

June 26

1804 The Lewis and Clark Expedition reached the Kansas River, completing their journey across what is now the state of Missouri. Describing the future site of Kansas City, Clark wrote "The countrey around the mouth of this river is verry fine." But he added "the waters of the Kansas is verry disigreeably tasted to me."

1809 The first recorded murder in St. Louis County history. John Long Junior killed his stepfather, George Gordon, at Long's Mill in Bonhomme Township. Long was hanged in September.

1826 The Catholic Church created the St. Louis Diocese, separating it from the Diocese of New Orleans. Bishop William DuBourg was in charge of running both Dioceses. In March of 1827, The Reverend Joseph Rosati would be named as the first bishop of St. Louis. Pope Pius the IX would name St. Louis as an archdiocese in 1847.

1846 Colonel S.W. Doniphan, in command of a battalion of Missouri troops, left on his expedition to Mexico. His troops captured Chihuahua and Saltillo under overwhelming opposition, and then marched to the sea at Monterrey. They returned to Missouri as national heroes.

1901 Stuart Symington was born in Amherst, Massachusetts. He became president of Emerson Electric in 1938 and restored the company to profitability after a bitter strike. President Truman appointed him as the first Secretary of the Air Force in 1947. Symington served as U.S. Senator from Missouri from 1953 to 1976.

1902 William Lear was born in Hannibal. A high school dropout, he got his start recharging batteries at 25 cents each. He is credited with over 150 inventions, including the car radio. He also built the first production business jet plane, the Lear Jet.

1909 The City of Wellston was incorporated for the first time. Opponents would soon force it to disincorporate for a while. Wellston is named for Erastus Wells, who developed the streetcar system in St. Louis and the narrow gauge railroad that served Florissant. The railroad ran past his country estate, which he called "Wellston."

1912 The offices and buildings of Edward Garner Lewis, the flamboyant founder of University City, were auctioned off. Lewis had spent a fortune defending himself against fraud charges as his publishing empire collapsed. He resigned as mayor and fled to California, where he founded the community of Atascadero. He also ended up serving six years for mail fraud after resuming his moneymaking schemes.

1922 Radio Station KSD was formally dedicated. (KSD actually signed on in February, but someone forgot to get a license. It went back on the air on March 8th.) KSD hired Miss V.A.L. Jones as the first female radio announcer in St. Louis. She was not allowed to use her name at first. But that changed when the station received a letter from a

listener. It read, "Please tell me the name of your announcer. If it is a lady, she has a nice voice. If it's a man, then he is a damned sissy!"

1926 The first direct-dial telephone exchange in St. Louis opened. The first exchange was LA-clede.

1937 The Daniel Boone Bridge carrying U.S. 40 over the Missouri River was dedicated. Back then; Highway 40 through the Chesterfield Valley had two lanes, with a third "suicide lane" in the middle. The highway ran between Wentzville and "Bellevue," on Clayton Road. The section between Bellevue and Lindbergh opened in 1938. 40 made it to Brentwood Blvd. in 1947, but it dead-ended there until 1959.

1950 The last streetcar run was made over the "Oh-Five" Creve Coeur Line to Creve Coeur Lake. When the streetcars were retired, a good portion of the old line was paved over and re-named Midland Boulevard.

1972 FBI agents were scouring the fields around Peru, Indiana. Farmers had found a submachine gun and a bag containing \$500,000 ransom delivered to a hijacker at Lambert Field. Authorities said the shock of bailing out at 30,000 feet probably caused the hijacker to drop the money.

1972 McDonnell-Douglas unveiled its newest fighter, the F-15 "Eagle." The F-15 was scheduled to begin flight tests in July. If the tests were successful, the Air Force planned to order 729 planes. Nine thousand workers were involved in the F-15 program.

1973 Gretchen Wilson was born. She grew up in Pocahontas, 36 miles east of St. Louis. Her mother was just 16 when Gretchen was born, and dad left when she was two. Gretchen tended bar and cooked at a bar called Big O's, eventually taking the stage there to sing. She moved to Nashville in 1996 and struggled before being discovered by Big Kenny and John Rich. Her first single, "Redneck Woman" came out early in 2004.

1981 The John Carpenter film, "Escape From New York" opened. The movie was largely filmed in St. Louis. The Chain of Rocks Bridge, Union Station and other sites filled in for 1997 New York City, where the city had been turned into an armed maximum-security prison camp. On opening day, co-star Isaac Hayes appeared at several St. Louis area theatres.

1997 The controversial dioxin incinerator at Times Beach was turned off for the last time. The site of the dioxin-contaminated town is now Route 66 State Park.

2002 Loved ones, friends and teammates of Daryl Kile were joined by thousands of fans for a memorial service at Busch Stadium. Kile's five-year-old son, Kannon, threw out the first pitch, and the Cardinals beat the Brewers 5-2. Hundreds of fans were leaving items before a makeshift memorial outside the stadium. A similar memorial to Jack Buck stood alongside.

2002- Ground breaking ceremonies were held for a \$250 million shopping mall off Highway 370 in Hazelwood. Plans called for the “St. Louis Mills” to open in late 2003. The Mills Corporation said the massive mall would become a tourist attraction.