24 September

Russo on Trial For Possession Of Deposit Key

Perry Raymond Russo, District Attorney Jim Garrison's star witness at the Clay L. Shaw trial, went on trial himself today in Criminal District Court on a charge of illegally possessing a safety deposit box key valued at $1.

Assistant District Attorney Harry Wheeler today contended the key belongs to Alvin E. Fontenberta, 6711 Dorchester, and was taken by Russo Aug. 22.

Russo also was booked with simple burglary of a residence at 4760 Overton Drive where Fontenberta was believed to live but the DA's office refused to charge him on the count.

Russo, 29, gained international notice in the Kennedy assassination conspiracy trial in which Shaw was acquitted.

On the stolen property charge, Wheeler gave written notice to Russo he will introduce into evidence this afternoon alleged confessions and-or inculpatory statements.

Patrolman Justin Favalora was the first witness called by Wheeler and was expected to resume testimony this afternoon.

25 September

Russo Guilty Of Possessing Stolen $1 Key

Perry Raymond Russo, star witness in the Kennedy assassination trial of Clay Shaw, was convicted in Criminal District Court last night on a charge of possession of stolen property.

He will be sentenced Oct. 5. The stolen property was a safety deposit box key valued at $1.

Russo, 29, became nationally known when he testified he witnessed conspiracy plans to assassinate the late President John F. Kennedy and appeared as chief witness in District Attorney Jim Garrison's unsuccessful attempt to convict Shaw.

Russo's conviction grew out of an incident involving Alvin E. Fontenberta, 6711 Dorchester, owner of the deposit box key.

Prosecuting Assistant District Attorney Harry Wheeler charged the key was stolen by Russo Aug. 22.

Russo also was arrested and booked with simple burglary of property valued at $8,400 which was found at a former address of Fontenberta's but the DA did not accept charges against him.