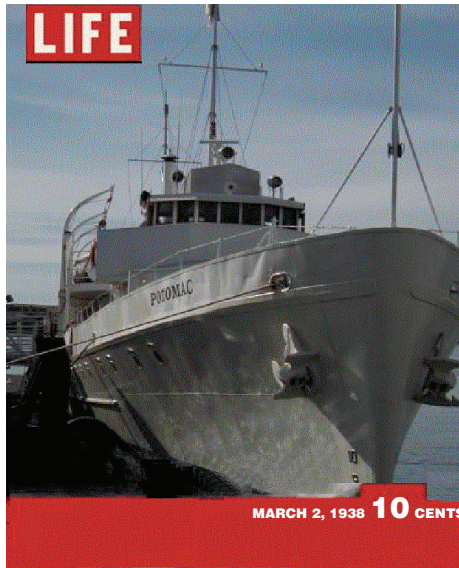


Happy 75th Birthday to the USS Potomac

By Paulette Langguth

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Presidential Yacht the USS Potomac is celebrating her 75th birthday during 2011 - if it's your 75th birthday year, too, congratulations! Here are some of the interesting highlights of 1936:



Although LIFE did not actually publish a special March 2nd edition, it does mark the date when the Potomac replaced the Sequoia as FDR's presidential yacht. Now President Roosevelt and those around him could rest more easily. A ship with a wooden hull had been replaced by one with a steel hull – thereby reducing the fire hazard; a ship with a gas engine had been replaced by one with a diesel engine – a much more efficient and safer propulsion system; and a ship in which he had to be carried from one deck to another had been replaced by one with an elevator – giving him a much desired freedom from dependence on others. Now, instead of being a guest aboard Vincent Astor's ocean going yacht for the fishing vacations that he loved, President Roosevelt had a ship where he could truly rest, relax, enjoy the fishing and think through matters of presidential policy.

In California, as elsewhere in the nation, the depression lingered on with unemployment at 16.9%. Thousands of Americans traveled to California hoping to get work in orchards and fields. They were often met with guards, dogs, and signs turning away the “undesirables”. In October of 1936, John Steinbeck wrote *The Harvest Gypsies*, which was published in seven installments for the *San Francisco News*. This work would later become part of the classic, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Nationally, our most popular movies were: *The Alamo*, *The Great Ziegfeld*, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, and *Follow the Fleet*, starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Topping the charts for new books was *Gone With The*

Wind. *Billboard Magazine* published the first pop music chart.



Olympic Star Jesse Owens

The 1936 Olympic Games were held in Berlin, Germany with our great Jesse Owens humiliating Hitler's Aryan Supermen by winning four gold medals.

Boulder Dam, later renamed Hoover Dam, was completed and began creating hydroelectric power. Killer tornadoes struck Tupelo, Mississippi and Gainesville, Georgia.

Franklin D. Roosevelt (Democrat) was re-elected for a second term defeating Alf Landon (Republican) and William Lemke (Union).



On the Campaign Trail

The average cost of a new house was \$3,925, a gallon of gas 10 cents, a loaf of bread 8 cents, a Studebaker car \$665, and rent averaged at \$24 per month. This was all covered by the average annual wages of \$1,713.

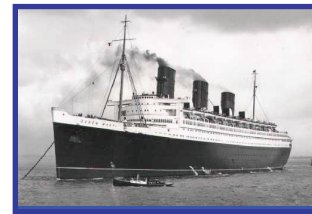
Born this year were: Jim Henson, Winnie Mandela, David Carradine, Ursula Andress, Alan Alda, Glen Campbell, Charlie Daniels, Engelbert Humperdinck, Glenda Jackson, F. W. deKlerk, Kris Kristofferson, Michael Landon, John McCain, Mary Tyler Moore, Roy Orbison, Robert Redford, Burt Reynolds, and Yves Saint Laurent. Now there's an interesting mix.

Around the world: Following the depression dictatorships were established in Mexico, Bulgaria and Peru. Mussolini announced the official foundation of the New Roman Empire following the capture of Addis Ababa. The Spanish Civil War began. King Edward VIII abdicated to marry Wallis Simpson. Japanese Marines took control of the Shanghai district of China. Chiang Kai-Shek declared war on Japan

The BBC started the first public television broadcasts in London.



BBC News Monitoring Room



The Queen Mary left Southampton on her maiden voyage over the Atlantic.



FDR goes to South America in November 1936 for his "Good Neighbor" cruise.

The world's major political leaders were: Australia, Prime Minister Joseph Lyons; Brazil, President Getulio Vargas; Canada, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King; Germany, Chancellor Adolf Hitler; Italy, Prime Minister Benito Mussolini; Japan, Prime Minister Keisuke Okada (till March 9) and Prime Minister Koki Hirota; Mexico, President Lazaro Cardenas; Russia/Soviet Union, General Secretary of the Central Committee Joseph Stalin.

The history of the USS Potomac is on our website www.usspotomac.org. but better yet, come to Oakland's Jack London Square for a tour of the "Floating White House" and help us celebrate her 75th Birthday.

Happy Birthday to the USS Potomac!