

January 29

1826 Doctor John Thompson was born in Hodgenville, Kentucky. Thompson would become a renowned St. Louis surgeon and medical teacher. “The Mechanical Doctor” invented the stomach pump, the double-action syringe, the cord and pulley system for treating leg and thigh fractures and other devices still in use today.

1876 The St. Ferdinand (Florissant) town council formed a committee to build the first calaboose and town hall on land purchased from Sarah and Joseph Chambers. The tiny building now serves as the Florissant Senior Citizens Center.

1926 Officers Ohmer Hockett and John Balke tried to shake down a bootlegging operation run by the Green Ones Gang. Gang members beat the officers senseless, then shot and killed them the next day. Pasquale Santino, a member of a rival gang, put the finger on Alphonse Palizzola and he became the first of the Green One’s leadership to be murdered. On September 9, 1927, four gunmen blasted away at Palizzola on Tenth Street. A ten-year-old boy was also killed by one of the ricocheting bullets.

1933 Poet Sara Teasdale of St. Louis died at the age of 48. Between 1904 and 1907 Teasdale and a group of friends published a monthly literary magazine, the *Potters Wheel*. In 1918, her book *Love Songs* won the Columbia University Poetry Society Prize, the forerunner of the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. Her sensitive, highly emotional poetry reflected her discontent with marriage. Her death was ruled an accident, but she had taken an overdose of sleeping pills.

1935 The first contracts were let for construction on a new superhighway between Wentzville and St. Louis. The new bridge over the Missouri, and the highway opened between Wentzville and Bellefontaine on Clayton Road in June 1937. The stretch between Lindbergh and Brentwood Blvd opened in 1947. Residents kept the highway a dead end there until 1958.

1944 Vice President Harry S Truman spoke at ceremonies marking the launch of the battleship *Missouri*. Truman’s daughter Margaret christened the “Mighty Mo” with a bottle of champagne. General Douglas MacArthur accepted the Japanese surrender aboard the *Missouri* on September 2, 1945. She fired her last shot during Desert Storm in 1991 and is now a tourist attraction at Pearl Harbor.

1947 City leaders began consultations on details for a nationwide contest to choose a design for the proposed riverfront memorial. George Howe, an architect from Philadelphia, was named as a professional advisor.

1953 The city building commissioner declared the old Coliseum at Jefferson and Washington to be unsafe. Built in 1908, it was intended to be the equal of Madison Square Garden. It served as the site for the 1916 Democratic National Convention. The building would be torn down later in 1953.

1958 The Cardinals made Stan Musial baseball's first hundred-thousand-dollar player. In 1957, Stan had won his 7th straight batting title. He hit .351 with 29 home runs. Stan said he would have settled for less money.

1959 *The Great St. Louis Bank Robbery*, made its world premiere at Leow's Orpheum Theatre. The film starred Steve McQueen, who played his first major role in *The Blob* a year earlier. Charles Guggenheim and John Stix directed the film. The movie told the story of the April 1953 hold-up and shoot out at Southwest Bank. Twenty-four St. Louis police officers were featured in the film.

1960 Ceremonies took place marking the opening of the new Plaza Square Apartments at 15th and Chestnut. St. Louis Comptroller John Poelker presented an oversized ceremonial key to Mr. and Mrs. Carl Bacon of Glendale. The Bacons were the first people to apply for a unit at the new six-building, 13-story complex.

1968 Aeneas Williams, Pro Bowl cornerback with the Arizona Cardinals and St. Louis Rams, was born in New Orleans

1970 The first Venture store opened at Missouri Highway 725 (now 170) and Page. Venture promised the store would offer "high quality merchandise appealing to middle and upper-income suburban dwellers." Venture would grow to 93 stores in nine states before shutting down in April, 1998.

1971 The city housing authority backed a plan to level the notorious Pruitt-Igoe housing complex. The \$22 million plan called for the 43 eleven-story buildings to be replaced with four residential "villages."

1971 The Cardinals traded outfielder Vic Davilillo and pitcher Nelson Briles to the Pirates for outfielder Matty Alou and pitcher George Brunet.

1980 Pope John Paul II named the Most Reverend John Laurence May as the 8th head of the St. Louis Diocese. Carberry was then serving as the Bishop of Mobile, Alabama. Archbishop May replaced Cardinal John Carberry. Carberry submitted his resignation at age 75 as required by church law.

1991 St. Louis radio listeners were stunned to hear a fake nuclear alert during a morning show broadcast on KSHE. The stunt caused the FCC to come down hard on the station. It cost announcer John Eulett his job as Cardinals public address announcer for a time.

1997 Officer Willie Neal Junior became the second St. Louis County police officer to be murdered in the line of duty. He was killed by a shot from his partner's gun during a gunbattle with a drug suspect at a North St. Louis liquor store.