

January 26

1826 Julia Dent was born in St. Louis. She grew up at Whitehaven, the estate that still stands today in Rock Hill. She married Ulysses S. Grant in 1848 and stood by him during his financial problems before the Civil War and a long separation during the war. While her husband was president, she was very active in affairs of state.

1856 A large crowd watched the first exhibition of the city's first steam fire engine, built by Abel Shawk of Cincinnati. It took just six minutes and 58 seconds from the time the boiler was lit until water began pouring from the hoses. The steam engine ended the era of St. Louis' colorful volunteer fire companies. They would race each other to fires, and often fought battles in the streets.

1862 Union Commander Henry Halleck issued new orders dealing with rebel sympathizers. He ordered prominent businessmen to take a loyalty oath. "Old Brains" warned that carriages flying a rebel flag would be seized and that women who came to the Gratiot Street Prison "insulting our troops and carrying on communications with prisoners of war" would be arrested.

1906 Police were warning young women not to go out unescorted on the streets of St. Louis. A search was underway for a suspect known as "Jack the Slasher." He had stabbed 15 women on crowded downtown streets in the past few days. None of the victims were seriously hurt.

1907 Mrs. Thomas Ferguson, the head of the Art Committee of the St. Louis District of Missouri Women's Clubs, announced a campaign against many newspaper comics. She said cartoons that depicted violence as humorous and ridiculed authority figures were "demoralizing" youth.

1915 St. Louis got its first motorized bus service. A "jitney" bus, operated by Carl Nolte, made the run along Olive between Fourth and Grand.

1935 Bob Uecker was born in Milwaukee. "Mister Baseball" played for the Cardinals in 1964 and 1965. His only appearance in the '64 World Series came when he grabbed a tuba from a band playing in center field and tooted on it before Game One. The Cardinals traded him to Philadelphia in 1965.

1937 The Daniel Boone Expressway was dedicated from Wentzville to Ballas. Later U.S. 40 and I-64, the highway made it to Lindbergh in 1938. But it dead-ended at Brentwood Boulevard until 1956. Drivers had to take Brentwood north to Clayton Road, and pick up the Express Highway, which only took you as far as Market Street.

1940 Governor Lloyd Stark, St. Louis Mayor Bernard F. Dickmann, and Veiled Prophet Queen Jane Smith attended the gala Missouri premiere of *Gone With the Wind* at the Leow's State Theatre here. Some moviegoers fainted. The manager of the theater told the

Post, "At first it upset us. But we've become experts at first aid. It's a matter of routine now, just the same as tearing tickets."

1945 The original McDonnell Phantom made its first flight. The Phantom would become the Navy's first jet fighter. It would also become the first Navy plane to fly at 500 miles per hour. On July 21, 1946, an FH-1 Phantom operating from the U.S.S. *Franklin D. Roosevelt* became the first jet combat plane to take off from an American carrier.

1945 "Boss" Thomas Pendergrast died at the age of 72. As boss of the powerful Kansas City Democratic machine, he effectively controlled Missouri politics. He was instrumental in the rise of Harry S. Truman. Pendergrast fell out of power after he was convicted of income tax evasion in 1939.

1957 Army Secretary Wilber Brucker ordered an investigation into plans to install a ring of 90-millimeter anti aircraft guns around St. Louis. Senator Stuart Symington complained that the World War Two vintage guns were obsolete. Symington asked that St. Louis be given higher priority for installation of missiles.

1961 Wayne Gretzky was born in Brantford, Ontario. "The Great One" Came to the Blues on February 27, 1996, in a trade for Patrice Tardif, Roman Vopat and Craig Johnson. He racked up 37 points in 31 games for the Blues before signing with the New York Rangers as a free agent in July.

1965 Lloyd Leo Anderson became the last Missouri inmate to die in the gas chamber. He was executed for the murder of 15-year-old delivery boy Thomas Grupe during a robbery at the Speckart Drug store in St. Louis in May 1961. It would be the last execution in Missouri until George "Tiny" Mercer received a lethal injection in January 1989.

1966 August A. Busch Junior, president of the Cardinals, presented the old Busch Stadium site at Grand and Dodier to the Metropolitan St. Louis Boy's Club. The club announced a fund raising drive to build a gym, pool, and baseball fields on the site.

1982 Six family members, including four children, were killed in a house fire in the Central West End. Investigators were focusing on faulty wiring as the cause of the fire at 4547 Kennerly.

1995 The Blues played their first game at the new Kiel Center before 20,282 fans. Before the game got underway, fans were treated to a 10-minute show that featured lasers and fireworks. The Blues -- playing their first game after a 3 1/2 month labor strike -- would go on to beat the Los Angeles Kings by a score of 3-1.

1999 Pope John Paul the Second arrived in St. Louis. President Clinton met the Pope at Lambert Field. Predictions of gridlock never materialized. Downtown parking lot owners were grumbling over the number of empty spaces. Over 20,000 youths cheered

the Pope at a service at Kiel Center. Backstage, John Paul the Second met Mark McGwire. It was 54 degrees that day, which added to the legend of the "Pink Sisters." The nuns had prayed for good weather for the visit.

2004 In a ceremony at the Cathedral Basilica, Raymond Leo Burke became the 8th Archbishop of St. Louis. The former bishop of LaCrosse, Wisconsin soon became embroiled in controversy over his statements that politicians who support abortion rights should not receive communion and his efforts to bring St. Stanislaus Church under full control of the archdiocese.