



## The La Salle Room—14th Floor

Dedicated to Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle (1643-1685)—first Frenchman to see the mouth of the Mississippi...and the man whose vision forecast an empire for France in the heart of America. ○

Born in Rouen to a wealthy French family, La Salle, like many younger sons of the period, entered the Jesuit order. At the age of 23, however, he left the order to pursue a life of adventure in the New World. ○

Arriving in Montreal in 1666, he soon interested himself in exploration and fur trading—searching for a route through the North American continent to China and the Far East and holding, with the Governor of New France, the Comte de Frontenac, a fur trading monopoly for much of the Canadian wilderness. ○

These interests took him through the Great Lakes and most of the old Northwest Territory and, on April 9, 1682, he completed his longest exploration when he and his companion, de Tonty, arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi and their goal, the Gulf of Mexico, after traveling the length of the great river.

Two years later, La Salle led a colonizing expedition of four boats which sailed down the Atlantic coast from Canada, around Florida, seeking to land at the Mississippi's delta. ○

They missed their goal, however, and found themselves stranded on the Texas coast. While on an overland trek back to the Mississippi, La Salle's men mutinied and murdered him early in 1685. ○

## The Stoddard Room—14th Floor

Dedicated to Amos Stoddard ( 1772-1813)

On March 9 and 10, 1804, Amos Stoddard presided at the famous Three Flags Ceremonies, when the colors of Spain, France and the United States flew over St. Louis within a twenty-four hour period.

A native of Woodbury, Connecticut, Stoddard received legal training prior to receiving a commission as Captain of Artillery in 1798, and becoming a career soldier in the service of his country.

Following the Louisiana Purchase, he was sent west to preside at the transfer of the territory to the United States and to become the first civil and military commandant of Upper Louisiana.

As Commandant, he had marked success in keeping peace with the Indians and quieting the fears of the citizenry about the new government. When he was released from the assignment a few years later, townspeople spoke of the “regret in parting” and of his “exemplary dispensation of justice”.

Stoddard went South after leaving St. Louis and, in 1812, published his classic “Sketches Historical and Descriptive of Louisiana”. Later that year, in the war with England, Major Stoddard was wounded at Fort Meigs and, after lingering briefly, died of his wounds in 1813.

## The St. V'rain Room—14th Floor

Dedicated to Ceran St. V'rain (1802-1870)

Ceran St. V'rain was the third son of Jacques St. V'rain, a French ex-nobleman who sought a new life in America.

Jacques obtained a sizable land grant from his brother Charles, then Lieutenant Governor of the Louisiana Territory. This grant included the northwestern part of St. Louis County. Here, at Spanish Lake, Ceran was born in 1802.

After his father's death in 1818, young Ceran undertook the establishment of Indian traders for Pratte, Cabanne & Company. Circumstances, however, turned his eyes to the Southwest rather than up the Missouri. Pioneering into New Mexico, he bought from the hunters and Indians and sold their goods to other traders.

His new home was in Taos. There, in 1833, he and William Bent formed Bent, St. V'rain & Company. The new company extended trading further into the mountains and built forts along the trail for the storage of valuable goods awaiting shipment to St. Louis. Bent's Fort on the Arkansas became the West's most famous stop-over on the trail from St. Louis to Santa Fe.

Ceran dissolved the partnership with the Bent Brothers in 1849 and became a colonel of the New Mexico volunteers. He also built mills and operated stores in the territory. Shortly before his death, he sent food to the plagued and starving city of Denver. He died at his home in Mora, New Mexico in 1870.

## The Louisiana Room—14th Floor

Commemorating the Louisiana Purchase in 1803

The territory of Louisiana, purchased from France in 1803 for \$15 million, stretched from New Orleans to the Canadian border and contained the land from which thirteen states were eventually carved.

