

May 28

1790 Thomas Sappington was born in Kentucky. One of 18 children, he came to what is now South St. Louis County in 1806. His father, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, had bought 680 acres of land for \$800 dollars. The home Thomas Sappington built still stands at 1015 South Sappington Road.

1890 Plans were unveiled for a building at Seventh and Chestnut to house the brewery syndicate of Ellis Wainwright. The first design was rather plain. But Louis Sullivan was eventually hired to design the building. Sullivan's design revolutionized American architecture and ushered in the era of the "skyscraper." The Wainwright used the steel frame of the building as structural support. In the past, exterior walls had supported tall buildings.

1896 Rescuers were frantically digging through the rubble of the tornado that killed 306 people a day earlier. A long line of people waited anxiously at the old morgue at 12th and Spruce. A crowd at the East St. Louis morgue rioted and stormed the superintendent's office. It was reported that the deadliest spot had been the corner of Seventh and Rutger, where 20 people died in the collapse of two tenements.

1903 The man who may have been "Jack the Ripper" died in St. Louis. Francis Tumblety was a porn peddling quack that was once arrested here in the 1860's for "putting on airs." He had a bitter hatred of women, referring to them as "cattle," and kept a collection of human uteri. Tumblety came to London two months before the horrific murders began. Scotland Yard called him their primary suspect, but there was not enough evidence. After being arrested for homosexual activity, he fled England under an alias on December 4, 1888. The "Ripper" never struck again.

1904 At 2:02 p.m. the Great Ferris Wheel opened to the public. It took 18 minutes for the first revolution and 15 for the second. Doctor L.C. Shutt, 2323 Eugenia, purchased the first ticket. The first wedding on the wheel took place. Mr. Eddy Rogers and Miss Florence Benton of Wamego, Kansas were married in Car 21, to be known as "The Marriage Car." After the fair, there were plans to move the wheel to Coney Island or the Forest Park Highlands, but it proved to be too expensive. Dynamite destroyed the wheel in May 1906. Legend persists that the massive axle was buried where it fell.

1914 A huge production in Forest Park opened, marking the 150th anniversary of the founding of St. Louis. Over the next five nights, over 400,000 people would see the "Pageant and Masque" presented at the lagoon on Art Hill. A cast of over 7,500 acted out scenes from the city's early history. Luther Ely Smith, who would later propose a riverfront memorial, organized the pageant. The success of the presentation ultimately led to the establishment of the Muny.

1917 Barry Commoner was born. The pioneer of the environmental movement joined the faculty of Washington University in 1947. He later helped found the St. Louis

Committee for Nuclear Information. In 1966, Commoner founded the Center for the Biology of Natural Systems to study man's relationship with the environment.

1923 Joseph W. Folk died, a year after the former governor had suffered a stroke. As St. Louis Circuit Attorney, Folk exposed the corrupt alliance between big business and city government officials. When he was elected as the youngest governor in Missouri history, Folk went after corruption on the state level. St. Louis never forgave Folk for going after prominent citizens, and always voted against him.

1927 Charles Lindbergh left Paris on the "Spirit of St. Louis." He circled the Eiffel Tower twice, and dropped a note of thanks to the French people. Two hours later, Lindbergh arrived in Brussels, where King Albert and his subjects were waiting to pay tribute.

1930 KMOX became the first station to broadcast a conversation between a plane in flight and a ground station. The broadcast was presented in cooperation with the Universal Division of American Airways and the government station at Lambert Field.

1932 St. Louis businessman C.A. "Cap" Tilles deeded his 68-acre "Rest Haven" estate to the city. The sportsman and philanthropist said the site at Litszinger and Lay Roads would become the "county playground" for St. Louis.

1950 The New York hypnotherapist hired by the Browns resigned, amid word he was about to be fired. Doctor David Tracy said the players refused to cooperate. Management hired Tracy in the spring to help players deal with a "defeatist complex." The Browns were in last place.

1951 Mayor Joseph Darst operated a bulldozer to begin demolition work on the first tenement on the site of a \$22 million-dollar, 1740 unit public housing project. The gleaming new buildings would be named for Captain Oliver Wendell Pruitt, a St. Louis pilot killed in World War Two.

1955 The Cardinals fired manager Eddie Stanky. The team was in fifth place, with a record of 17 wins and 19 losses. Harry "The Hat" Walker would take over as skipper.

1966 "River Deep, Mountain High" by Ike and Tina Turner entered the *Billboard* Top 100. Many critics regard the song as producer Phil Spector's masterpiece. He spent over \$200,000 creating the "wall of sound" on the record. But the song stalled at number 88, prompting the reclusive Spector to shut down his record label and retire. The song did reach number three in the UK.

1974 Amtrak announced it was considering moving its operations out of Union Station. Amtrak officials were negotiating to purchase a 15-acre site west of Union Station that could be used as a "temporary" facility. The forlorn "Amshak," cobbled together out of five mobile homes, opened in 1978. It is still in use today.

1981 Pittsburgh businessman John Connelly bought the "Admiral," which had appeared to be destined for the scrap heap. He paid \$600,000. In September, St. Louis interests would pay Connelly \$1.4 million for the legendary excursion ship. But Connelly kept the engines.