On Aug. 16, 1954, I saw Archie Moore knock out Harold Johnson at Madison Square Garden, and five days later I saw Gerald Dreyer knock out El Conscripto at legendary St. Nicholas Arena.

If you are a boxing fan, you do not forget seeing Archie Moore in the Garden, nor do you forget your first fight at small, loud, smoky St. Nick's, one of the fight clubs that dotted the landscape back when New York City was the kingdom of boxing and the Garden was its palace.

The clubs are gone now – buildings named Broadway Arena, Eastern Parkway Arena, Fairmont Athletic Club, Ridgewood Grove Arena, Rockland Palace, St. Nicholas Arena and Sunnyside Garden. Famous fighters launched their careers in them and other clubs, and they served as battlegrounds for neighborhood heroes and their vociferous followers.

Jake LaMotta in 1941 and Floyd Patterson in 1952 made their winning pro debuts at St. Nick's; Muhammad Ali beat Billy Daniels there in 1962; Emile Griffith's first 12 fights were there, and Kid Chocolate appeared in eight fights there in the 1920s. The biggest St. Nick's crowd, however, was the one that jammed into the arena, which legally held about 4,000 fans, to watch a 1939 fight between Brooklyn rivals Al "Bummy" Davis and Mickey Farber, noted Lawrence S. Ritter in his excellent1998 book "East Side, West Side: Tales of New York Sporing Life, 1910-1960." Davis won the eight-round welterweight main event on a split decision.

St. Nick's was built as indoor ice skating rink in 1896 on a corner of West 66th Street and Columbus Avenue in Manhattan. It hosted boxing shows from 1906 until it closed in 1962.

By the way, I discovered that El Conscripto was a Mexican welterweight, whose name was Tomas Lopez. Dreyer was a South African.

Broadway Arena

This 4,500-seat Brooklyn club was a home for boxing from the 1920 until it closed in 1951. Rocky Graziano fought there six times, including his successful pro debut in 1942. Al "Bummy" Davis appeared there 13 times, including four of his last five fights. The last fight of Davis's career was a sixth-round disqualification victory on Sept. 11, 1945. Fifty-two days later, Davis was shot to death while trying to foil a holdup at a bar he was in. He was 27.

Eastern Parkway Arena

Known as "The House of Upsets," This 4,500-seat one-time roller-skating rink was the site of Floyd Patterson's first pro defeat. In his 13th fight, Patterson lost an eight-round decision to former light heavyweight champion Joey Maxim on June 7, 1954. Lawrence Ritter noted that an

informal poll of boxing writers voted 11-0 for Patterson.

It was at Eastern Parkway in 1952 that up-and-coming Joey Giardello outpointed Billy Graham two fights before Graham would lose a highly disputed decision to Kid Gavilan in a bid for the welterweight title in Madison Square Garden. It also was there in 1958 that Jose Torres began his march to the light heavyweight championship

Fairmont Athletic Club

On his 21st birthday, Jack Dempsey made his New York City debut at the Fairmont Athletic Club, a busy arena in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx in the teens and 1920s. Dempsey fought a 10-round no-decision bout against Andre Anderson on June 24, 1916, and two weeks later he fought another 10-round no-decision match against Bert Kinney. While New York law prevented official decisions being given, Dempsey was given the nod in newspapers in both fights.

The year before Dempsey appeared at the Fairmont A.C., Gene Tunney, then an 18-year-old middleweight, fought there and scored a second-round knockout and won a six-round newspaper decision.

Ridgewood Grove Arena

This 4,000-seat club in Queens near the border with Brooklyn was another “home” arena for Bummy Davis, who fought there 18 times, including a four-round decision victory in his debut on May 22, 1937. Davis, a king of the club fighters, compiled a record of 65-10-4, 46 knockouts, and was good enough to fight several main events in Madison Square Garden, but he never got a world title shot.

Tony Canzoneri celebrated his 18th birthday on the Grove’s opening night on Nov. 6, 1926 and lost for the first time in 32 fights by dropping a 10-round decision against Davey Abad in a featherweight bout. Al Singer, who won and lost the lightweight title in 1930, made 11 appearances there in the 1920s. Among other stars who fought at the Grove were Sugar Ray Robinson, three times in 1941, and Rocky Graziano and Sandy Saddler, four fights each.

Rockland Palace

The Rockland Palace, with a capacity of almost 5,000, was packed the night of May 28, 1917, and it was no wonder. What the fans saw was Benny Leonard win the lightweight championship on a ninth-round knockout of Freddie Welsh.

Jersey Joe Walcott also fought at the club catty-corner across from the Polo Grounds, home of the New York Giants baseball club, 15 years before he won the heavyweight championship. Walcott won one of three fights there in 1937 and won another fight in 1939. One of Walcott’s losses was on an eighth-round knockout by Tiger Jack Fox, who fought eights times at the Rockland Palace, also known as the Manhattan Athletic Club.

Sunnyside Garden

This boxing venue, which seated only 2,400, was built in 1926 as a private indoor tennis court in Sunnyside, Queens, for millionaire Jay Gould. Future middleweight champion Vito Antuofermo made his debut with a win there in 1971, as did heavyweight contender Gerry Cooney in 1977.

Jose Torres fought at Sunnyside six times, and Harold Johnson, light heavyweight champion in 1961-63, made a one-fight comeback here three years after retiring when he was stopped in the third round by Herschel Jacobs in 1971. In the little Garden's final fight Ramon Ronquilla scored a split decision over Bill Jackson in an eight-round light heavyweight bout on June 24, 1977 before 427 fans. The building was razed in December 1977.