In 1762, the French ceded this territory to the Spanish. The news, kept secret, was not known in Louisiana until September, 1764 and it was March, 1766 before the first Spanish officials reached the territory. Spanish merchant vessels never did come to supply the colony. It would have been wholly abandoned if French merchants had not continued to trade with New Orleans even after it was known that the territory was no longer French.

In 1800, reviving dreams of a French empire, Napoleon planned a new colonial empire in the Americas. It was to stretch from the Caribbean, across Florida, to New Orleans. In October, 1800—by secret treaty—Louisiana was re-transferred from Spanish to French hands. Rumors of this action caused great apprehension in the United States—it threatened encirclement. French control of New Orleans and the Mississippi River was dangerous, economically and otherwise, to the western states.

However, in 1803, influenced by reversals in Haiti and the threat of war with England, Napoleon gave up his dream and agreed to sell the entire providence to the Americans. President Thomas Jefferson made the purchase even though he felt he was exceeding his constitutional powers in doing so.

This acquisition reinforced the security of the new republic by eliminating France in the contest for supremacy in North America and laid a large part of the material foundation for the future greatness of our country.

## The Saint Louis Room—15th Floor

The Saint Louis room (formerly the Grill) on the 15th floor was refurbished in March of 1998 and is the formal evening dining room Mondays through Saturdays. This room also has an adjacent comfortable lounge. In 2008 the Saint Louis Room and Lounge were renovated to update the dining room, expand the lounge area and add an intimate bar.

## The Marquette Room—15th Floor

Dedicated to Jacques Marquette (1627-1675)—Missionary, explorer, discoverer of the “Great River of the West”

Father Marquette was born in Laon, France, and entered upon his religious career with the Society of Jesus at the age of 17. He set sail for Quebec in 1666 and soon was busy establishing missions among the Ottawa Indians along the northern shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. In 1672 Marquette joined a young Canadian explorer, Louis Jolliet, who had been commissioned to find the “Great River” of the West. Their hopes were realized on May 16, 1673, when their canoes shot out of the Wisconsin River onto the broad waters of the Mississippi. Traveling south as far as Arkansas, they recorded much of the scenery of the river in their journals before returning north by way of the Illinois and the Chicago portage. In the fall of 1674 Marquette set forth again to found a mission among the Illinois Indians. After preaching a while to the natives, he became ill and returned to his mission at St. Ignace, Michigan—an outpost he had established in 1671—and

there he died.

## The Lisa Room—15th Floor

○ Dedicated to Manuel Lisa (1772-1820)—Pioneer and innovator in the fur-trading business. The man to whom much of the credit for the early prosperity of St. Louis belongs.

○ Manuel Lisa was born in New Orleans and passed his early life there before moving north to St. Louis in 1790. Almost immediately he became involved in the fur trade, and soon was granted a monopoly by the Spanish government to conduct business among the Osage Indians.

○ In 1806, Lisa and a group of St. Louis traders formed a partnership to seek furs on the Upper Missouri. In the spring of the following year they sent an expedition of nearly 60 men to establish a post far up the muddy river. Fort Raymond, their trading establishment, was the first of its kind on the Upper Missouri, and to Lisa belongs much of the credit for pioneering various trading methods which soon became standard for the great fur industry.

○ Governor William Clark of the Missouri Territory appointed him as sub-agent for the northern Indian tribes, a position he held until his death. Lisa made some thirteen trips in pursuit of his business ventures, traveling nearly 26,000 miles in the wilderness. He was one of the leading citizens of the town of St. Louis.

○ He died in his home in St. Louis and now lies buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery, virtually forgotten by the city he helped to prosperity.

## The Lafayette Room—15th Floor

Dedicated to Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834)—"Fighter for Liberty" who visited St. Louis and was honored by St. Louis in 1825.

Lafayette first saw the light of day at his family's ancestral estate, the Chateau of Chavaniac near Auvergne, France. At the age of thirteen he succeeded to the title along with a large fortune and a princely income. Shortly after his marriage three years later, he became a member of the Royal Guards.

