

### Gary Ackerman (D/NY) Clips

- In July 1982, (as State Senator) he announces for new 8th District Cong. (BR is in 7th.) "Washington is where the action is if one wants to effectively influence governmental policy affecting the people of this country... After four first-rate years as a minority member of the State Senate..." Newsday 7/8/82.
- Lots of speculation about who else will run. Scheuer decides to run. Ackerman drops out.
- Newsday 7/14/82: "Ackerman Ends Bid for US Seat." Gerald McKelvey. Bid was "unwelcome," opposed by Manes, who probably cut the deal--he was active in getting Scheuer to run in 8th instead of vs. Addabbo. Ack.: "I decided that my family is too important right now. Besides, I'm only 39. There's a lot of years left." "In the interest of party unity, I've decided to continue my quest in the State Senate." He's married and has a seven y/o son.
- Daily News 9/27/82: Speaks of "the off again/on again and coolness" between Manes (Borough President and Dem County Leader) and Ackerman "(M) sees me as a basic threat to his rule..." "My campaign staff beat his people" in a local AD race. Ackerman backs insurgent who won Dem nomination.
- Ackerman was "campaign manager" for the insurgent. Gerald McKelvey, "Results of Vote Mixed for Manes," 9/27/82. Ackerman makes anti-Manes comments, but says he doesn't want to be county leader. Point is: Ackerman is very heavily involved in local Queens politics.
- His state senate district encompasses Bay Terrace, Whitestone, Beechhurst, College Point, Flushing, Bayside.
- Michael Arena "Manes and Cuomo, After The Election" Newsday 11/7/82. Rehearses the insurgent campaign of Nettie Mayershon, who was the co-leader of Manes's Club, "Stevenson Democratic Club." So, Ackerman's masterminding of the co-leader coup (she got elected to Assembly, too), was a direct slap and a blow at Manes. Ackerman is called "a frequent thorn in his side."
- Mayershon is still in office and from the Stevenson Club, which Gary and Allan Gershuny started.
- Daily News 7/8/83: Ackerman wants Flushing PO named after Ben "a man whose wisdom, intelligence and stature towered above the commonplace." Done--see Newsday 10/4/83--Ben was Ackerman's representative since his first vote, he says.

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- Daily News 1/4/83, Bernard Rabin: "With Running Shoes On, Ackerman Looks For Race." "There may be no vacancies in the immediately foreseeable horizon, but State Senator Gary Ackerman is not one to let one pass if one should occur...Ackerman denies he is interested in running for anything... However, his far flung activities for candidates in other parts of Queens in the last election indicate to politicians that he would be ready and willing to seek and obtain their reciprocal support if a vacancy in a higher office opens up." Ackerman takes poll indicating, he says, "that crime is the number one concern of the people of Queens."
- Newsday 1/9/83: (5 days after the above) and three days after BR's funeral (Ben must have died on the 5th). Michael Arena "Battle Shapes up for R. Seat" listing all possible candidates, four state senate, four state reps, three city councilman and two others. The party will make the nomination "a weighted role of district leaders (36 of them) whose AD's are in the district.
- New York Post says that the strongest Democratic contenders are Sens. Weinstein and Gold and Assemblymen Weprin and Hevesi. Ackerman not mentioned.
- Ben's district, they say include Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, Rego Park and a lot of Flushing, Elmhurst, Jamaica, Queens Village, Bellarose.
- Bernard Rabin, Daily News, "See How they Run for 7th District Seat." He goes through the list and says of Ackerman, "is known to be interested in running...", and he adds, "Ackerman is not known as a loyalist." 1/10/83: the people listed in article are 4 or 5.
- 1/14/83: Rabin. Daily News, "Dems Swarming for a honey of an open seat." Ackerman says he's "pursuing the designation" and "weighing the possibility of an independent race. Actually the more independents in the race, the more wide open the field and the better chance I would have." Lila Rosenthal being touted as compromise.
- Manes pushes Hevesi, Hevesi declines to run, Lila Rosenthal jumps in and there are nine candidates. Michael Arena "9 Now Vying To Replace Rosenthal" 1/19/83. Manes throws race open.
- New York Times Frank Lynn: "Democrats Pick a State Sen for House Race." Ackerman defeats 11 others (33 of 36 support him). Lila Rosenthal withdraws. Manes calls Ackerman "strong campaigner" and accepts reality and tries to rally district leaders.

