

A GUIDE TO THE CATSKILLS--PART II.

BY
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YES, HARVEY FIERSTEIN IS STARRING IN A NEW PLAY TITLED, "CASA VALENTINA." THE PLAY TELLS THE STORY OF A CATSKILLS RESORT IN THE '50S AND '60S WHERE ALL THE MEN DRESSED AS WOMEN, DESPITE MOST OF THEM BEING STRAIGHT.

- . GROSSINGER'S ONCE HOSTED A "FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY" OF WOODSTOCK REUNION.
- . GROSSINGER'S HAD ITS OWN POSTOFFICE AND CITY DESIGNATION AS GROSSINGER'S NEW YORK.
- . GROSSINGER'S POSTED THE FOLLOWING SIGN NEAR ITS INDOOR POOL:
 - 1 LIFEGUARD - 75 BATHERS
 - 2 LIFEGUARDS FOR 150 BATHERS
- . IN 1952, GROSSINGER'S BECAME THE FIRST PLACE IN THE WORLD TO USE ARTIFICIAL SNOW.
- . ELIZABETH TAYLOR WAS MARRIED AT GROSSINGER'S.
- . IN 1958, JACKIE MASON PERFORMED AT THE FLAGLER HOTEL. THAT WEEKEND THE HOTEL WAS PACKED WITH A CONVENTION OF KOSHER BUTCHERS. (The Yiddish word for butcher is "kasev.") HE WAS TOLD TO BE CAREFUL; KOSHER BUTCHERS TEND TO BE VERY TOUCHY ABOUT THEIR WORK. MASON SAID, "MY MOTHER HAD TWELVE KIDS. BOY, COULD THAT WOMAN CHOP MEAT!"
- . "TRIPLING" MEANT THAT AN ENTERTAINER DID TWO OR THREE SHOWS IN ONE EVENING, COMMUTING ACROSS SULLIVAN AND ULSTER COUNTIES.
- . DAVID M. BADER ("HAIKUS FOR JEWS - FOR YOU, A LITTLE WISDOM"), WROTE:
 - CATSKILLS HOTEL SIGN--
 - PRESIDENT JOHNSON SLEPT HERE
 - HAVEN'T CHANGED A THING
- . ALAN KING'S QUARTERS WHILE WORKING AT THE WHITE ROE INN CONSISTED OF A FOLD-UP COT ON STAGE.
Source: "Take My Life, Please," by Henny Youngman

. ALAN KING WAS HIRED TO PERFORM AT THE HOTEL GRADUS. ON
MEMORIAL

DAY HE GOT ONSTAGE AND DID A JOKE:

“WHEN YOU WORK FOR GRADUS, YOU WORK FOR GRATIS.” EVERYBODY
LAUGHED, EXCEPT MR. GRADUS, THE OWNER OF THE HOTEL. HE FIRED
KING, AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, HE HAD TO LEAVE.

Source: “Name-Dropper - The Life and Lies of Alan King” by Alan King and Chris
Chase.

. RED BUTTONS HAD A CLEVER IDEA FOR SUPPLEMENTING HIS MEAGER
SALARY AS A TUMMLER. THE BORSCHT-BELT DINING HALLS WERE
STRICTLY

KOSHER--NO MIXING MEAT AND MILK. SOME OF THE YOUNGER GUESTS
WANTED CREAM IN THEIR COFFEE (“KAVE”). RED WOULD FILL UP A
FOUNTAIN PEN (“KVALPEN”) WITH CREAM AND GIVE A SQUIRT TO WHOEVER
DIDN’T WANT THEIR COFFEE BLACK. THE CHARGE WAS 25 CENTS A
SHPRITZ.

Source: “Take My Life, Please,” by Henny Youngman.

