

## February 16

**1763** The Treaty of Paris ended the Seven Years War. The treaty gave England and Spain possession of most of North America. By a secret treaty, France ceded Louisiana to Spain and French possessions east of the Mississippi to the British. The treaty was very important for the village of St. Louis. French settlers, wary of British rule, flocked here.

**1766** Bishop Louis Valentin DuBourg was born in Santo Domingo. He came to St. Louis in 1818 as the first bishop here. He established St. Louis Academy, the forerunner of St. Louis University. He also pushed for construction of the first adequate church building here. DuBourg brought the Order of the Sacred Heart and invited the Jesuits to St. Louis.

**1846** This is believed to be the date that William B. Ferguson and his wife arrived in an area north of St. Louis to build homes. He bought 107 acres. In 1855, he offered nine acres to the North Missouri Railroad (later the Wabash) for a station under the condition that the station be named Ferguson.

**1847** The Missouri Legislature incorporated the first library west of the Mississippi. Civic leaders and philanthropists founded the Mercantile Library Association. The subscription library grew into one of the city's most important institutions. The library hosted such luminaries as Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde and Ralph Waldo Emerson. It served as the first permanent art museum and the original home of the symphony.

**1862** Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River in Tennessee fell to Union forces led by General Ulysses Grant. It was the first major Union victory of the war. He earned the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" that day, for his order to Confederate General Simon T. Buckner.

**1897** The first double hanging in St. Louis County. 18-year-old "Cottonhead" Smith and Sam Foster, an African-American, were hanged for the murder of Bertram Atwater. It was Atwater's murder that spurred residents to incorporate the city of Webster Groves.

**1898** A reporter for the *Post-Dispatch* wrote from Havana that the sinking of the battleship *Maine* on January 25<sup>th</sup> appeared to be an accident. Sylvester Scovel wrote, "The event is deplored and the general hope is that a false construction may not be placed on the event." But other newspapers, notably William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*, used the sinking to campaign for a war against Spain.

**1903** Several meetings were held to protest a measure in the legislature designed to clean up the city in time for the fair. The bill called for moving all of the "disreputable houses" to one area. The residents of the near south side neighborhood chosen for the new district were not too pleased with the idea.

**1903** Notorious outlaw Cole Younger returned to Missouri after his pardon from Minnesota, where he had been imprisoned since the disastrous raid on the Northfield Bank. After a meeting with Frank James in Kansas City, the two announced they had purchased the "Buckskin Bill Wild West Show" and Frank would be the star. The terms of Cole's parole prevented him from appearing on stage.

**1925** Albert Bond Lambert and the St. Louis Aeronautics Corporation bought the 169-acre Lambert St. Louis Flying Field. They had been leasing it, and hoped that the purchase would convince the government to extend airmail service here. Lambert developed the field at his own expense, then made the unbelievable offer to sell it to the city at the cost of the land alone.

**1946** Construction began on the new eight-million-dollar Ford plant on Highway 66 near Lambert Field. Governor Walter N. Davis poured the first concrete. Florissant was moving to annex the area, but the farmers who lived there were considering incorporating their own village.

**1953** A grand jury began investigating the violence involving the leaders of the Steamfitter's union here. The Callahan brothers were fighting to keep from turning over the union's books, which were subpoenaed by the grand jury.

**1959** Workers began tearing down a home at 3518 Laclede. It was the first of over 2300 buildings that would be demolished in the renewal of the Mill Creek Valley, 465 acres between 20th and Grand. Over 20,000 people, 95% of them African-American, would be displaced. The area would be dubbed "Hiroshima Flats" before new buildings began going up.

**1973** Eight teenaged boys from Godfrey, Illinois were killed when an Amtrak train crushed their station wagon at a crossing on Bethany Lane.

**1973** St. Louis public school teachers voted to end the first strike in their history. Teachers won an \$800 across-the-board pay increase. They had walked off the job back on January 24th.

**1974** Filming began at Busch Stadium on the made-for-TV movie "Lucas Tanner." David Hartman played the fictional Webster Groves high school teacher and former Cards pitcher. The movie grew into a short lived series on NBC.

**1979** The *Globe-Democrat* reported that the first airborne ambulance service in the St. Louis area was about to be launched. Allan Barklage, chief pilot for Fostaire, was back from Texas after training in the new 450- thousand-dollar jet copter to be used by the service.

**1999** Police arrested dozens of people as the Fat Tuesday celebration in Soulard got out of hand. Mounted Police maced a crowd that had gathered to watch women bare their

breasts in exchange for beads. Mayor Clarence Harmon said such behavior might be accepted in New Orleans, but it would not be tolerated here.