The War for American independence broke out when Lafayette was only eighteen, and against his friends' advice he sought and obtained a commission—that of Major General—in the American service. Plots and counter-plots attended his departure. After one arrest, he was forced to flee to Spain to board his ship for the New World.

Acting as a volunteer without pay, the youthful Marquis was only moderately useful on the military field during the war, but he captured the imagination of Americans, becoming a hero to many. Returning to France filled with admiration for the American form of constitutional government, Lafayette played an important and popular role in the early stage of the French Revolution. However, when it assumed more radical aspects, he was declared a traitor by the extremists and held for five years as a state prisoner. An opponent of Napoleon's ambitions which ran counter to his love of freedom, Lafayette remained in virtual retirement during the Emperor's ascendancy, returning to serve his country only briefly during the Bourbon restoration.

In 1824, at the invitation of President Monroe, Lafayette paid a triumphal return visit to the United States, welcomed and cheered wherever he went. On

April 29, 1825, he arrived in St. Louis where he was warmly received by the town's old French families, and honored that night at the most elaborate ball St. Louis had ever seen.

### The Jefferson Room—15th Floor

Dedicated to Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

By arranging for the Louisiana Purchase and the explorations of Lewis and Clark Expedition...he, more than any other president, influenced the future of St. Louis.

Statesman, architect, author—Governor of Virginia, Secretary of State, and President—Thomas Jefferson was undoubtedly one of the most talented men ever produced by this country and a truly great American.

Entering first into negotiations to buy only New Orleans and thereby preserve the freedom of navigation on the Mississippi, Jefferson suddenly found himself being offered the entire French holdings in North America. He quickly accepted—negotiated the purchase for some \$14 million, or about one cent an acre—and, through this one act, assured the physical greatness of his country, a contribution to our development which is rarely fully appreciated.

In chartering the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Jefferson initiated a project which revealed the hidden treasures of the new territory and excited the imagination of successive waves of traders and settlers. In doing so, he truly made St. Louis the gateway to new opportunity.

Somehow it is fitting that Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the country he helped to create and helped to make great.

## The Chouteau Room—15th Floor

Dedicated to Auguste Chouteau (1749-1829)—Chief Lieutenant of Pierre Laclede and builder of the first permanent dwellings on the site of St. Louis.

Rene Auguste Chouteau, a native of New Orleans, left that town in August of 1763 to accompany Pierre Laclede on a mission to establish a fur trading post on the Mississippi near the mouth of the Missouri River. After briefly surveying the proposed site late that fall, the expedition spent the winter at Fort Chartres. It was Chouteau, only 14 years old, who returned north with about 30 men and on February 14, 1764, came ashore to start erecting the first cabins of St. Louis.

Chouteau served Laclede as his first lieutenant in a wide variety of activities until Laclede's death in 1778. He then assumed the position and title of first citizen of St. Louis. His energy, ability and tactfulness—together with his incorruptible integrity—won the respect of his fellow citizens and he soon established the basis for one of St. Louis' great family fortunes.

After the transfer of Louisiana to the United States in 1804, Chouteau became one of the first justices of the territorial court, four years later he was made colonel in the St. Louis Militia, and when the infant village officially became a "town" in 1809, Chouteau was chairman of its first board of trustees.

His mansion was the center of genteel life in St. Louis and his gracious hospitality is well recorded by important visitors.

## The Lewis & Clark Room—16th Floor

Dedicated to Meriwether Lewis (1774-1809) and William Clark (1770-1838)—the men who lead the epic expedition that made St. Louis truly “the gateway to the West”.

Meriwether Lewis, from Albemarle County, Virginia, was born a neighbor of Thomas Jefferson and, in 1801, after a career in the army, became the private secretary of the new President. Jefferson had long envisioned an expedition across the continent, and Lewis had long cherished the hope of leading such a venture. Finally, when the Louisiana Purchase was negotiated in 1803, both men’s dreams were realized.

Lewis was appointed to lead a group of explorers west to the Pacific and chose an old friend, William Clark, as co-captain.

