

February 2

1682 French explorer Sieur Robert Cavalier de La Salle, traveling down the Illinois, reached the Mississippi. He named it the River Colbert, after a French minister. On April 9th, he became the first explorer to travel the river to the gulf. He claimed the entire basin for France.

1809 Doctor George Engelmann was born in Germany. He came to St. Louis in 1833, and caused a controversy when he became the first physician here to use obstetrical forceps. On January 1, 1836, he began keeping track of the weather. His records over the next 40 years are the only weather records we have from that period. But he is best remembered for developing Henry Shaw's botanical garden.

1837 Governor Lilburn Boggs signed a bill creating the second Bank of Missouri. Boggs had served as cashier for the first state bank, from the time it was founded in 1816 until it failed in 1819. The Bank of the State of Missouri was an important steadying influence on westward migration. It failed in 1877.

1863 A young writer from Missouri used his new pen name for the first time, in three dispatches for the Virginia City, Nevada *Territorial Enterprise*. Samuel Clemens heard the term "Mark Twain" during his days as a steamboat pilot in St. Louis. The term signified a depth of two fathoms, safe for a steamboat.

1865 The General Assembly chartered the public school library, the foundation of today's St. Louis Public Library. Superintendent of Schools Ira Divoll had been working for years to develop the library. At the time, free public libraries were virtually unheard of.

1875 Henry Shaw set up an endowment fund to ensure maintenance of the botanical garden he had donated to the city. Shaw also enlarged the park around the garden. He donated a wide strip of land on its borders. He had planned to sell the land for residential development.

1876 St. Louis was among the eight teams to sign on as the National Baseball League was founded. The other seven cities were Boston, Chicago, New York, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Louisville and Hartford.

1898 A party of 75 St. Louisans was preparing to depart for the gold fields of the Klondike. Organized as the Alaska Mining and Trading Company, each member represented \$1,000 in stock. A lady journalist was among the group. She planned to send reports back to the St. Louis newspapers.

1903 A bill was introduced in the legislature to move the state capitol to St. Louis. Proponents of the measure complained that Jefferson City lacked adequate hotels and railroad facilities. Jeff City was criticized as "A place where gambling, vice and immorality flourish without protest from the citizens or the officers of the law."

1906 Over 50,000 people lined the river bank to witness one of the most destructive fires in East St. Louis history. The fire started in the huge Union Elevator and spread to four one-thousand-gallon oil tanks. Burning oil ignited dozens of homes and businesses.

1916 President Woodrow Wilson made a speech at the Old Coliseum. He was in St. Louis to kick off a national tour to speak on preparedness.

1923 Albert "Red" Scheondienst was born in Germantown, Illinois. He became one of the top second basemen in the National League, despite suffering from double vision from an injury as a teenager and playing for years with tuberculosis. He managed the Cardinals from 1965 to 1976, in 1980 and in 1990. As skipper, he won 1,999 games. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1989.

1927 The first steps were taken towards construction of a new bridge over the Mississippi River north of St. Louis at the Chain of Rocks. A bill was introduced in Congress to grant a charter to a firm led by St. Louis contractor John Scott.

1931 The structure of Bagnell dam was completed, and the Osage River began backing up behind it. The dam formed the vast Lake of the Ozarks. The lake is 125 miles long, with 1300 miles of shoreline and one "Party Cove."

1942 The groundhog at the St. Louis Zoo faced censorship of his annual forecast, due to the war. Zoo Director George Vierheller said the animal had been sleepy anyway, and would probably just stay in his burrow. The restrictions on weather reports would go so far as to bar broadcasters from mentioning rain delays during baseball games. Dizzy Dean invited listeners to "stick their head out the window," to find out why the game was delayed.

1947 Authorities feared a gang war was about to erupt on the East Side. Members of the Chicago syndicate were trying to muscle in on a lucrative racing news service run by a local gang. The Capone men were also moving in on the jukebox and pinball machine business.

1949 St. Louisans Bill and Charlie DeWitt acquired a controlling interest in the Browns. The former soda and peanut vendors at Old Robison Field (the old home of the Cardinals) said they wanted to keep the team in St. Louis.

1952 Josephine Baker returned to St. Louis for her first public appearance since leaving to become the toast of Europe. She received a warm welcome from an audience of 8,000 at Kiel Auditorium. Proceeds went to the Citizen's Committee On Overcrowding In The Public Schools. Baker seldom returned here, saying the city represented fear and humiliation to her.

1954 John Tudor was born in Schenectady, New York. The pitcher had a spectacular season for the Cardinals in 1985. He started out one and seven in May, but would win 20

and lose just one for the rest of the season. But his season was marred after he fell apart in Game Seven of the World Series and punched an electric fan in frustration.

1955 The Citizens Bond Issue Screening Committee called for construction of a \$4.5 million museum and planetarium in Forest Park. Speakers said it would be a valuable addition to the educational and cultural interests of St. Louis.

1962 Stan Musial was named chairman of a special citizen's committee. The committee would be in charge of fighting for passage of a bond issue to pay for proposed public improvements in the new stadium area. Voters had already said no once to the \$6 million bond issue.

1970 A Belleville judge issued an injunction prohibiting Cahokia District 187 from suspending male students with long hair. The judge said the 34 suspended students had been denied their right to free expression.

2000 Mike Martz was named as the new coach of the Rams. Martz had served as offensive coordinator under Dick Vermeil.

2000 The Drury Hotel opened in the historic International Fur Exchange Building at Fourth and Market. Demolition had already begun on the building in 1997, when hotel owner Charles Drury stepped in.

2000 The *Post-Dispatch* profiled a local performer who was beginning to break out nationally with his new single. Cornell Hayes Junior of University City started out with the St. Lunatics, who had some success locally with "Gimme What Ya Got" in 1996. The article mentioned that "Country Grammar," the debut single for the rapper now known as Nelly, referred to a dialect peculiar to St. Louis.