

Men's Club Report: The Red Apple Rest Story

By Paul Nettler

It's a beautiful American story. A Russian immigrant with absolutely no experience goes into a business that he knows nothing about, and turns it into an iconic story. And in the depths of the Depression, no less.

Such is the story of the Red Apple Rest. It's a story beautifully described by his daughter, Elaine Freed Lindenblatt at the Wednesday, October 7th meeting of the North Shore Towers Men's Club. She wrote a book about it entitled, "Stop At The Red Apple."

The Red Apple Rest was a restaurant on the infamous Route 17, the main highway to the Catskills. It served over a million customers a year, and amongst those customers were many in the audience who reacted animatedly to Freed's story and the photos she displayed. For them it was truly a poignant trip down Memory Lane. Combine that trip and her father's Horatio Alger story, and it's no wonder that many left with a warm and fuzzy feeling.

Freed's presentation was highlighted by many slides taken through the years, which drew instant recognition from many in the audience. Many celebrities would stop off for a little nosh, and there was a great picture of Eddie Cantor in a bug eyed conversation with her father.

Her father could be labeled a marketing genius. He negotiated an arrangement with the Greyhound Bus Company and the Boy Scouts to have their buses stop off at the restaurant, so that the passengers could use the rest rooms and get something to eat. He expanded the number of rest rooms to lessen the waiting and make stopping off more conducive. He built a motel right across the highway whose residents, of course, would dine at the restaurant.

Obviously, a business that complex had its fair share of problems as well. For

instance, they had a problem with people trying to avoid paying, especially young men sneaking out through the bathroom windows, solved by putting up bars.

But nothing lasts forever. A combination of Freed's father's death, changing vacation mores, and other faster highways to the Catskills became too much to overcome. So, in 1984 the Red Apple Rest, ironically born in the worst of times, died in the one of the best of times and closed its doors. But although it's been over 30 years, for some the memories happily remain.

Our next Men's Club meeting will be held on Thursday, November 12th at 7:30 pm in the large card room. Our speaker will be Ann Margaret Carozza, who is an expert on the subjects of Elder Law and Estate Planning. She is a renowned attorney, who also served for 14 years as a NY State Assembly woman. She is an executive member of the NYS Bar Association, Elder Law Section and the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. Carozza is the Chairperson of the Long Island Alzheimer's Foundation Legal Advisory Board. She is also a TV legal contributor, and has appeared on many shows such as Good Morning America and Dr. Phil, and has been quoted in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Crain's* and others.

The Current Events Group, led by Gary Darche, met on Monday, October 5th in the Coleridge Lounge. Twelve men participated. As usual, there were interesting discussions and diverse opinions were expressed. Among the issues discussed were the reasonable regulation of firearms, which the group supported, and the overall impression of Pope Francis's visit, which were positive. Questions were raised about the ability of the Republican Congressional majority to efficiently conduct government business after Speaker Boehner's resignation. The group was also concerned about the manipulation of drug prices and its resulting

burdens on Medicare and the increased cost of health insurance. There was an informative discussion about Volkswagen's cheating on emissions tests, an ongoing story that we will continue to follow. The next meeting will be on Monday, November 5th at 10:30 am in the Coleridge Lounge. Come and bring your opinions with you. If you would like any additional information call, Gary Darche at (718) 225-3060.

The next meeting of the Book Club Group will be held on Monday November 9th in the Coleridge Lounge, at which time they will discuss the book they are currently reading, "The World's Fair," by E.L. Doctorow, so there is still time to join. Due to the fact that many members are snow birds, this will be their last meeting until April. If you have any questions, please contact Ralph Edwards at (347) 235-0472.

Our informal breakfasts on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:15 am continue to attract a convivial group. However, there will be a change of venue. All breakfasts will now be held in the restaurant.

We have some interesting events planned for the month of November. On Wednesday, November 4th, a lunch is planned at Anthony's on Union Turnpike at 1:00 pm.

On Tuesday, November 10th at 11:00 am we have scheduled a tour of our North Shore Towers's power plant, generators and infrastructure. It should be fascinating. Stud Poker has now replaced Texas Hold 'Em as the game of choice, and on Tuesday November 12th there will be a tourney starting at 6:30 pm in the downstairs card room. If interested, or if you have any other questions about our programs, contact Arnie Rabinowitz at (516) 317-6705. Lastly, Bingo is coming back on Sunday November 29th at 7:00 pm in the downstairs card room. And for all you Snow Birds, you will be getting a schedule of your events in the near future.

Our casting call is still open. Can you sing, dance, play an instrument, tell jokes? Come share your talent with us. Don't be shy, give it a try. Rotten tomatoes will be confiscated at the door. For information, contact Bud Bank at (347) 502-7365. Don't forget to come to our next meeting and bring a dollar bill with your name on it. You might just win in our new "Chuck-A-Buck" game. Would you like to know more about us? Then visit our web site at northshoretowersmensclub.org or call our president, Al Fuchs, at (917) 612-5350.