

February 17

1763 Doctor Antoine Francois Saugrain De Vigne was born in Paris. He would come to the village of St. Louis as the first scientist west of the Mississippi. Saugrain provided scientific equipment to the Lewis and Clark expedition. He also provided them with matches he had made, 20 years before matches came into general use.

1797 The "Father of Kansas City" was born in St. Louis. Francois Chouteau and his wife established a fur trading post east of present-day downtown Kansas City in 1821. An 1826 flood forced them to move closer to what is now the center of the city.

1901 City officials were heartily endorsing one of the proposals to beautify the city in time for the fair. The plan called for the purchase of the block on Market Street opposite Union Station for use as a park. The buildings then facing travelers as they emerged from the station were an unsightly collection of saloons and gambling dens.

1902 The city council was holding hearings on the possible purchase of the old Exposition Building grounds at 13th and Olive. The site was under consideration for a new central library. Andrew Carnegie had donated \$1 million for a main library and branches if the city would acquire a site and maintain the buildings.

1905 The \$1,250,000 sale of the Lindell Hotel at Sixth and Washington was called one of the biggest real estate deals in St. Louis history. Stix, Baer and Fuller, proprietors of the Grand Leader Department Store, planned to level the hotel. They pledged to replace it with an eight-story store, to be "the finest in the west."

1906 Archbishop Kain announced that a plan had been chosen for the erection of a new cathedral at Newstead and Lindell. The contract was awarded to architects Barnett, Hayes and Barnett of St. Louis. The cost was put at \$1 million, without the murals and mosaics.

1908 The original American Theatre opened on Market between 6th and 7th Streets. The city's primary home for vaudeville, the American would host such performers as WC Fields, George M. Cohan and the Ziegfield Follies. The building was torn down in 1953.

1911 The St. Louis School Board expressed dissatisfaction with the current one cent school lunch of a jam sandwich and a caramel. The Board planned to develop a five cent lunch "which would be sufficient to divert the small boy's attention from his appetite to his books.

1925 Martin L. Mathews was born in Neelyville, Missouri. In the summer of 1960, he met with fellow neighborhood baseball coach Hubert "Dickey" Ballantine at Handy Park in St. Louis. They decided to form a group to keep young men off the streets. The Mathews-Dickey Boys Club's first clubhouse was in the old Bob Russell Sporting Goods Building at 4738 Natural Bridge.

1943 William “Dinty” Colbeck was shot to death at Ninth and Destrehan. As head of the Egan Gang during the 1920’s, Colbeck led a violent war against the Hogan Gang in the streets. Colbeck was sent to prison in 1924 for the robbery of a mail payroll at Staunton. Upon his release in 1940, attempted to regain his control of the underworld. His murder ended the gangland era in St. Louis.

1946 Archbishop John Joseph Glennon was elevated to the College of Cardinals. St. Louisans never saw him as a prince of the church. He died while visiting his native Ireland prior to his return trip to St. Louis from Rome.

1952 Mayor Darst signed a bill creating the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority. The measure set the city's ambitious slum clearance plans in motion. The authority was granted the power to condemn and clear entire neighborhoods, then sell the land for construction of low-income housing.

1957 A fire at the Katie Jane Nursing Home in Warrenton killed 71 people. The blaze is the deadliest in Missouri history. The home's license renewal had been held up after a state inspector found faulty wiring.

1958 The FCC recommended that KTVI-TV be granted a permanent license to broadcast on Channel Two. WTVI had begun broadcasting on U-H-F Channel 54 from Belleville in 1953. The call letters were changed when the station moved to studios on Berthold and began operating on Channel 36 in 1955.

1965 The *Globe-Democrat* reported that many women proprietors of antique stores in Gaslight Square kept their doors locked during the day for fear of toughs and thieves. Other shops were curtailing their hours. The area around Boyle and Olive was shaken by the murder of Mrs. Lillian Heller on December 30, 1964.

1972 Julie Nixon Eisenhower became the first member of a presidential family to take a trip to the top of the Arch. Before flying to St. Louis, she had seen her parents off on their historic trip to China.

1972 A bill before the Board of Aldermen would change the name of Easton Avenue and portions of Franklin Avenue to Martin Luther King Boulevard. Alderman C.B. Broussard was one of the sponsors. He said the measure was part of a concerted drive to name streets after the murdered civil rights leader.

1999 The deer trappers were packing up in Town and Country. City leaders called in the professionals after a plan to shoot the deer ignited a controversy. They trapped and located about 80 deer.

2003 KMOX radio personality Nan Wyatt was shot and killed at her home. Her husband, Tom Erbland admitted that he planned the murder after reading Wyatt’s journal and learning that their marriage was falling apart. In addition to being the co-host of the

area's top-rated morning show, Nan was also a panelist on *Donnybrook*, on Channel Nine.