

### **February 3**

**1846** Belle Starr was born in Carthage, Missouri. The "Bandit Queen" had relationships with Cole Younger and Jim Reed. Then she moved to Oklahoma with Sam Starr. They rustled cattle and ran moonshine. Sam killed a couple of her lovers. Belle was shot to death on her birthday in 1899. A neighbor she had been feuding with was acquitted in the case.

**1876** President Ulysses S. Grant announced he was coming back to St. Louis to testify on behalf of his personal secretary. General O.E. Babcock was on trial for his alleged role in the "Whiskey Ring" conspiracy here. Grant personally intervened on Babcock's behalf, and his reputation took a beating.

**1887** An act of Congress authorized construction of a second bridge over the Mississippi at St. Louis. The bridge became known as the "Merchant's Bridge," because it was constructed under the auspices of the Merchant's Exchange for railroad use only.

**1893** The first street-car railway post office in the country began operations along the West End Narrow Gauge Line between St. Louis and Florissant. A post card mailed in St. Louis could arrive in the village that very day. Many other cities soon copied the idea.

**1899** A group of prominent St. Louisans were in Washington to visit President McKinley. They were seeking his aid in acquiring \$5 million from Congress for the proposed world's fair. McKinley heartily endorsed the plan and promised his support.

**1902** Seven city firemen were killed in a fire at the American Tent and Awning Company at Third and Chestnut. The assistant chief was among the dead. The wall of the building collapsed on the firefighters just as they were satisfied the blaze was under control.

**1908** Chris Von der Ahe, the flamboyant former owner of the St. Louis Browns, filed for bankruptcy. He was a saloonkeeper who tried horse racing, a merry-go-round and a chute-the-chutes ride to get crowds to come to the ballpark. The Cardinals and the Browns played a benefit for Von der Ahe, but he died broke in 1913.

**1926** The newspapers reported on an unusual bootlegging victim. The body of Paul Berrittieri was found in a garage behind his home at 5343 Odell. Apparently overcome by fumes, Berrittieri was found floating face down in a 20,000 gallon vat of mash. Firefighters and police were nearly overcome by the fumes attempting to recover the body.

**1926** The Auto Club of Missouri was protesting the publication of announcements for auto races on Missouri roadways. The problem was especially bad on the recently completed St. Louis to Kansas City highway. The Auto Club was planning to ask the legislature to establish a Highway Patrol.

**1928** A crowd of about 1,000 watched as Mayor Victor Miller laid the cornerstone for the new courthouse downtown. The cornerstone contains a box of documents detailing the controversy over moving the courts to a new location. The box also contains a medallion featuring a likeness of Charles Lindbergh.

**1931** The St. Louis County Plan Association protested the Missouri Highway Department's "Super Highway 40" plan. The association said the highway from Wentzville to St. Louis would cut through Ladue Village and "destroy the most beautiful residential property in the county" to build a highway for Kansas City motorists.

**1934** The Cardinals and the Browns announced they were discontinuing radio broadcasts from Sportsmen's Park. Games had been broadcast on weekdays only since 1926. The owners of the clubs thought the broadcasts were keeping fans away from the games.

**1952** Josephine Baker made her only appearance here after she became famous. Baker left St. Louis at an early age and became the toast of Europe as a dancer for the Follies Bergeres. She told a crowd at Kiel Auditorium that for years, St. Louis to her represented "A city of fear, humiliation, misery and terror." As a child, she witnessed the horror of the 1917 race riot in East St. Louis.

**1956** Becky "The Queen of Carpet" Rothman was born in St. Louis. Her parents owned Veterans Linoleum and Rug Company in East St. Louis. She went on to own six Becky's Queen of Carpet and Tile Superstores. In 1988, she began appearing in zany TV commercials riding on a magic carpet. She went down in local TV history with the likes of Steve Mizerany and the Schweig Engel Guys.

**1960** Demolition was scheduled to begin soon on a North County landmark. The son of explorer William Clark had built a 26-room mansion, called Minoma, in 1857. The house in the 6700 block of Hagen in Northwoods served as a family museum for many years, showcasing artifacts from the expedition.

**1968** The *Globe-Democrat* reported that "Gaslight Square ain't what she used to be." The article blamed crime and crowds of teenagers hanging out in front of the "Go-Go" establishments. A dozen clubs had closed since 1967.

**1982** County officials ordered businesses to keep one half of their employees home as efforts continued to clean up from the biggest snow storm here in 70 years. The city was offering \$45-an-hour to owners of four-wheel drive vehicles to help clear the residential streets. The final death toll from the storm would reach 16.

**1988** The Blues won their eighth straight game, establishing a new team record.

**1994** Police arrested 28-year-old Thomas Brooks and charged him with the murder of Cassidy Senter of North County. Cassidy's murder was one of the most publicized in area history.

**1999** The Mayor of Town and Country came out against a plan to thin the deer population in the well-to-do suburb by shooting the deer. City leaders ignited a controversy when the plan was unveiled. They later decided to call in professional trappers to relocate the deer.

**2002** The New England Patriots stunned St. Louis with a 20-17 victory in Super Bowl 36. The Rams erased a 14-point deficit but lost on the final play, a 48-yard field goal by Adam Vinatieri. The Rams had been listed as 14-point favorites going into the game.