

## **March 5**

**1790** Daniel Page was born in York County, Maine. The second mayor of St. Louis, he served four terms from 1829 to 1833. Under his administration, a night watch was set up, and the first business regulations were passed. Street cleaning and garbage collection service was also started. He was also a great philanthropist. Page Boulevard is named for him.

**1849** The Missouri General Assembly authorized the construction of the first city hall in St. Louis. The city never really got a permanent city hall until 1872, when one was built on 11th street, between Market and Chestnut. Our present city hall was completed in 1902. It was modeled after the Paris city hall.

**1855** The Missouri Legislature established the five first legal holidays in Missouri. The act set up five "holydays." Financial transactions falling due on Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Years, the Fourth of July or Sundays would be due and demandable the day before.

**1877** The St. Louis Court of Appeals ended the legal battle over the election that separated the city from the county. The initial vote count showed it had failed. But the court instead found that it had passed. The separation is now blamed for many of our area's problems. It would never have happened if the election had not been contested.

**1894** Colorful Browns owner Chris von Der Ahe, unable to hire two managerial candidates he wanted, announced he would manage the team himself. He eventually relented, and hired George "Doggie" Miller as manager.

**1897** One of the last acts by outgoing President Grover Cleveland was to sign legislation allowing for a third bridge across the Mississippi here. Promoters announced a campaign to raise \$1 million to build the bridge in North St. Louis.

**1903** The city street commissioner was complaining about a critical labor shortage here. He blamed high wages being offered by contractors rushing to complete the fair on time. An ad for 30 men to clean and repair the streets for \$1.50 per day brought only 28 applicants.

**1923** A Chamber of Commerce official said the dense smoke that choked St. Louis was actually an asset. He said, while not contesting that the smoke pall was a drawback to comfort and perhaps to health, "We can only hope that visitors will regard each piece of soot as evidence of our industry."

**1932** W.C. Handy returned to St. Louis to address students at the public schools for African Americans. Handy said he had earned over \$500,000 from his 1914 composition, "St. Louis Blues." The song was still selling over 70,000 copies each year.

**1935** St. Louis Police Chief Gerk met with Charles Lindbergh at the estate in Hopewell, New Jersey. Gerk was chosen to attend a meeting of top police officials because of his work on notorious cases such as the kidnapping of Doctor Isaac Kelley and Augustus Busch Orthwein. Lindbergh told Gerk he was confident the baby would be found unharmed.

**1946** Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Harry Truman left St. Louis for a speech at Westminster College in Fulton. Churchill's most famous words were spoken that day in Missouri, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended upon the continent." Other world leaders would follow Churchill to Fulton, including Presidents Ford and Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Mikhail Gorbachev.

**1948** In the biggest heist in St. Louis in years, three masked bandits made off with \$31,400 in cash. They held up the payroll truck at Bussman Manufacturing in North St. Louis.

**1950** The children's show, *The Wrangler's Club*, premiered on KSD-TV. Harry Gibbs starred as the beloved "Texas Bruce." He would entertain kids and show cartoons until 1963. When Gibbs retired, *Corky The Clown* took over the slot. Weatherman Cliff St. James played Corky until 1979.

**1950** The Post-Dispatch began publishing a series that spurred big changes in St. Louis. Headlined "Progress or Decay," Richard Baumhoff penned eleven articles outlining the problems of the city and concluded that many would be solved by tearing down and starting over. City planner Harold Bartholomew wrote the 12<sup>th</sup> article, calling for reconstruction of slums with "superblocks" of residences.

**1953** The president of the powerful AFL Teamsters International Union ordered two of his top officers to come to St. Louis and conduct a thorough house cleaning. Rumors were rampant that organized crime had infiltrated the union. One of the officers was James Hoffa of Detroit.

**1969** For the first time, vandals hit the Arch. Workers used solvents and plenty of elbow grease to remove the graffiti from the steel.

**1974** A crowd of 600 streakers claimed a world's record at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Streakers struck Washington University, the Penrose Street Police Station, the 8900 block of Riverview and in the Central West End.

**1991** The Blues made a trade that didn't turn out so well. They dealt Geoff Courtnall, Sergio Momesso, Cliff Ronning and Robert Dirk to Vancouver. The Blues picked up Garth Butcher and Dan Quinn.

**1993** It was a sign of things to come. The Mississippi River at St. Louis rose 14 feet in 48 hours. The Missouri River at Hermann rose 11 feet in 48 hours.

**1999** The "Spoonball" era at St. Louis University came to an end. Men's basketball coach Charlie Spoonhour announced his retirement. In his seven years at SLU, Spoonhour revived the program and took the Bills to the N-C-Double-A Tournament three times. Lorenzo Romar replaced him.