

Interview of John Jessup (A.) and Bill Schuyler (B.)

by Skip Ross (S.) and Elmo Sanders (E.)

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- J. Princess Elizabeth of Yugoslavia was a speaker when J was President. The topic - "Making the Danube Blue Again". J. met her and began lunch. She mentioned that it was her birthday. He asked the restaurant if they could provide a cake - they did. J. asked the princess to cut herself a piece. No - she would cut one for everyone. She divided the cake into 40 pieces.
- Forest Cress, a member since 1957, came to lunch to celebrate his 100th birthday in 1992.
- Edward Teller spoke in June, 1992. Before lunch, J. asked him about Star Wars, knowing that he was a great advocate of the program. Teller refused to use the term "Star Wars" to describe it. J. found him to be a great listener.
- J. tried to get a fellow Princetonian, George Schultz, ("Dutch", as J. knew him) to speak to the Forum. He declined - too busy.
- J. recalls when women were invited only twice a year, to the 2 annual Ladies' Days, unlike today when they are welcome as guests any time.
- Tom Campbell, Bill Lane and John Gardener are speakers J. remembers from his year as President.
- J. recalls that the Forum used to have entertainment programs occasionally - singers, small bands, even once a magician.
- The practice used to be for the chairman of the program committee to write to the future speaker to confirm the date and request arrival by 11:30.
- When J. was president, in 1992, meals at L'Omelette were \$26.
- B. and J. were on a committee that searched for a new lunch venue. They recall lunching at 7 restaurants, and deciding the the Sheraton where we now meet served the best "rubber chicken", as well as offering the best long term agreement with guaranteed meeting space large enough for the Forum. Johnson & Mape, a construction company for which J. worked at the time, had built the Sheraton.
- B. and J. recalled the heated dispute over raising the limit on membership to 55. B. favored it, J. opposed it. The members voted in favor. B. and J. both consider it a real tribute to the collegiality of the Forum that the members can disagree vehemently about issues, and continue their close friendships afterward.
- B. remembers one member that was always critical, complained a lot about various things, and arrived at meetings maybe a little drunk. He was asked to resign, and decided to comply. As far as anyone remembers, that was the only resignation ever requested of a member. For many years, membership has been considered to be permanent. Per the current By-laws, if a member's attendance drops too low, he can be moved to Inactive status.

- M. recalls that the history of the Forum's first 20 years seem to discuss ways to drop a member.
- B. recalls that when considering applicants to fill openings, there was normally a backlog of 2-4 applicants. Several of us recall a Membership Committee meeting at which there were 9 applicants to fill 3 openings.
- B. points out the strong evidence that our current By-laws, last revised in 1983, are good is how congenial, convivial, ..., ... the group is.
- J. recalls that at one time the Forum considered incorporation, because of concerns about our tax status.
- One member in the past (Bob McKee) kept pressing the Forum to record the programs. The majority of Forum members wanted to remain private - no public records. They wanted speakers to speak freely without worrying about seeing their remarks in the press. One scientist from Stanford had a number of very controversial things to say in a presentation, and probably would have been less open were the remarks recorded.
- J. observed that at times new members tended to all be of a common background - doctors, academics, etc. The Membership Committee would sometimes discuss whether to choose applicants in a way to offset this.
- The Membership Committee tried for a while to pursue younger members, but found it difficult because of their inability to attend meetings regularly.
- Once it was suggested that we admit women as members. The membership fought hard against that change. One concern expressed was that when a small number of women had been admitted, the concern about the disproportionality between men and women would drive the Membership Committee to admit only women until a better balance was achieved.
- Concerning member gender, the original Forum governing policies in 1951 stated: "Until such time as the club may determine otherwise the membership of The Fellowship Forum shall not exceed 35 members, all of whom shall be of the male sex and shall have attained the age of maturity."
- J. recalls a time when there was a head table at each lunch, populated by the Forum's officers and the speaker.
- J. recalls when the policy was to not pre-announce the upcoming speaker, based on the feeling that attendance should not be based on what the program was to be.
- We recalled the Ted Hatrak initiated the practice of photographing members, leading to inclusion of photos in the member booklet and the attendance sheets.
- M. recalled that it was the practice to ask the new member at a table to take attendance at the table as a way to get to recognize the members.
- J. and B. remember a time when a group of the same members sat together each week at a central table. This no longer seems to occur. New members, in particular, are encouraged to move from table to table in their early months to become acquainted with all the members.

- J. was sponsored by Emmot Caldwell.
- B. was sponsored by Durwood Baker who, they discovered quite by accident at a chance meeting, had taught B. history in high school in St. Louis, MO.
- Once a year, in the summer, the Forum used to go to Emmet Caldwell's home for a lunch. The ladies were invited - the probable origin of our current Ladies' Day tradition.
- Emmet Caldwell was remembered by J. and B. as a very staunch Forum member.
- While president, B. asked Eric Hutchinson to lead a committee to develop a history of the Forum. Disappointed with the lack of results, B. muses over the fact that not once in what Eric produced was B. even mentioned.
- Legacy Forum members are Charlie Mitchell (son of Sydney Mitchell) and Harry Hartzell (son of Harry E. Hartzell).
- Prior to moving to the Sheraton, the cost of lunches would be paid by each member in cash at the table, and the restaurant staff would pick it up after the members left. No one remembers how the lunch ticket practice began.
- When, a couple years ago, we stopped printing the member booklet each year it created consternation among some members who were not comfortable with having to download and print their own copies.
- Our planned talk today about the Americas Cup history reminded B. that a cousin of his grandfather was on the original winning team. The speaker knew of him, and shared an anecdote about him in the talk.