

Truman Sweeps Dewey In November 1948

Get into a conversation with a long-time Queens resident and you're likely to discover a subscriber of the *Long Island Star-Journal*, a daily paper that informed the community about local and world news until it folded in 1968. A banner across the *Star-Journal* masthead reminded readers that the newspaper's name came from the merger of the *Long Island Daily Star* (1876) and the *North Shore Daily Journal--The Flushing Journal* (1841).

Welcome to November 1948!

On November 2, Democrat Harry S. Truman was elected president in one of the greatest upsets in American political history. In polls and forecasts, he had been given no chance of beating Republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey of New York. Truman swept a Democratic Congress into office with him, as Republicans lost control of both the House and Senate.

On November 27, both longshoremen and ship owners were expected to ratify a new contract, which would end a 17-day East Coast dock strike, which tied up 400 ships from Norfolk, Va., to Portland, Me. The plan called for a 13-cent hourly wage increase for

daytime work and 19 cents for night, holiday and weekend work. The plan also provided for improved vacation benefits and a welfare plan for disabled longshoremen.

It was also expected that cargo operations at Pacific Coast ports would resume the following week, following settlement of an 86-day old strike by West Coast longshoremen. This settlement called for a 15-cent hourly wage increase.

On November 2, the trial, at Foley Square in Manhattan of 12 top-ranking Communists who were charged with advocating the overthrow of the government by violence and force was delayed at the request of their attorneys.

Three Queens men were among the defendants. They were Eugene Dennis of Sunnyside, national Communist secretary; Robert Thompson, also of Sunnyside, state chairman, and John Gates of Thompson Hill, editor of the *Daily Worker*.

The adjournment was granted because William Z. Foster, national chairman of the Communist Party, was ill and unable to attend. Asking that the communists be brought to trial as soon as possible, U.S. Attorney John F. X. McGohey warned, "The

security of the nation rests on the determination for this cause."

Eighty-seven Queens soldiers were among the 7,572 World War II dead returned from Europe aboard the Army transport *Carroll Victory*. The men, the largest single group to be brought home, had been temporarily interred in cemeteries in France, Belgium and Holland. Next of kin were notified in advance of the arrival of the vessel. They had the choice of having the remains returned to the United States for burial in a private or national cemetery or having interment in a permanent American military cemetery overseas.

On November 18, two laughing 15-year-old schoolboys admitted to police that they had committed at least 16 burglaries in Northern Queens within the last two weeks. Treating their arrest and

The youths, Albert Monroe and Scott Hatch, both of Astoria, were described by policemen as "hoodlums". Although they couldn't remember all of their jobs, the suspects boasted of their daring and cunning.

The youths had done eight jobs the previous evening. Their arrest came after patrolmen, investigating reports that the delicatessen of David Ort at 53-07 Broadway in Woodside had been broken into, spotted the boys on the street with their pockets bulging with packs of cigarettes. They laughed with glee when they were charged with making a shambles of the delicatessen. Olive oil bottles had been broken and the contents spilled into the cash register. Eggs had been taken from crates and thrown against shelved merchandise.

They were booked at the Elmhurst Precinct sta-

had "borrowed" a two-masted schooner and sailed about 1,000 yards in Flushing Bay when the boat ran aground in College Point. Police tracked Malichewitz by a calling card he had left on the 52-foot boat.

Malichewitz said he was seized with an urge to fight Russians. He decided to get himself a boat capable of making a trip to Poland, which appeared to him to be the best spot to begin his battle. He boarded the schooner *Winnebago* and found a key to the motors in the ignition.

Unfortunately he neg-

ly fell into the pit while looking for an exit. It was at about 5:15 a.m. the next day, when a janitor discovered the semi-conscious man.

Katz went to the theater around 1 p.m., and when he didn't return home, his daughter began a search involving neighbors and police. The search was still going on when he was discovered. He was taken to Queens General Hospital for treatment of internal injuries, cuts and bruises and a sprained back.

Playing at the movies were "The Babe Ruth Story", starring William



Vintage postcard of the RKO Keiths Theatre in Flushing

lected to open the gasoline lines, so the motors quickly conked out on him and the tide began to sweep the boat toward grounding in College Point. Rather than risk a crash with him on board, Malichewitz jumped into the water and swam ashore. Police said the boat, valued at \$32,000, was not seriously damaged.

On November 23, thousands of moviegoers at the Flushing RKO Theater viewed screen melodramas for eight hours, while a 76-year-old man lay helpless in the organ pit. Adolph Katz, of 140-50 Ash Ave., evident-

Bendix and Claire Trevor, and "Easter Parade", starring Fred Astaire and Judy Garland.

That's the way it was in November 1948!

Greater Astoria Historical Society exhibits are open to the public on Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. at Quinn's Gallery, 4th floor, 35-20 Broadway, Long Island City. New exhibit, "Lager, Leisure, and Laughter: Long Island City at Play", now on view. For more information, call the Greater Astoria Historical Society at 718-278-0700 or visit www.astorialic.org.



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their crimes as a huge joke, the suspects, who were students at Bryant H.S. in Astoria, told a tale of breaking into Astoria and Jackson Heights shops and offices.

tionhouse as juvenile delinquents.

Edward Malichewitz, 35, of Greenpoint, who set sail for Europe to fight the Russians, was in jail, charged with piracy. He

