

## **March 12**

**1849** The Missouri General Assembly chartered the Pacific Railway Company to build a railroad from St. Louis to Jefferson City, then to a point on the western line of Van Buren, now Cass County. The plan called for the line to eventually reach the Pacific Ocean. Construction began in 1852.

**1849** The state legislature passed an act to provide for the first real sewer system in St. Louis. The bill authorized the city council to tax property owners to pay for it. Construction began in March, 1850, after the great cholera epidemic made the work more urgent.

**1877** The first official business of St. Louis County, newly separated from the city, was transacted at the temporary county seat at the Mount Olive House. Ralph Clayton would donate 100 acres of his land for a permanent county seat.

**1900** Two of baseball's biggest stars, John McGraw and Willie Robinson, declared they would never play here. St. Louis had purchased their contracts after the Baltimore Club went bankrupt. They would eventually sign, but McGraw left after the 1900 season. Legend says he tossed his uniform into the river as the train carrying him back to Baltimore chugged across the Eads Bridge.

**1903** August Krause, a wealthy farmer, killed his wife and six children at their home on Schoettler Road, 1½ miles south of Bellefontaine in St. Louis County. (Now part of Chesterfield) Krause then cut his own throat. Relatives and neighbors said Krause had been deranged for some time, and often prayed that he would not harm his wife and children.

**1905** Federal officials in charge of appraising the government buildings at the World's Fair set the minimum price for the giant bird cage at \$3,500. The cage had cost \$14,000 to build. Several cities were said to be interested.

**1920** The Board of Aldermen was considering a bill regulating "airship traffic" over the city. The bill prohibited the operation of aircraft over assemblies of more than 100. It set minimum clearance over buildings at 300 feet, and banned the dropping of any object from a plane.

**1921** A gunman for Fifth Ward Boss William Egan gunned down rival rum runner "Big Maxey" Greenberg and political lobbyist John P. Sweeney at 6<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut. Greenberg had switched allegiance from "Egan's Rats" to the Hogan Gang. In the fall of 1921, gunmen for the Hogan Gang killed Egan. The two gangs were soon locked in a deadly war on the St. Louis streets.

**1940** Emerson Electric announced that it had acquired 22 acres at West Florissant and the Wabash tracks. A plant for hermetic motor products would be built on the site, which grew into a massive complex during the war.

**1956** A developer submitted a plan to build the world's tallest building in Clayton to the County Council. The plan called for a \$200 million-dollar, 120-story building. At the time, the legal height limit for buildings in Clayton was five stories.

**1958** The Budweiser's team of Pat Patterson, Ray Bluth, Don Carter, Tom Hennesy and Dick Weber rolled the greatest series in bowling history. On lanes seven and eight at Florissant Lanes, they finished with a three-game total of 3,858 pins.

**1960** Joseph Griesedieck, president of Falstaff, purchased a large minority interest in the Chicago Cardinals. It marked the first step in moving the team to St. Louis.

**1963** Architect Edward Durell Stone unveiled a \$12,000 plastic model showing his design for a new downtown stadium. He called the design "a 20th century version of the Roman Coliseum." The design features 96 arches along the top, each repeating the catenary curve of the Gateway Arch. Other works by Stone include the General Motors Building in New York, the National Geographic Building, and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington.

**1966** Bobby Hull of the Chicago Blackhawks became the first player to score more than 50 goals in a season. He scored his 51st against the Rangers in Chicago. His son, Brett, would score 50 goals in 50 games in 1991.

**1970** The drive to keep the musical *Hair* out of St. Louis passed its first test in the Board of Aldermen. Following a stormy public hearing, a committee sent a measure introduced by Doris Bass to the full board. *Hair* was scheduled for a ten-week run at the American Theatre.

**1973** The great Frankie Frisch died in an auto accident at the age of 75. The "Fordham Flash" played with the Cardinals from 1927 to 1937. He managed the "Gashouse Gang" from 1933 until 1938.

**1975** The *Globe-Democrat* reported that the old Chain of Rocks Bridge was doomed. The Madison Village Board had accepted a bid from a Michigan firm to demolish the bridge for \$103,000. But a sudden dip in steel prices made it more trouble than it was worth to demolish the old bridge.

**1989** The curtain came down on the Ambassador Theatre. The chandeliers, staircases and even sections of plaster work were auctioned off. The Ambassador was once the home of the "Skouras Brothers Missouri Rocket Girls," which evolved into the world-famous Radio City Music Hall "Rockettes." It was torn down in 1997 to make room for a plaza in front of the Mercantile Bank headquarters.

**1999** Six children were killed in a fire in the 1400 block of Salisbury. Police would later charge Nevelynn Stokes with first-degree murder. They said Stokes set the fire after he

was beaten up during a quarrel with the woman who lived in the building and her boyfriend.

**1999** A federal judge signed an order ending the school desegregation case. Judge Stephen Limbaugh accepted a settlement that curtailed bussing of students between the city and county and set performance standards for city schools.