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- Bernard Rabin and Stephen McFarland, "Democrats Pick Ackerman." Ackerman statement: "I will prove that social programs pay off. I will show that a kid who is the son of a taxi-driver can grow up in Queens, graduate from a tuition-free Queens college and can give back to his country 10 times more than he has taken." He and his wife, Rita, have two sons and one daughter.
- *Ben's 1980's district* Elongated district takes in East Elmhurst, Corona, Elmhurst, Flushing, Kew Gardens, Richmond Hill, Woodhaven, Jamaica Estates, Holliswood, Queens Village and Glen Oaks.
- Brian O'Connor, "Dems: Ackerman For Congressman." "In his first campaign for City Council, Ackerman ran as an insurgent and lost. He recovered... to beat five other Dems in the State Senate following years." Then says that he backed Mayershon.
- Ackerman won election with 50% of vote vs. three opponents-- Repub and two Independents.
- There's post election talk that indicates the limitation of TV in the district--Doug Schoen, a pollster, spends \$350,000 on media and does no street campaigning and gets 16% --Queens party claims they put hundreds of workers on the street. Ackerman says you can't buy an election or do it with media. See George Arzt, "Lessons of the Queens election," New York Post 3/3/83.
- Senate district included Flushing, Corona, East Elmhurst, College Point, Malba, Beechhurst, Bay Terrace, Fresh Meadows, Bayside, Hollis. See Tribune 1/3/79.
- When Ackerman was a social studies teacher, he asked NYC Board of Education for "Maternity/Child Care" leave when first child was born. In Class Action suit, backed by ACLU, he charged that mothers get four years leave and fathers nothing--he won and didn't return to teaching--but was ahead of his time. He did this in 1969.
- In 1981, there was a controversy over Ft. Totten and Ackerman made charges and Ben supported him by asking for an investigation--first appearance of BR and GA in story--Newsday, 4/8/81--they both support public use under City Parks Department. William Butler, "Asks Probe of Group Seeing Ft. Totten Site" in which dispute Ackerman calls Manes "coward," "gutless wonder," and "lying through his teeth." Newsday 4/8/81: "Harsh Words Over Ft. Totten." The controversy pits Ackerman vs. a veteran's guy that wants to use the facility for some purpose--I think National Park Service designates it a preserve of some kind--it's a (public) community usage vs. private groups (vets) usage kind of controversy. 56 acres of

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surplus land is involved. City Parks Department gets into the act. Vets group is Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association. Army gets into act and wants some of the land back and it makes deal with vets. Ackerman outraged.

