

November 30

1835 Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in Florida, Missouri. His father moved the family to Hannibal in 1839. Clemens came to St. Louis in 1853 to work as a typesetter. Horace Bixby hired him as an apprentice steamboat pilot, and Clemens received his pilot license in 1859. It was while working on the river that he picked up a term used to measure the water's depth, "Mark Twain." His last visit to St. Louis was in 1902, when he dedicated a tablet at the Eugene Field home.

1837 St. Louis Chamber of Commerce President Edward Terry presided over a sumptuous banquet at the National Hotel. (Now the site of KMOX and KMOV) Eighty prominent St. Louisans with New England backgrounds attended to recall the eastern Thanksgiving custom. Thanksgiving did not become a national event until Abraham Lincoln's edict some 25 years later.

1843 Thanksgiving was officially observed for the first time in Missouri. Governor Thomas Reynolds had declared that the last Thursday of November be set aside for a day of prayer and celebration.

1875 The city chemist was predicting a decreased in infant mortality here as a direct result of the "Whiskey Ring" scandal unfolding in St. Louis. With the distilleries shut down, farmers could no longer get distillery "swill" and had to feed their cows grain.

1920 Actress Virginia Mayo was born in St. Louis as Virginia Clara Jones. Her great, great, great grandfather founded East St. Louis. She made her debut at the Muny Opera in 1937. Mayo appeared in dozens of pictures, including *White Heat* and *The Best Years of Our Lives*. Mayo received one of the first stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Sultan of Morocco once said the beautiful actress was "tangible proof of God's existence."

1927 Robert Guillaume was born Robert Williams in St. Louis. He stole the show in the comedy series *Soap* in the 1970's with his role as the butler, Benson. He was rewarded with a best supporting actor in a comedy Emmy in 1979 and his own spin-off series, *Benson*. He won the best actor in a comedy series Emmy in 1985. He also appeared in the ABC series *Sports Night*, returning to the show following a stroke in 1999.

1930 Labor leader and organizer Mary Harris "Mother" Jones died at the age of 100. She spent 60 years fighting for the rights of coal miners and other workers. She is buried in Mount Olive, Illinois.

1942 St. Louis Director of Public Safety, H.D. McBride, ordered an immediate inspection of all night clubs and taverns in the city. He was reacting to the fire two days earlier at the Coconut Grove Nightclub in Boston. The fire killed 479 people.

1946 The Aviation Council of Greater St. Louis recommended a second major airport be built on the east side. The city wanted to build the second airport at Columbia Bottoms in North St. Louis County.

1957 Vladimir Golschmann announced he would retire at the end of the season. Golschmann had conducted the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra for the past 27 years. His leadership was credited with making the orchestra one of the finest in the nation.

1959 Plans were announced for a \$10 million shopping center to be built at New Halls Ferry and Jennings Station Roads. When it opened in 1961, the River Roads shopping center was state-of-the-art. But today it stands largely vacant, a victim of changing demographics and traffic patterns.

1959 McDonnell Aircraft announced it had been awarded a contract to build six more space capsules for "Project Mercury." That brought to 20 the number of capsules ordered by the government.

1960 The former owner of the St. Louis Zoo's popular chimp, "Mister Moke" was sentenced to four years in prison for stealing the chimp back in December of 1959. He took him to Florida to perform in the movies.

1962 Mayor Tucker signed the first St. Louis fair employment practices bill. The measure banned racial discrimination in employment, unions, and vocational schools.

1963 The newly widened Manchester Road was dedicated by the Mayors of Manchester, Ellisville and Ballwin. The ceremonies were originally scheduled for November 22, 1963. Highway officials boasted the new road could handle 10,000 cars per day.

1964 For the first time in 70 years, travelers couldn't get a haircut or shave at Union Station. The Fred Harvey Barbershop was closed, a victim of declining rail traffic.

1982 Residents looked on as technicians in "moon suits" began taking soil samples in Times Beach. The town was listed as one of 41 sites in Missouri possibly contaminated by dioxin. The streets were sprayed with dioxin-contaminated waste oil to keep the dust down in the summer of 1972.

1990 The riverboat *President* made its final cruise from St. Louis. It moved to Iowa to become a floating casino. The same line that built the *Admiral* built the *President* in 1933. It cruised here for a few years, and then went to New Orleans. When the *Admiral* was declared unseaworthy in 1980, the *President* replaced it.

1993 St. Louis was stunned as the NFL announced it was awarding a second expansion franchise to Jacksonville. Things looked pretty bleak for the effort to bring a football team here.

1999 A judge ordered the Missouri Department of Transportation to allow the Ku Klux Klan to take part in the state's "Adopt-a-Highway" program. The signs recognizing the Klan went up on I-55 near Butler Hill, within a few hours one had been cut down and the other stolen.

2001 Pianist Johnny Johnson filed suit against Chuck Berry. Johnson claimed Berry owed him royalties on at least 30 rock and roll classics, including "Roll Over Beethoven," "Maybelline" and School Day." Johnson claimed they had collaborated on the songs, which were credited to Berry alone. A judge threw the suit out on October 21, 2002.