



MEN'S CLUB

BY PAUL NETTLER

On September 16th approximately 50 members and guests were treated to a fascinating history lesson taught by our neighbor, Bob Zucker. Bob was personally involved in that bit of history on which he has done an amazing amount of research: the invasion of Japan that never was in the fall of 1945. At the time, Bob was a Lieutenant-Commander in the Navy and commanded an eight-ship task unit in the Fifth Fleet. He described in great detail the preparations that both we and the Japanese made for the invasion everyone knew was coming. We were prepared to suffer huge casualties as our experiences on Iwo Jima and Okinawa foretold. Even though we were able to decipher the Japanese code, there were many things to fear. For instance, they had about 12,000 planes—five times our estimate—and those were Kamikazes, which had sunk or heavily damaged many of our ships. They had missile capabilities as well.

The plan was to invade the southernmost island, which was rocky and full of caves, in which the Japanese actually built underground air bases we couldn't detect. There was also the fact that the civilian population would resist to the death along with their military. It was calculated that we could suffer 1,000,000 casualties before Japan was finally conquered. Which begs the debate as to whether we should or shouldn't have dropped the bomb.

As Bob pointed out, even today there are those (including some scholars) who feel that it was an immoral act. They seem to ignore Pearl Harbor, the Bataan Death

March and the multitude of atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese armies in the years leading up to the war. Bob pointed out that some people believe that the civilian Japanese death toll would have been much greater if we had engaged in conventional warfare and not dropped the bomb. During informal conversations afterward, no one in our audience expressed any reservations about dropping the bomb. In fact, one of the ladies in the audience made a heartfelt statement about what it might've been like, and the things that would never have happened, had her husband not come home.

Bob also gave us some insight as to how Emperor Hirohito was treated. Common opinion was that he was a mere figurehead and had nothing to do with the planning and carrying out of the war. But in fact, he called the shots. Yet, he was not treated as a war criminal as were people like Tojo and the German leaders. Because the Japanese people fanatically worshipped Hirohito as a god, we could never have gotten his and their cooperation during the occupation. And as history shows, that laid the groundwork for our becoming fast allies, which we sorely needed when our former ally China, became, in a sense, our enemy.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 7th at 7:30 pm in the large card room. Our featured speaker will be Elaine Freed whose family owned The Red Apple Rest, a famous restaurant on Route 17 on the way to the Catskill Mountains resorts. Elaine wrote a book about the eatery, which annually served more than a million customers. She'll tell us about its shaky beginnings during the

Depression through its colorful and bumpy trip across the decades. For many readers, this is sure to be a trip down Memory Lane.

On September 9th, more than 100 members and guests attended our end of season farewell dinner at the Swan Club. "Farewell" meaning goodbye to the Snow Birds, who will shortly start their migration south. Good conversation, good food, good wine, what more could you ask? The end-cut of roast beef was like "buttah." Also, we proved that we're still young enough to "cut a rug" when the disk jockey played "Sweet Caroline." And speaking of eating, we'll host a paid-up membership brunch on Sunday, October 25th, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, free for members and \$20 for significant others and guests.

The Current Events Group continues to attract a lot of interest. The next meeting will be on October 5th, at 10:30 am in the Coleridge Lounge, Building 3. Gary Darche will moderate. Club members are encouraged to give it a try—discussions are friendly and respectful. At the last meeting, we discussed such varied topics as the Iranian agreement, both Republican and Democratic presidential candidates, the Kentucky county clerk's refusal to allow gay marriages, the city's homeless population, and to prove that our membership still has a pulse, the topless ladies of Times Square.

For further information, contact Gary at 718-225-3060.

Our Book Club Group also continues to attract member interest. They're currently reading "The Boys In The Boat," which we'll discuss at the next meeting on September 28th. The following meeting on November

10th, will focus on "The World's Fair" by E.L. Doctorow. Meetings are at 10:30 am in the Coleridge Lounge. For more information, contact Ralph Edwards at 347-235-0472.

We continue to hold our weekly informal breakfasts at 9:15 am on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the VIP Room and on Fridays in the restaurant. For you poker lovers, there will be a Texas Hold 'Em Tournament on Tuesday, September 29th, at 6:30 pm and Thursday, October 29th, at 6:30 pm. To reserve your place at the table, call Arnie Rabinowitz at 516-317-6705. A Bingo night is scheduled for Sunday, October 25th, in the large card room. For additional information on our events and happenings, visit our web site: northshoretowersmensclub.org and click on the "Calendar" tab.

Lastly, as a further inducement to come to our meetings, we now have a "Chuck-a-Buck" game. Put in a dollar with your name on it, and if it's drawn, you get half the pot. The other half goes to the club.

You "gotta" be in it to win it. I know.

CASTING CALL

THE NORTH SHORE TOWERS MENSCLUB IS HAVING A TALENT SHOW. WE WELCOME ALL OUR GIFTED RESIDENTS TO COME AND SHARE YOUR TALENT WITH US. IF YOU CAN SING, DANCE, PLAY AN INSTRUMENT, TELL JOKES, ETC. PLEASE CONTACT OUR IMPRESSARIO, BUD BANK AT 347-502-7365.