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Norby Walters

Night of 100 Stars

By Steven Gaydos ▾

Old school" may be shorthand for "old-fashioned" in some circles, but in Hollywood, with its Golden Eras, Walk of Fame and Silver Screen Legends, it should be taken as the ultimate compliment.

It certainly applies to former club owner and agent, current poker-party and awards-season-bash host extraordinaire Norby Walters, one of the most dapper, snappiest characters in a town grown unfortunately and increasingly gray and corporate.

Walters hosts an annual Oscar viewing party called "Night of 100 Stars" at the Crystal Ballroom of the Beverly Hills Hotel, which is an outgrowth of his nearly 20 years of private poker parties that features regular guests such as Richard Lewis, Bryan Cranston, Tony Shalhoub and Sean Astin.

Walters' career began in 1952, when he launched what became known as the Norby Walters Bel-Air nightclub in Brooklyn with his late brother Walter.

"I had Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie — all the jazz greats — and I got Miles Davis his first solo gig. Every time he'd see me, he'd say, 'Norby you motherfuckeryougotmemyfirstgig!'" says Walters in an effusive rat-a-tat tone that wouldn't sound sweeter if it came out of Parker's storied sax.

The event is sponsored, with a few tickets available for sale for those who want to hobnob with Norby's crew, which he says "includes Oscar winners and nominees and, more importantly, people who know how to have fun." For more info: nightof100stars.com

