

July 8

1826 The U-S Army paid the village of Carondelet five dollars for land to establish a military post to replace Fort Bellefontaine. The villagers hoped the new post would bring business to the town. The post would be named "Cantonment Adams," later changed to "Jefferson Barracks."

1871 The St. Louis City Council was debating a bill to regulate cattle driving through the streets of the city. The bill called for cattle to be driven in lots no bigger than 25, and at speeds not to exceed two miles per hour.

1893 The cornerstone was laid for the magnificent new Union Station. Workers had already laid the foundation walls.

1901 Fans at Sportsmen's Park, infuriated by an umpire's call against the Cardinals in favor of the Brooklyn Superbas, rushed the field at the end of the game. Umpire Hank O'Day got his lip split open before players and the cops rushed to his aid.

1913 St. Louis housewife Pearl Curran claimed that the spirit of a long-dead Puritan woman spoke to her through a Ouija Board. The message said, "Many moons ago I lived. Again I come. Patience Worth my name." For the next nine years, Curran would write down the messages from Patience Worth. They added up to four critically acclaimed novels and hundreds of poems. Experts said the writings were historically accurate, filled with facts the uneducated Curran could not have known.

1921 The long dress coat worn by city policemen for 25 years was replaced with a short uniform coat, to allow the officers easier access to their guns. Several policemen had been shot recently while unbuttoning their coats to go for their revolvers.

1924 Legendary piano player Johnny Johnson was born in Fairmont, West Virginia. He came to St. Louis in 1952, and joined Chuck Berry in the Sir John Trio on New Year's Eve 1953. Johnson's piano playing is featured on all of Chuck Berry's 1950's rock and roll classics. Berry is said to have wrote "Johnny B. Goode" in his honor. Johnson's playing in the film *Hail, Hail Rock and Roll* revived his career.

1931 One of the oldest firms in St. Louis became a victim of the automobile age. The Weber and Damme Wagon Company declared bankruptcy after 70 years in business. There were now only five wagon making firms left in St. Louis, once a center of the industry.

1944 One of the first organized "sit-in's" for civil rights took place in St. Louis. Forty-five women, including 15 whites, staged a sit-in at the lunch counters at Stix, Baer and Fuller, Famous-Barr and Scruggs, Vandervoort and Barney. The stores closed the counters rather than serve the demonstrators.

1947 St. Louis was in the grips of flying saucer hysteria. A banner headline in the *Globe-Democrat* reported on the saucer mystery. Many St. Louisans fell victim to an ad-man's prank. Startled motorists saw dozens of "saucers" fall to earth. The six-inch discs were dropped from a plane to advertise a flying school. Two teens were in custody for throwing a fake saucer on the lawn of the county courthouse.

1953 Former Mayor Darst died, just two month after his term ended. Public housing was his greatest, or most notorious, legacy. While Darst was mayor, construction began on Pruitt-Igoe, the John Cochran Homes, and DeSoto-Carr.

1954 The second television station in St. Louis signed on the air. KWK TV broadcast on Channel Four from the Globe Democrat Building.

1962 Stan Musial slugged three homers in one game, becoming the oldest player in major league history to accomplish the feat. Stan also tied a major league record by hitting a home run in four straight at-bats. He had homered in his final at bat the night before.

1962 Karen Hantze Susman, a teenaged bride from St. Louis, arrived home after sweeping the singles and doubles titles at Wimbledon. Her doubles partner was 17-year-old Billie Jean Moffitt. A year earlier, they had become the youngest team to win the women's doubles. Moffitt would become better known as Billie Jean King.

1970 A St. Louis alderman was urging the city to ban rock concerts in Forest Park. Alderman John Joyce was reacting to rumors that the Grateful Dead were planning to hold one of their free concerts here. He said he opposed opening Forest Park to "the destructive hordes."

1972 The Senate approved \$500,000 to begin construction of a controversial dam on the Meramec River. The money would be used for land acquisition for the 12,000 acre lake about 80 miles southwest of St. Louis. The dam was expected to be completed by 1980, and become a major recreation destination for St. Louisans.

1982 Representatives of the Gateway Redevelopment Corporation, Landmark Redevelopment, labor and Mayor Scheomehl created the Pride of St. Louis Redevelopment Corporation to try to reconcile the competing plans for the Gateway Mall. Pride would eventually decide to go ahead with the demolition of the historic Buder and Title Guaranty Buildings.

1983 California businessman Harry Ornest and a group of local investors formally presented a bid to buy the Blues and keep them in St. Louis. Ornest offered about \$12 million.

2000 St. Louis Police officer Robert Stanze was shot and killed. Stanze was shot as he attempted to arrest Eddie Belk, who was already wanted for wounding a Berkeley officer. Belk managed to conceal a gun, and opened fire as Stanze got in the patrol car.

2000 The *Sporting News* named St. Louis as the Best Sports Town in America.