

Stork Club 'Bounces' Big Names

By CYNTHIA LOWRY
NEW YORK, April 20 (AP). — A number of years ago the proprietor of the Stork Club, John Sherman Billingsley, was sitting there talking to Steve Hanningan, the late press agent who discovered that pictures of pretty girls sell Florida resorts better than pictures of palm trees.

Billingsley was remarking upon a couple of recent fights among his customers, both of which had been duly spread upon the newspapers.

"Bar fights," said Hanningan thoughtfully. "Over a year, I'd say, providing the names are right." Whether Billingsley needed the advice is open to question. "Sherm," as habitués of his club like to call him, has such a keen instinct for the right names in right — or better yet, wrong — situations that in 25 years he has become almost as much of a celebrity as those who frequent — or are barred from — his mirrored cafe on E. 53rd St.

Wants to Run Nice Place
"Mr. B." — as his employees refer to him — tells you that his only ambition is to run "a nice place where people can come for a good time and where I can bring my family any time without their seeing anything I wouldn't like them to see."

In view of this, it is remarkable how often fights at the Stork Club land in the gossip columns or in tabloid headlines.

All speakeasy operators barred customers in prohibition days and Billingsley, whose Stork was one of the best known among such establishments, was no exception. The man at the peep hole just said, "No."

But Billingsley is the only one who has continued the custom with such loyal press from the columns. In the fairly recent past, such notables as Elliot Roosevelt, the late Humphrey Bogart, Milton Berle and — most recently — Jackie Gleason have been bashed into outer darkness, so to speak.

Customers Are Screened
The anti-Billingsley faction, which seems both large and vocal, insists that barring a big name is most likely when publicity has been on the lean side, or unfavorable.

They cite the fact that Billingsley bounced Gleason in the middle of one of the Stork Club's periodic and well-publicized bouts with employees' unions.

A rival ink-wiper said: "Gleason was just unlucky. Billingsley would have barred any one with a Trendex rating that week. What better way of letting the world know that, in spite of picket lines, celebrities were still coming?"

Billingsley's autocratic ways of screening customers seems to be behind most of the scuffles he's made.

"Who does this guy think he is?" asked one critic. "A speakeasy graduate telling people whether they can come into a public eating place . . ."

Some Love Him
There are others who find Billingsley an attentive host, a pleasant if not brilliant conversationalist, and who frankly enjoy visiting the place. The size of his booster club is indicated by the fact that he serves from 1,000 to 2,000 meals a day, does an annual gross business of about three million dollars and operates one of the few restaurants in town without a mortgage.

Much of this, of course, is tourist trade. To many visitors to New York, it is as much of a must as Rockefeller Center skating rink. Billingsley does his best to cooperate by making it easy for tourists to prove they were there. Each woman receives a small flask of perfume and a special lipstick embossed with the Stork insignia. It's only incidental that Billingsley also is in the perfume business.

Club Welcomes Celebrities
But Billingsley is enough of a businessman to know that tourists don't come to see other tourists. They come to see celebrities. So he woos the Park Avenue and Broadway lions even more lavishly. Several years ago, a Stork Club regular estimated that Billingsley spent \$250,000 a year on gifts ranging from \$5,000 automobiles, electric reducing bicycles, golden gimcracks like cigarette holders, tie clasps and golden keys, to peckies, garters, suspenders and — by his own estimate — "thousands of dogs."

One of the more flattering Billingsley gestures is the sudden arrival at a guest's table of a vintage champagne with his compliments. This sort of thing he does often for celebrities, or perhaps for a group of free-spenders out-of-towners who act like they're getting ready to leave.

Likes Poppy Music
While such open-handedness with champagne and convertibles and friends say Billingsley figures it's cheaper in the long run than a floor show. There is usually dance music, but it's neither waltzy nor schmaltzy.

The Billingsley speech is carefully preserved country-style, studded with words like "golly." This may be a heritage of his youth. Born in Enid, Okla., in 1906, one of nine children, he quit school before the fifth grade, was married by the time he was 18.

He came to New York in the early 20s and made a fast fortune in Bronx real estate. Several years before repeal, he started as a partner in one of the thousands of New York speakeasies. Thus, the Stork was born.

CONFIDENTIAL SUPER SAVINGS

REG. \$299.95

ZENITH TELEVISION

latest 1957 console save \$80
\$219.95

ONLY \$2.75 A WEEK
No Down Payment

Engineered for superior sight and sound, for long tube life, for outstanding cabinet beauty. The Cinebeam® picture tube reflects all the light out through the front of the screen to double the picture power. CineLens® face plate minimizes reflection, emphasizes detail. Static-free FM sound—Select wood cabinet, mahogany finish.

with UHF tuner for ch. 27 **\$229.95**
reg. \$329.95 blond finish cabinet **\$229.95**
with UHF tuner for ch. 27 **\$239.95**

Mail and phone orders*

reg. \$935.00 color television set

\$498

ONLY \$21 A MONTH
No Down Payment

Deluxe in every detail . . . and you can own this big-screen COLOR set for the price you would pay for a deluxe black and white set! 21 series tri-color picture tube brings life-size pictures of thrilling realism. Personalized color control; receives black and white too. Ours exclusively . . . sorry we can't tell the famous name.