. A TYPICAL DINNER MENU AT GROSSINGER’S HOTEL IS SHOWN BELOW:

DINNER

APPETIZERS

Chilled Cantaloupe
Cooked Sun Ripened Tomato Juice
Italian Antipasto

RELISH

Spanish Queen Olives California Ripe Olives
Homemade Dill Pickles

SOUP

Chicken Gumbo Creole
Consomme, Egg Barley
Clear Broth en Tasse

ENTREE

Veal Oriental, en Cassrole

DINNER

Grilled Chopped Club Steak, Mushroom Sauce
Calves Liver Saute w Beef Crisp
Southern Friend Spring Chicken a la Maryland

Braised Beef Roulade, Saxon
Roast Philadelphia Capon, Apple Sauce
Boiled Young Fowl en Pot, Matzoh Ball
Garden Vegetable Dinner Plate, Baked Idaho Potato
Lyonnaise Potatoes Asparagus Spears

SALAD

Tossed Green Salad Bowl, French Dressing

DESSERT

Green Mint Crunch Ices New England Blueberry Pie
Fresh Coconut Layer Cake Lemon Sponge Cake

- . A GUEST AT GROSSNGER'S RECOGNIZED AN ISRAELI STATESMAN WALKING INTO THE DINING ROOM. "I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD," HE SAID TO A NEIGHBOR. "NU, SO HOW DO YOU KNOW HE'S NOT?" WAS THE RETORT. "WHERE ELSE WOULD HE GO?"

Source: Commentary, Morris Freedman

- . ALAN KING WORKED AS THE NUMBER THREE COMIC AND THE PORCH TUMMLER AT THE NEW PROSPECT HOTEL. HE ENTERTAINED ALL DAY LONG, IN THE DINING ROOM AND ON THE LAWN ("di lonke"). HE WAS THEN GIVEN A LITTLE PART IN THE SHOW. KING WOULD EMCEE THE BEAUTY CONTEST ("der konkurs"); HIS BIG JOKE WAS ABOUT HOW UGLY ("mieskayt") THE CONTESTANTS WERE. HE SAID, "FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF BEAUTY CONTESTS, THERE WILL BE NO WINNERS."

Source: "Name-Dropping - The Life and Lies of Alan King" by Alan King and Chis Chase.

- . GROSSINGER'S HAD SIGNS ON THE FLOWER BEDS WHICH READ:

PLEASE DO NOT PICK UP. WE BLOOM FOR YOUR PLEASURE.
SIGNED, THE FLOWERS

- . THE DESIGNATION "COUNTRY CLUB" WAS ADDED TO GROSSINGER'S HOTEL'S TITLE IN THE LATE 20s. THIS WAS ABOUT THE TIME WHEN JEWS WERE BEING EXCLUDED FROM COUNTRY CLUBS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

- . ALAN KING SAID, "IN THOSE CATSKILLS RESORTS, YOU PUT ON A VAUDEVILLE SHOW ONE NIGHT, A BURLESQUE SHOW THE NEXT NIGHT, AND A SHOW WHERE YOU GOT ALL THE GUESTS TO PERFORM, AND LET THEM MAKE SCHMUCKS OF THEMSELVES"

Source: "Name-Dropping - The Life and Lies of Alan King" by Alan King with

Chris Chase.

- . "GREAT COMICS--JACKIE MILES, JAN MURRAY, PHIL FOSTER--WORKED THE CATSKILLS, AND I SOAKED THEM UP. I STOLE FROM EVERYONE."

Alan King

- . MAX KELLERMAN ("Dirty Dancing"), WHO OWNED THE FICTIONAL KELLERMAN RESORT, SUMS IT UP: "IT ISN'T THE CHANGES SO MUCH. IT'S THAT IT ALL SEEMS TO BE ENDING. YOU THINK KIDS WANT TO COME WITH THEIR PARENTS TO TAKE FOX-TROT LESSONS? TRIPS TO EUROPE, THAT'S WHAT THE KIDS WANT. TWENTY-TWO COUNTRIES IN THREE DAYS...SEEMS LIKE IT'S ALL SLIPPING AWAY."