

July 2

1849 The panic stricken city of St. Louis observed a day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer." Over 175 people had died of cholera that week alone. City officials had hoped that the great fire on May 17th had checked the spread of the disease. But 4,000 people would die, about one-tenth of the city's population.

1874 To test the newly-completed Mississippi Bridge, 14 locomotives pulling loaded coal tenders moved in double file along the span. They paused at the center of each arch, to put maximum strain on the span. The builder of the bridge, James B. Eads, watched confidently.

1875 We know the weather is weird in St. Louis, but this is too much. According to an old weather service log book, a signal corps observer reported "a small shower of bullfrogs" here.

1892 The Terminal Railroad Association announced the winner of a contest to pick a design for the new Union Railroad Depot. Architects Theodore C. Link and Edward A. Cameron submitted the winning entry.

1892 The town of Lamotte, Missouri, formerly Missouri Point, was celebrating a third name change. At the request of the railroad, they changed the name to West Alton. Townspeople expected the railroad to bring prosperity.

1899 St. Louis radio and stage star Harry Fender was born. He starred in the Ziegfield Follies on Broadway, then gave it all up to become a city cop. He later starred as *Captain Eleven* on TV and hosted a show from the Steeplechase Room at the Chase on KMOX.

1900 A settlement was reached in the violent 55-day streetcar strike. At least 14 people had died and 200 were injured. Business ground to a halt and 1600 St. Louisans were pressed into service as citizen's police officers to keep order. A week later, the workers walked out again. The union eventually gave up, but the strike is seen as an important turning point in St. Louis history.

1901 Because of a drought, every wagon in the village of St. Peters was pressed into service to haul water from the "Cave Springs." They were named after a man-made cave on the Stille farm, from which a spring flowed. The springs were later covered by the I-70 interchange that now bears the name.

1910 The papers here reported that Albert Bond Lambert, president of the Aero Club of St. Louis, had acquired an aviation field ¼ of a mile from the Kinloch Park Station near the Wabash Railroad Line. Lambert planned to spend \$15,000 to build a grandstand and hangars for an aviation meet in the fall.

1917 The deadliest race riot in U.S. history was sweeping East St. Louis. Tensions rose when an aluminum plant hired blacks to replace strikers. On July 1, whites in a car fired

into a black neighborhood. Two white officers were killed when they responded. Carlos Hurd of the *Post Dispatch* described in gruesome detail how blacks were pulled from streetcars and beaten, lynched or shot down as they tried to escape their burning homes. At least 39 blacks and nine whites died. East St. Louis never recovered.

1937 Explosive charges sent the Wabash Railroad bridge plunging into the Missouri River. The bridge was built in 1871. At the time, it was the longest iron bridge in the country. The bridge was the scene of several disasters, including a terrible construction accident.

1947 Torrential rains here added to the most destructive flood in city history to that date. The Mississippi was at its highest level since 1844. Thousands were being evacuated from the area around Dupon and East Carondelet. Damage was put at 12 million dollars in the St. Louis area.

1951 The flamboyant Bill Veeck bought the St. Louis Browns from Bill and Charlie DeWitt. Veeck would go down in history for his stunts, including sending a midget to the plate, and letting fans vote on the plays. He bought the Browns with the intention of forcing the Cardinals out of St. Louis. But Anheuser-Busch bought the Cardinals, and the Browns moved to Baltimore to start the 1954 season.

1953 Massive traffic tie-ups resulted from a wildcat strike by workers for the Public Service Company, which ran the streetcars and busses. Governor Donnelly was considering seizure of the Public Service Company by the state to get things moving again.

1967 President Johnson made a surprise visit to St. Louis to address the annual Democratic Governor's Conference. The governors then announced they were ending a rebellion against the administration. The governors cited a "credibility gap" with the Johnson administration that they said had cost the party in the 1966 elections.

1973 Betty Grable died of lung cancer at the age of 56. She was born on December 18, 1916 in St. Louis, the daughter of a wealthy stockbroker and a mother who had given up show business. Betty lied about her age at 13 to win a spot in the chorus line at the Fox Theatre.

1991 Declaring, "because of the lame-ass security, I'm out of here," Axl Rose halted the Guns n' Roses concert at the Riverport Amphitheatre. Fans went wild, causing \$200,000 in damage as they ripped up seats and trashed equipment. At least 60 people were injured and 16 arrested. After being charged with assault and destruction of property, Rose was ordered to pay \$50,000 to local charities.

2002 Chicago millionaire Steve Fossett crossed 117 degrees longitude, becoming the first person to circumnavigate the globe solo in a hot air balloon. He brought his Bud Light "Spirit of Freedom" balloon down the next day in Australia. Washington University

served as mission control for the flight. Fossett made it on his sixth attempt in six years. Some of those attempts had been launched from St. Louis.

2003 Five people, including a Jefferson County man died, when a tractor-trailer loaded with fireworks exploded in Bonita Springs, Florida. Sunset Fireworks of Jefferson County made the fireworks. Sunset's sister company, Pyro Products in Grubville, had been the scene of three explosions since 1999 that killed two women and injured five others.