



## around the town

### JOE FRANKLIN TRIBUTE

The Metropolitan Room celebrates broadcast legend Joe Franklin and his "Memory Lane" TV Show at irreverent tribute on July 20, 2013.

By: Linda Amiel Burns



Joe Franklin

Furshpan, Managing Partner at the Met Room, introduced Joe and they sat in front of microphones for a TV style interview. Joe was in his regular rare form, always ready with a quip and clever answer. Joe can make old corny jokes sound new and we laugh at them in spite of ourselves. When asked about the secret of his longevity, Joe responded, "Sincerity – once you learn to fake that, you're OK." Clips were shown on the screen of some of his past guests, but the one that was the most fun was Billy Crystal playing Joe on Saturday Night Live with a panel of odd guests.

It is said that Joe Franklin invented the television talk show format in 1950 and for over 43 years "The Joe Franklin Memory Lane TV Show" was on the airwaves with thousands of guests from the famous to the infamous and obscure. On the evening of July 20, 2013 at The Metropolitan Room a full house of fans and friends came out to celebrate this legendary broadcast idol. On stage was the amazing Vince Giordano and two of The Nighthawks along Peter Mintun at the piano.

The evening produced by Steve Garin and Bernie



Joe Franklin, Bernie Furshpan

Following the TV Format, Joe had several guest artists perform. The first being Christine Pedi (now on Sirius Radio) who talked about her experience of interviewing Joe and the excitement the other broadcasters had and grabbed him to be on their shows. Christine sang a terrific rendition of Berlin's song from 1917 "You'd Be Surprised" followed by "I Will Survive" doing her famed imitations of celebs. Bronwyn Rucker and Joe Franklin did some shows at Don't Tell Mama together and Bronwyn sang "Poor Butterfly" Joe's request holding a large fan. Then Singer/Songwriter/Producer Tomaczek Bednarek rocked the room with a swinging version of "That Old Black Magic."

I have known Joe for most of my life as my dad, Jack Amiel. owner of two famous Broadway Restaurants in the Brill Building (The Turf and Jack Dempsey's) were great friends. Also, have wonderful memories of my many appearances on The Joe Franklin Show as you never knew who would be on the panel with you. One time I was sitting next to a champion Polish contortionist, a 90 year old Datsun dealer singing "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," and Fred Kelly (Gene's brother) who ran a dance studio in Oradell, NJ and danced on the coffee table during the interview. It was always fun and you had to be on your toes to get a word in edgewise. Joe also had me bring singers from my workshop The Singing Experience to perform on the show and they were thrilled.



*Tomaczek Bednarek*

Kudos to Bernie and the folks at the Metropolitan Room for producing this tribute to the one and only Joe Franklin who is not only a national treasure but one of the nicest people in show business. He treated unknowns and the top celebrities alike and with the same respect. When asked what he would like on his tombstone, Joe replied, "I'll be right back after this short break."

We all hope that Joe will be with us for many, many more years to come!

Listen to Joe Franklin on Bloomberg Radio where he has held court with celeb interviews for the past 10 years.

**Metropolitan Room Schedule: [www.MetropolitanRoom.com](http://www.MetropolitanRoom.com)**

**July 20, 2013**