

## July 18

**1779** The first coroner's inquest in St. Louis is said to have been held over the body of Domingo de Bargas, a young Spanish merchant who met a sudden death. The governor ordered the inquest to satisfy the parish priest that the man had died of natural causes, and there was no impropriety in burying him in consecrated ground.

**1872** The first issue of the St. Louis *Globe* hit the streets. The former owner of the St. Louis *Democrat* would buy the two papers three years later and combine the two papers into the *Globe-Democrat*.

**1877** The separation of St. Louis City and County was completed, as Mayor Henry Overstolz and the city comptroller presented their report settling the debts between the city and county to the judges of the former county court. The population of the county was about 30,000 at the time, and the separation seemed like a good idea.

**1885** The Browns (AA) lost to the Athletics in St. Louis, snapping their 27-game consecutive-win streak at home. The streak is still a ML record.

**1931** Governor Henry Caulfield dedicated the St. Louis County Hospital in Clayton. County Hospital closed in November, 1985 and was torn down after its patients were moved to the new Regional Medical Center.

**1936** The city was suffering thru the worst heat wave ever. At least 471 people died during that long, hot summer. Records show that for 13 straight days, the high temperature averaged 103 degrees. The health commissioner urged people to “think cool” and not talk about the heat.

**1940** Joe Torre was born in Brooklyn, New York. He played for the Cardinals from 1969 to 1974. Torre hit .363 in 1971, capturing the Most Valuable Player award in the National League. He managed the Cardinals from 1990 to 1995. Torre then led the Yankees to World Championships in 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2000.

**1947** Just in case you thought the airport controversy was a new problem. The Civil Aviation Authority recommended a site on the Columbia Bottoms north of the city for a second airport. By 1950, the city had bought up the land for the airport, which the major airlines opposed. The effort was eventually abandoned. Farmland since the 50's, the land is now a park.

**1954** St. Louis Knights President and GM Bob Reed said the pro football team needed \$15,000 if they were to play that season. The team had won the Central States League championship, but was hurt financially by several factors, including a gigantic traffic jam around Oakland Stadium that had kept much of a sellout crowd from getting to the championship game against Wausau, Wisconsin.

**1964** The Bidwell brothers were threatening to move the Big Red to Atlanta. Sources in New York and Atlanta reported that the team was "as good as gone." But the Bidwells reconsidered when several minority shareholders threatened a lawsuit. Politicians also helped the team win more favorable scheduling in their lease at Busch Stadium.

**1969** It was announced that work had begun on a \$22 million amusement park near Eureka. The 200-acre park had another 302 acres set aside for future expansion. It was expected that the new "Six Flags over Mid-America" would prove to be an economic boon to Eureka.

**1980** Two hundred National Guardsmen were ordered to St. Louis to search door to door for heat victims. The toll from the heat had reached 108 in the city alone since the heat wave began on July 2nd. Governor Joe Teasdale asked President Jimmy Carter to declare St. Louis a disaster area.

**1993** At nine p.m., the Mississippi river crested here at 46.9 feet, 3.7 feet higher than the record crest of 1973. Water was flowing past the Arch at the rate of 7.5 million gallons per second. Also that day, a levee along the River des Peres was breached, sending water surging into the South St. Louis neighborhood. It looked like the worst was over, but there was more to come.