- Bernard Rabin and Don Singleton: "State Senator Goes Bumming, Spends Night in Flushing Armory," New York Daily News, 12/19/81. He goes in disguise to armory where homeless men are being put, in order to make case that this is not the best place for them. "These people do deserve help, understanding and support. But the Flushing Armory, either temporarily or permanently, is not the place." He wants 'em kept in Manhattan. Jedd Moskowitz was his aide then, too.
- William Butler, "Ackerman Incognito in Armory," Newsday, 12/21/81.
- At years end, John Toscano of Daily News sums up 12/28/81 events of the year re Ackerman--he lists his feud with Manes and his night in the armory "in an attempt to dramatize the homeless issue."
- On Ft. Totten--Reagan finally gets in and asks a Board--Stockman, Meese and GSA guy to decide--Ben says that community wants public use, not private developer.
- Re 1992, Stewart Ain, New York Times, 6/15/92: "Major Changes Due in Congress Lineup." Ackerman re new district, "It looks like a snake with its head in Queens... I'm going to put everything into it and win that seat."
- Arthur Nitzburg, "Will We Lose Our Voice in Congress?" Bayside Times Ledger, 6/11/92, staff of Ackerman, "Is there any way to save Gary's career? Given his cockamamie lines, how in heaven do we save Gary?" I don't know whether this is a reaction to an early version or not! I think it's the final one "from Queens to Smithtown."
- Problem for Gary is that he hasn't represented Northern Queens for nine years. Re voters 292,000 are in Queens, 127,000 are in Nassau and 161,000 are in Suffolk.
- In July, Ackerman and Scheuer are running. Ackerman gets Queens County Democratic party nod, then Nassau and Suffolk--Scheuer retires, but before Scheuer retires, the race is seen as media vs. field volunteers. Again, the emphasis on hard work is key for Ackerman. Arthur Nitzburg, "Everythings Changed: Congressional Lineup, Bayside Times Ledger 7/16/92. "Scheuer will run a media campaign w/o large numbers of field volunteers. Ackerman will have most of the field volunteers, but will not have enough money to put out much in the way of media." Scheuer early front runner.

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- Scheuer campaign manager says re Ackerman, "the poster boy for the clubhouse crowd." Scheuer has never lost Democratic club support.
- Ackerman described in article, paper unknown, as "a fierce combatant" and that helps discourage 72 y/o Scheuer. Scheuer was originally the favorite and Ackerman scares him out--same thing as the Rosenthal seat. Ackerman campaigns the hardest and (threatens the most).
- Re Scheuer, Susan Friedman, "Jewish World," 7/27/92: "The relentless pressure to get out to Nassau and Suffolk counties every weekend and every waking moment to meet the other half of the district was more of a burden than he felt prepared to accept." "It was not the fear of losing, but the fear of winning that concerned me." He calls Ackerman "the leader." Same sentiment (JS) hard work recorded in Sheila Borgstrom, Bayside Times Ledger 7/23/92.
- Arthur Nitzburg, "Rep James Scheuer Withdraws from Congressional Race," 7/23/92 Bayside Times Ledger. Ackerman aide says, referring back to 1982, "We were scared into submission by Scheuer's money. But never again." Ackerman aide describes how they got Nassau and Suffolk endorsements. "Everyone forgot the level of sophistication in the Ackerman campaign. The Nassau and Suffolk processes were county conventions. We checked on how many votes there were, how many to get a quorum, how many to get endorsement. We sent mailgrams and made calls. If Gary didn't get through to a delegate, we left Gary's number on the answering machine. Gary was available. Scheuer was not."
- Info on 5th District from 1990 census and New York State Legislative Task Force on Redistricting.  
 Voting age population: 79% white, 11% Asian, 7% Hispanic, 3% black.  
 Median household income: \$52,000 (NYS=\$32,900) 83% vs. 75%, 3.1% vs, 9.1%, more with high school diploma than New York State and less on public assistance, but more non-whites than Ne York State (10.2% vs. 8.6%)
- Ackerman, Five member Newsday investigative team does story on wife's job as consultant, "Skirting the Rules," 9/4/92.
- New York Times endorsement in 9/9/92 Democratic primary, "He has won credit for work to rescue Jews from Ethiopia and famine relief. His record is otherwise indifferent, but he is, in any case, preferable to Rita Morris."
- 9/10/92 New York Post endorsement re Ackerman: "strong on constituent services, he's clearly the better choice."