The men and their party left Wood River on May 14, 1804 and returned, successful in their mission, to St. Louis on September 23, 1806.

Two months later, Jefferson appointed Lewis to be Governor of the Louisiana Territory, a difficult job in a difficult time.

On October 11, 1809, in a crude inn on the Natchez Trail, Lewis met his death. Whether his death was suicide brought on by frustration and exhaustion of the governorship or whether it was murder at the hand of robbers has never been determined. However, his greatest period of triumph was, without a doubt, the epic journey to the Pacific which unfolded the mysteries of the West to his fellow countrymen.

William Clark, the outgoing red-headed brother of General George Rogers Clark, was also a native of Virginia. However, his family moved to Kentucky and established themselves on an estate outside of Louisville when he was 15 years old.

After a career in the Army, Clark resigned his commission to devote more time to family affairs and was leading the life of a gentleman farmer when Lewis called him to join the expedition.

When Clark returned from the West, he settled in St. Louis.

In 1807, he became a Brigadier General in the Missouri Militia and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis. In 1813, President Madison appointed him Governor of the Missouri Territory, a post he held until statehood was achieved.

### The Ballroom—16th Floor

The Ballroom (formerly the Main Dining Room) on the 16th floor, provides an elegant setting for private parties. The adjoining Cocktail Lounge with its living room atmosphere is an ideal place for members and their guests to gather.

## The Pierre LaCledde Room—16th Floor

Dedicated to Pierre de LaCledde Liguist (1724-1778)

French pioneer, man of vision...founder of St. Louis in 1764.

○ Laclede was born in the year 1724 in the picturesque village of Bedous, France...located in the valley of the Aspe River in the shadow of the Pyrenees Mountains near Spain. At the age of 31 Pierre left his pleasant homestead and crossed the seas to cast his lot with the infant colony of Louisiana. For service against the Indians he was granted exclusive fur trading rights on the upper Mississippi.

○ Seven years later he ambitiously determined to establish a new settlement far up the Mississippi River. Achieving this ambition on February 15, 1764, Laclede named his village St. Louis in honor of Louis XV of France and of the King's patron saint, Louis IX.

After the village thus founded, Laclede maintained his place of business and his home in the large building he had built on the block bounded by streets later known as First, Second, Market and Walnut Streets. He operated our first industry, a water-powered flour mill, near the present Eighth and Spruce Streets.

○ In 1778, as Laclede, then 54 years of age, was returning from one of his trips to new Orleans, he became ill, died on his boat while it was near the mouth of the Arkansas River, and was buried on the bank of the Mississippi. His grave was soon lost in the wilderness and no trace of it has ever been found.

○ But Pierre Laclede is not without monument nor does he want for fame, for in the city that he founded are a statue and a portrait of him, and a street, and business companies bear his name.

○ The portrait of him now on exhibition at the Missouri Historical Society was made in 1772 when he returned

from the New World to visit his home in France. This portrait has been obtained after ten years of effort, from Dr. Armand Madamet of Bedous, France, descendant of Laclede, a former Mayor of the town where the Laclede family has lived for many generations.

A reproduction of this famous portrait by Mrs. Dorothy Quest now hangs in the Pierre Laclede Room on the 16th floor of the Club's quarters in the Pierre Laclede Building. Commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Nooney, it was formally presented to the Saint Louis Club during the city's Bicentennial celebration in 1964.

On hand to take part in these celebrations were Madame Jean-Louis Chaudruc, only living descendant of Pierre Laclede, and her husband, Monsieur Chaudruc from Bedous, France, who live in the 250-year-old Laclede ancestral home.

On May 20, 1985, non-stop from Paris to St. Louis, Mme. Chaudruc made a return visit to attend the re-dedication of the Pierre Laclede Center. She was accompanied by her granddaughter, Isabelle Teisure. Mme. Chaudruc also celebrated her 80th birthday (during that visit).