

May 24

1804 The Lewis and Clark Expedition passed the Daniel Boone homestead and the small settlement near what is now Defiance. Lewis and Clark went ashore, but there is no record that they ever met Boone.

1815 One of the bloodiest of the Indian battles in Missouri during the War of 1812 took place not far from what is now Old Monroe in Lincoln County. Six American rangers and seven Indians were killed in "The Battle of the Sink-Hole."

1836 The cornerstone was laid for the first real permanent theatre in St. Louis. Meriweather Lewis Clark, the son of the famous explorer, designed the new "St. Louis Theatre." It was located at Third and Olive, later the site of the Merchants Exchange. (now beneath I-70) The theatre was the first in the country with individual seats.

1851 The "Central Plank Road Company" took over the road then known as Old Bonhomme Road, running from where Olive Street left the city to Howell's Ferry on the Missouri. The road was renamed as the Central Plank Road, but failed as a toll road. The county took over the bankrupt road in 1858 and renamed in Olive Street Road.

1874 A crowd of 25,000 people bought a five-cent ticket and promenaded on the Eads Bridge on the first Sunday it was open to pedestrian traffic. Water fountains and a concession stand were set up for the weekend crowds enjoying the view and the cool breezes.

1904 The giant Ferris wheel at the world's Fair began operating for a series of tests. The wheel stood at the Forsyth entrance. It was 25 stories tall. Each of its 36 cars was the size of a Bi-State bus, and the wheel could carry 2,000 people. The 70-ton axle was the largest piece of forged steel in the world. It took 175 freight cars to bring the wheel from Chicago, where George Ferris had designed it for the Columbian Exposition of 1893.

1904 County Constable John Mueller became the first to hunt speeders from the air. Captain H.E. Honeywell and John Berry took him up in a balloon a field near Bridgeton. Mueller didn't spot any "scorchers." Honeywell assisted in operating the captive balloon at the fair and Berry failed in his attempt to compete in the airship competition.

1924 Construction began on the Fairmount Jockey Club's new \$500,000 race track near East St. Louis. Workmen labored by day and under giant searchlights at night to have the track ready by Labor Day.

1927 Mayor Victor Miller declared that when Charles Lindbergh returned to St. Louis, it would be a public holiday. City offices were to be closed. Businesses would be asked to give employees the day off. If school was still in session, the Mayor said he would ask the School Board to give the kids the day off.

1930 Barnes Hospital announced a \$20 million expansion program. Hospital officials said "a group of skyscrapers" would rise where the present three-story hospital stood on Kingshighway.

1938 Larry Wilson was born in Rigby, Idaho. Wilson anchored the Cardinals defense at free safety from 1960 to 1972. He was the first player to make regular use of the safety blitz and racked up 52 career interceptions. He once intercepted a pass with both of his hands in casts. Wilson was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1978.

1940 The first night baseball game at Sportsmen's Park. A crowd of 25,562 saw the Browns lose to the Cleveland Indians 3-2 under the lights.

1946 More than 350,000 jobs in St. Louis were threatened by the railroad strike. Eight thousand engineers and trainmen had walked off the job here. More than 65,000 local railroad workers were idled. Businesses that relied on rail service were considering closing down.

1949 The Hotel Statler became the first hotel in St. Louis to offer television sets in guest rooms. An ad in the *Globe* showed one of the sets, complete with a seven-inch screen.

1956 A second federal grand jury recessed without solving the mystery of the missing half of the Greenlease ransom. St. Louis policemen Louis Shoulders and Elmer Dolan were convicted of perjury for testifying that they brought the ransom to the police station the night Carl Austin Hall was arrested.

1960 Aloys Kaufman, president of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce, warned that the present airport facilities would be saturated within three or four years. He called for the establishment of a second airport for St. Louis.

1964 The contract for construction of Civic Center Busch Memorial Stadium was awarded to Fruin-Colnon and Millstone Construction in a joint venture. The \$20,544,000 contract covered the stadium and the two parking garages with spaces for 28,000 vehicles.

1967 The Stadium Cine opened. Considered state of the art for its time, the cinema could seat an amazing 454 people. Today, Mike Shannon's Restaurant occupies the site.

1969 Amid much fanfare, the Spanish Pavilion opened downtown. Mayor Cervantes led the push to bring the pavilion here from the New York World's Fair. Less than a year after it opened, the foundation formed to bring it here was broke, and the pavilion was closed. Today, it serves as the lobby of downtown Marriott.

1970 The Blues traded legendary goalie Jacques Plante to Toronto for "future considerations." Owner Sidney Salomon said he made the trade because the Blues would have had to give up Plante or Glenn Hall in the upcoming expansion draft.

1978 Alan Barklage, chief pilot for Fostaire Helicopters, shot Barbara Oswald to death after she pulled a gun on him in a hijacking attempt two thousand feet over the US Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois. She planned to force Barklage to land in the yard and rescue her boyfriend.

1978 The 5,000th McDonnell-Douglas F-Four "Phantom Two" rolled off the assembly line. The Phantom Two revolutionized jet fighter tactics when it was introduced in 1958. Production would continue until October 1979.

1983 Ralston-Purina filed a \$60 million anti trust lawsuit against the NHL. The league had refused to approve the sale of the Blues to a group from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Ralston argued that the league was forcing the company to operate the team against its will.

1997 Paul Tracy won the Motorola 300, the inaugural event at the Gateway International Raceway in Madison. The race was marred because of problems with the track due to the extreme heat.

1999 An era in St. Louis politics was about to come to an end. Representative Bill Clay announced he was retiring after 32 years.