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- Tribune 9/11/92: "Is considered among the most dynamic members of the House." "Powerful chairman of the POCS subcommittee on Compensation and Employee Benefits..." "leading the central effort to recruit and retain a modern and responsive federal work force." PAFF and "personally involved in some of the most important events of our times." "Has used his internal influence to face down totalitarian dictators." "Taken on extra workload on Banking Committee." Gary Ackerman's hands-on approach to legislation is well noted and respected on Capitol Hill. To better understand the plight of the homeless, he has spent time on city streets and in shelters posing as a homeless man. When his colleagues have been in fact-finding missions to the beaches of Europe, Rio de Janeiro and the Bahamas, Ackerman has visited some of the poorest and most inhospitable parts of Africa and Central America for the Hunger Committee, on occasion even risking his life."
- Daily News endorsement 9/13/92: re his opponent Rita Morris, "She offers no evidence, however, that has has a ghost of an idea how Congress works or what she would do there. Ackerman is best known for having over 100 checks covered by the ill-fated House Bank. But he has been diligent on constituent services and a leader on African famine relief. He's the choice over Morris."
- An article in Newsday 9/16/92, says re the new district: "The new district doesn't include Ackerman's long time base of support, a heavily Jewish area in Central Queens. But Ackerman, a tireless campaigner and schmoozer, travelled extensively throughout the district trying to impress voters with his "record." Joseph Queen "Ackerman had struggle."
- Another version of same article, "Incumbents Again," by Joseph Queen, Ackerman: "We had to work our collective tails off. We didn't take anything for granted." Called it "the msot watched race."
- The articles treat the big event of the campaign as the Scheuer withdrawal. See Andrew Wolf "Ackerman Wins Primary: Sets Sights for November Election." Times 9/18/92. He carried Queens, Nassau and lost in Suffolk. "The real story in this election was not how Ackerman won, but how the enigmatic Ms. Morris managed to get as much as 42% of the vote... using \$250,000 of the family fortune, Morris ran an entirely negative campaign designed to undermine Ackerman..."
- Robert Lothian, "Ackerman Wards Off Challenge," Bayside Times Ledger 9/10/92: "Ackerman remained upbeat through the primary and slapped the flesh at bagel stores, train platforms and coffee klatches." "Morris attacked Ackerman as arrogant and out of touch with voters for his involvement in the House Bank scandal, for allegedly moving Scheuer out of the primary and

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for allegedly claiming a Bill Clinton endorsement when he shouldn't have."

- Arthur Nitzburg, "Another Frantic Sunday in the Park," Bayside Times Ledger, 9/17/92: watches Ackerman campaign at Bowne Park Civic Association Festival. "Ackerman's aides trailed behind, handing out large Ackerman shopping bags. Each bag cost about \$.75 cents... Ackerman is a seasoned campaigner and is accomplished at working an event. He moved effortlessly through the crowd. His encounters were all superficial. There was little or no substantive conversation, even though almost everyone knew who he was and greeted him by name. What became clear after a while was that the charges of conflict of interest made vs. him by Newsday and by his opponent were not sticking... the anti-Ackerman messages weren't getting through. In contrast to Ackerman, the people gathered around Morris were full of ideas, enthusiasm and anger for the powers that be."
- Arthur Nitzburg, "How Badly Has Ackerman Been Hurt?", Bayside Times Ledger 9/24/92: "If Morris can do this well against Ackerman, imagine what a better candidate could do." Called Ackerman "a nationally prominent incumbent." Ackerman "has shown himself to be much weaker than most people had assumed." Queen's Democratic organization "was deeply damaged by Ackerman's poor showing, especially since (Manton) convinced the doubting Nassau and Suffolk organizations of Ackerman's invincibility." Hank Morris "was a most effective compiler and publicizer of the charges (vs. Ackerman) taken together, they paint a devastating picture of sharp dealing in Congress."
- Ackerman vs. Binder, Stewart Ain, "Ackerman Tries to Parry Newcomer's Challenge," New York Times, 10/18/92.
- He pitches his seniority!! "Seniority becomes more important this year than anyone can remember because so many senior guys are leaving. As the 5th ranking Democrat on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I'd become a very senior member of the committee and get the chairmanship of influential subcommittees." They call him "weakened by a brusing primary." (I Xeroxed this one.)
- Newsday endorsement 10/23/92: "A Close Call: Bet on Binder." "On balance, we think his youth and energy offer a better prospect for growth...". Re District, "While its Queen's portion may be spiritually one of the most suburban parts of NYC, sooner or later the district's representative will face issues that pit urban needs against suburban concerns and will have to balance the two carefully."
- New York Times endorsement 10/28/92: "For Congress from NY"

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They endorse Binder, too. "Mr. Ackerman worked effectively on famine relief and the plight of European Jews, but his record is otherwise unremarkable." Ben R would never get this back of the hand and he'd kill for a Times endorsement. "In a close call, we endorse Mr. B for the promise he offers of energetic representation."