Mail and phone orders*

Guaranteed by the manufacturer and by Meier & Frank's. Buy your television with complete confidence in the set, installation and service at Meier & Frank's—the store of Integrity.

All sets sold in our delivery area are delivered, installed, connected to your antenna, serviced, and operating instructions are given by a television technician, at no extra charge.

We offer expert installation and service on television sets in many localities throughout Oregon and Washington.

TELEVISION HEADQUARTERS—SECOND FLOOR
*Plus shipping cost to areas outside our regular truck delivery routes.

reg. \$21.95 GE clock radio
Latest 1957 model; plastic case. Telechron clock with wake-up switch; built-in aerial. Canary yellow.
\$16.50
Mail and phone orders*

reg. \$39.95 radio-phono
Portable two-tone carrying case; plays 78, 45, 33 rpm records, all sizes. Separate radio and phonograph switch.
\$24.95
Mail and phone orders*

reg. \$135.00 tuner-amplifier
Harman-Kardon MF 100 hi-fi model. Complete system in one chassis. 3-position selector switch. Black and brass.
\$99.95
Mail and phone orders*

reg. \$109.00 Electrovoice speaker
SP 12 B coaxial speaker, factory mounted; can be expanded to a separate 3-way. Speaker range 30 to 13,000 cps.
\$79.95
Mail and phone orders*

RADIO AND HI-FI—SECOND FLOOR

reg. \$3.98 RCA Victor 12" 33 1/2 LP Records \$1.98 each

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> LCT-1010 Concerto in D for violin and orchestra. (Beethoven) Heifetz and Toscanini | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1006 Chocolate Soldier (O. Strauss); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LCT-1113 Concerto in D Minor (Sibelius) Heifetz, violinist | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1010 The Vagabond King (Friml); Al Goodman (Romberg); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1000 Hot Mallets; Lipnet Hampton and orchestra | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1011 The New Moon (Romberg); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1002 Duke Ellington Seattle concert | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1012 Charles Fredericks, Marion Bell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1004 Shorty Rogers Courts the Count | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1013 The Student Prince (Romberg); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1005 Louis Armstrong Sings the Blues | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1016 The Red Mill (Herbert); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1007 The Don Elliott Quintet | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1018 Blossom Time (Romberg); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1008 Jazz for People Who Hate Jazz | <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1021 Strauss Waltzes (J. Strauss Jr.); Al Goodman and orchestra |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1011 An Evening at the Embers; Alex Kallias Trio | <input type="checkbox"/> LPM-1106 Just Too Much; Hal Schaefer Trio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1018 Collaboration; Shorty Rogers-Andre Previn orchestra | <input type="checkbox"/> LPM-1116 The Natural Seven; Al Cohn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1020 Reap the Wild Winds; Stuart McKay and his Winds | <input type="checkbox"/> LPM-1118 All I Wanna Do Is Swing; Joe Newman Octet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LJM-1023 Lullabies in Rhythm; Barbara Carroll Trio | <input type="checkbox"/> LPM-1309 Tony Cabot Swings on the Campus, Vol. 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1002 E.M. Piafore (Gilbert-Sullivan) Al Goodman and orchestra | <input type="checkbox"/> LPM-1309 Tony Cabot Swings on the Campus, Vol. 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LK-1005 Naughty Marietta (Young-Herbert) Al Goodman and orchestra | <input type="checkbox"/> LPT-1005 Benny Goodman and His orchestra |

reg. \$2.98 RCA Victor 10" 33 1/2 LP records . . .
popular, hymns, light opera, cowboy **\$1.49 each**
RECORDS—SECOND FLOOR



reg. \$800 famous make console piano
Full 88-note keyboard, longer strings for better tone. Pure copper wound bass strings, high touch response action. All hardwood construction, mahogany finish.
\$419
ONLY \$15 A MONTH
no down payment
Mail and phone orders*

PIANOS—SECOND FLOOR



WE HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT WE GIVE THE **LARGEST TRADE-IN ALLOWANCE** IN TOWN and NEVER KNOWINGLY ARE WE UNDERSOLD AT MEIER & FRANK'S

Zenith Super Royal Series
A real fringe area TV
262 sq. in. picture area

almost 1/2 price

Full year guarantee on the 21 series color picture tube . . . full 90-day warranty on all other tubes and parts . . . no extra charge.

STORE HOURS
MONDAY AND FRIDAY: 9:30 A.M. TO 9 P.M.
OTHER DAYS: 9:30 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M.

FREE STORE-SIDE PARKING FOR OVER 1,000 CARS

IT PAYS TO BUY AT MEIER & FRANK'S

Meier & Frank Co.
OREGON'S OWN STORE SINCE 1857
SALEM EM 3 2211