

June 27

1780 Ferdinand de Leyba died. He was the third Spanish Governor of Louisiana. De Leyba fortified Fort San Carlos with cannon, which proved critical in turning back the British and Indian attack on St. Louis in May 1780. He had saved the city, but merchants blasted De Leyba as negligent. Some historians have referred to him as the “Spanish Benedict Arnold.”

1825 George Sibley and his party left St. Charles on an expedition to survey a road to the Mexican settlements. Their route would become the Santa Fe Trail. After his return, Sibley and his wife Mary moved to a farm they called “Lindenwood.” In 1831, Mary opened a boarding school for women that developed into Lindenwood College.

1847 The first of the Missouri Volunteers returned to St. Louis from the Mexican War. Volunteers under Colonel Doniphan became national heroes after victories at Chihuahua and Saltillo and a march to the sea at Monterrey.

1876 The Republican National Convention met at the Merchant's Exchange. It was the first major national political party convention held west of the Mississippi. The convention nominated Samuel J. Tilden for president and Thomas A. Hendricks for vice-president. Tilden actually won the popular vote, but Rutherford B. Hayes ended up with one more vote in the Electoral College.

1897 William B. Ittner was elected as Commissioner of School Building for the city schools. Ittner designed some of the most beautiful schools ever built, including McKinley, Yeatman, Soldan, Sumner and Cleveland High Schools. He also designed 43 elementary schools locally and about 500 schools across the country.

1898 The directors of the St. Louis Public Library announced they had bought the old Exposition Grounds for \$525,000. The site was bounded by Olive and Locust, 17th and 18th. They planned to build a new central library on the site. Andrew Carnegie would donate \$1 million for the new building.

1901 The Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company appointed a commission of architects to lay out and design the buildings at the fair. They began their work two weeks later.

1920 Nine people were seriously injured in an accident on the Scenic Railway at the Forest Park Highlands Amusement Park. (Where Forest Park Community College stands today) A handkerchief on the tracks caused on train to jump the tracks. Another car smashed into it.

1926 About 40,000 fans packed Sportsmen's Park to see the debut of pitcher Grover Cleveland Alexander in a Cardinal uniform. Alexander had been acquired from the Cubs a few days earlier. He threw a four-hitter as the Cards moved into first place.

1926 A landmark in "The Hill" Neighborhood was dedicated. The present St. Ambrose Church building replaced one that burned in 1921.

1933 James F. Conway was born in St. Louis. He became the 45th Mayor of St. Louis in 1977. Conway's term was marked by battles with North Side residents. Conway fought for construction of a North-South Highway. That battle kept the city from passing a budget for eight months in 1979-1980. Conway also moved to consolidate Homer G. Phillips Hospital in North St. Louis with City Hospital, a move that sparked protests.

1945 As victory in the Pacific neared, the Army announced it would begin shutting down production at the ordinance plant on Goodfellow. About 16,000 people would lose their jobs.

1957 The notorious Vandeventer overpass on Highway 40 opened. By 1964, it was dubbed "the world's longest parking lot," and plans were underway to build a replacement. St. Louisans endured detours and headaches during the construction between 1977 and 1984.

1958 Stan Musial was named to the All-Star team for the 15th time. He received more votes from his fellow players and coaches than any other major leaguer. Stan would be the only Cardinal on the All-Star team in Baltimore on July 8th.

1961 City leaders were hailing the approval of a \$31 million loan from the Equitable Life Insurance Company of New York. The loan assured completion of the first phase of the Civic Center Redevelopment Project, including the proposed downtown stadium.

1961 Stan Musial doubled in a game against the Braves at Old Busch Stadium in his 10,000th at bat. Stan became only the fourth major leaguer to get 10,000 at bats. The others were Tris Speaker, Ty Cobb and Rabbit Maranville.

1962 Shortly after five a.m., a worker gave the signal, and trucks began pouring the first concrete for the foundations of the Arch. The first pour was made into a 44-foot excavation for the south leg.

1970 Jim Edmonds was born in Fullerton, California. Edmonds came to the Cardinals in a traded that sent Adam Kennedy and Kent Bottenfield to the Angels on March 23, 2000. Edmonds has won eight Gold Glove awards for his spectacular play in center field. He also hit the home run in extra innings that gave the Cardinals the win in Game Six of the 2004 NLCS.

1983 Omni International Hotels announced plans for a 550-room world class luxury hotel at Union Station. The hotel would complement the \$125 million station redevelopment project. City officials were predicting that Union Station would become one of the city's top attractions.

1985 Route 66 passed into history as officials decertified the route and voted to remove the few remaining signs. They had come down in Missouri in 1977. When it was first commissioned in 1926, Route 66 followed Manchester. The route was shifted to Chippewa and Watson in 1932. In 1935, that route was renamed "City 66" and the main route shifted to cross the Chain of Rocks Bridge, following what is now Dunn Road and Lindbergh to hook up with City 66.

1993 The Mississippi River rose above flood stage for the second time that year. But this time, it would keep on rising. The flood of 1993 was underway.

2000 Nelly's first full-length album was released. "Country Grammar," would knock Eminem from the top of the album chart on August 26th. It would garner three Grammy nominations and go on to sell over 9,000,000 copies, putting St. Louis on the hip-hop map.

2004 About 25,000 fans watched as drag racer Darrell Russell blew a tire at 300 miles per hour, his dragster spun out, disintegrated, and burst into flames at Gateway. Russell was killed. The fans at the NHRA Sears Craftsman Nationals were not told of the death, and the competition went on. Russell was the first driver to die in an NHRA top event since 1996.