- Newsday, 10/29/92: Joseph Queen, "Candidates Want to Take the 5th," "Welcome to the wacky world of the 5th District, where voters from very different communities in Queens, Nassau and Suffolk get to pick just one guy to represent them..."
- The Long Islander "Tale of Three Counties" editorial reaction to Ackerman's victory, "one of Long Island's key congressional seats has been stolen right out from under the noses of voters. The political players allowed Mr. Mrazek's seat, which included Long Island's North Shore from Huntington through Glen Cove, to be tacked onto a densely populated region of New York City."
- Bayside Times Ledger, Arthur Nitzburg, "Three Way Republican Primary Looms in 5th CD," 2/3/94: Re 1992 race, Ackerman got Queens 61-38; Nassau 59-40; Suffolk 38-58. "Ackerman has spent much of his time in the past two years playing a diplomat in North Korea and Ethiopia and being a diplomat to the Nassau and Suffolk partisans of his district, which started out ~~just out~~ just as alien to Ackerman as North Korea or Ethiopia. In so doing, he has sometimes underserved his Queen's constituents, setting off howls of indignation from a few Queens' civic and political leaders."
- Ackerman got interested in North Korea and went there in October 1993. First American to cross DMZ since 1953--talked with Kim Il Sung, lots of clips on North Korea policy.
- Bayside Times Ledger, Arthur Nitzburg, 4/7/94: "Republican Grant Lally Enters Race for 5th CD." He describes the district "Goes from Flushing in Queens to Smithtown in Suffolk County. It is at maximum, five miles wide by more than 60 miles long. It contains about 290,000 Queens residents, 130,000 Nassau County and 160,000 in Suffolk."
- "The assumption of political analysts has long been that any winning candidate for the 5th CD seat must be Jewish, because Jews are a major constituent within the district. The size of the Jewish vote in the district is variously described as a range between 25 and 35%."
- New York Times, "New York Congressman," Cathy Delum, 5/22/94: Ackerman, "A genial, glad-hander, famous for his white carnation boutonniers and annual importation of an entire NY deli governing board to Washington for a fund-raiser and

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chooses food for the weekly delegation meetings. (He has blocked removal of federal projects from NYC and has pick up Solarz interest in Asia. They added, He's not one of their big hitters. I forgot their categories, but I should get their categories--if I did, Ackerman would look poorly. "Colorful character" was their title for him and Owens and Towns.

### Awards

1. Presented to Honorable Gary L. Ackerman, member of Congress, in recognition to the tradition of outstanding public service and exemplified in Congress by his predecessors in Congress. Benjamin S. Rosenthal, in whose memory our Club is named, June 6, 1985 (by) Benjamin S. Rosenthal Regular Democratic Assn., Inc.

2. Bread for the World

Several Democratic Clubs, Independence Democratic Club, Central Queens Regular Democratic Club, Council of Korean Churches of Greater New York, Greek Orthodox Church, United Jewish Coalition, Salvation Army, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), U.S. Postal Service, Queens College, New York Psychological Association, Picture of Gary Ackerman crossing DMZ, his mission of mercy.

- There are two memories of Ben in the office. #1 above and a photo of Ben, Gary and Ed Koch.
- Placques from Indo-American Pharmaceutical Society, "Drug Fighter of the Year," IUE-AFL-CIO.
- I asked someone in office for "best local political reporters" and got two views: David Babread of The Times Ledger and David Ambro of Northport Observer.

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