

## **March 28**

**1793** Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was born in New York. In the winter of 1818-1819 Schoolcraft and his assistant, Levi Pettibone, became the first white men to extensively explore and document the Ozarks. His journals made him internationally famous. He predicted that St. Louis would become the "seat of empire for that vast basin of land." Schoolcraft was also a pioneer in Native American studies.

**1837** President Van Buren declared the area known as the Platte Country to be part of the state of Missouri, giving the state its present boundaries. The area had been bought from the Indians a year earlier. The counties of Platte, Buchanan, Andrew, Holt, Nodaway and Atchison were created from the Platte Purchase area.

**1899** August Busch Junior was born. As Chairman from 1946 to 1975, he built Anheuser-Busch into the largest brewery in the world. The firm built nine regional breweries, and increased its annual sales from 3 million barrels in 1946 to more than 34 million in 1974. "Gussie" was the first brewer to advertise on a national television show and guided introduction of the Budweiser "bowtie." He was most beloved for his work as president of the Cardinals from 1953 until he died in 1990.

**1902** Marlon Perkins was born in Carthage, Missouri. He began his career at the St. Louis Zoo cutting grass and cleaning cages. Two months later, he took over the reptile collection. Perkins nearly died in 1928, when a Gabon Viper bit him. He left to direct the Buffalo Zoo in 1938. In 1962, he returned to become director of the the St. Louis Zoo and began hosting television's "Wild Kingdom." The show ran for 23 years.

**1913** The St. Louis Browns traded infielder Buzzy Wares to a minor league team in Alabama, but not for another player. He was traded for the Brownies use of the Montgomery stadium during spring training. Wares committed almost 200 errors in two minor league seasons.

**1921** The Missouri Aeronautical Society established a 180-acre flying field in Bridgeton. The organizer of the society, Major Albert Bond Lambert, said he hoped the new field would help St. Louis gain a place on the proposed transcontinental air route.

**1923** "Jelly Roll" Hogan gave his pledge to the pastor of St. Patrick's Church that he would try to make peace between his followers and the Egan Gang. Outraged citizens were demanding an end to the gun battles in the streets and the "shooting up" of businesses. The truce only lasted a short time, before Egan's Rats opened up on a crowd in an effort to kill Hogan. Two bystanders, including State Representative William McGee were killed.

**1923** Planners of the proposed Municipal Auditorium were recommending a 12,000 to 15,000 seat hall and an adjacent hall to seat about four thousand. Both halls would feature such modern amenities as stereo opticon projection equipment and ramps instead of stairwells.

**1929** Prohibition agents uncovered the largest bootlegger distribution point ever found in St. Louis. They seized 1,700 gallons of booze along with two trucks and four cars used in the operation. The agents were acting on a tip that Chicago bootleggers were planning to set up on a scale never before attempted in St. Louis.

**1941** KMOX began broadcasting at its current 1120 position on the dial. When the station signed on in 1925, KMOX broadcast on 1070 from studios in the Mayfair Hotel.

**1947** The St. Louis newspapers printed a letter from the Centralia mine workers local to Illinois Governor Dwight Green. Written a year before the disaster that killed 111 men, it begged the governor to "please save our lives" by making state officials enforce safety regulations. An investigation found that coal mine operators were forced to make political contributions in return for lax enforcement of safety laws.

**1950** St. Louis County voters approved a new county charter. The charter eliminated the old county court government. It divided rule among executive, judicial and legislative branches. The charter created the office of county supervisor and set up a seven-member county council.

**1958** Chuck Berry's autobiographical "Johnny B. Goode" entered the *Billboard* chart. Berry's family lived on Goode Avenue. Berry also wrote the song as a tribute to his pianist, Johnny Johnson. At the time, Berry was under fire in the black community for appearing on KSD-TV's *St. Louis Hop*. A black newspaper was reporting that the show was discriminating against black teens.

**1958** Composer William Christopher Handy died in New York at the age of 84. He came to St. Louis in 1893, seeking work as a musician. But times were hard, and he recalled those experiences in the song "St. Louis Blues." Just months after his death, the movie based on his life was released. Billy Preston played Handy as a young boy. Preston would go on to play keyboards with the Beatles and score solo hits like "Will It Go Round in Circles."

**1959** County police announced a crackdown on a fad that was sweeping the nation--go-cart racing. Owners of the speedy carts were racing on parking lots without permission. Even worse, they were running them on the streets.

**1963** Mayor Tucker and a group of civic leaders met with Walt Disney in California, hoping to persuade him to construct an attraction on the St. Louis riverfront. Plans for "Riverfront Square" fell through due to a lack of financing, and because Walt initially refused to allow beer to be sold. A few months after Disney withdrew from the project in 1965, he announced plans for a development in Central Florida.

**1966** Mayor Cervantes announced a nationwide architectural competition to select a design for the proposed "Gateway Mall." The mall was planned to stretch from the Arch westward to 18th Street.

**1969** After two years of debate, the Board of Aldermen chose one of two rival plans for the redevelopment of Laclede's Landing as a tourist attraction. The \$65 million plan called for the retention of the old buildings on the landing.

**1970** Classes were suspended at Washington University following the worst clash to date between police and students protesting against the ROTC. Seven people were injured and nine arrested after students tried to "quarantine" the building by boarding up the doors and windows.

**1982** The co-owner of the landmark Slay's Restaurant on Hampton was killed by a burglar. Anthony Slay was a fixture at the gathering place for South Side politicians. The restaurant was located next door to the Hampton Avenue police station.

**2004** Jerry Berger's final regular column appeared in the *Post-Dispatch*. For almost 26 years, the gossip columnist and his "sightseers" chronicled the exploits of the rich, famous and notorious, starting out with the *Globe-Democrat*.