

Jewel Theatre Audience Guide

Addendum: London Gentlemen's Clubs and the Explorers Club in New York City



directed by Art Manke

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GENTLEMEN'S CLUBS IN LONDON



Nell Benjamin describes her fictional Explorers Club in the opening stage directions of the play:

We are in the bar of the Explorers club. It is decorated in high Victorian style, with dark woods, leather chairs, and weird souvenirs from various expeditions like snowshoes, African masks, and hideous bits of taxidermy. There is a sofa, a bar, and several cushy club chairs. A stair leads up to club bedrooms.

Pictured above is the bar at the Savile Club in London, which is a traditional gentlemen's club founded in 1868 and located at 69 Brook Street in Mayfair. Most of the gentlemen's clubs in existence in London in 1879, the time of the play, had been established earlier, and were clustered together closer to the heart of the city.

Clubs in the Pall Mall area were: The Athenaeum, est. 1824; The Travellers Club, est. 1819; The (original) Reform Club, 1832; The Army and Navy Club, 1837; Guard's Club, 1810; United University Club, est. 1821, which became the Oxford and Cambridge Club in 1830; and the Reform Club (second location), est. 1836.

Clubs on St. James Street were: Whites, est. 1693; Brooks, est. 1762; Boodles, est. 1762; The Carlton Club, 1832; Pratt's, est. 1857; and Arthur's, est. 1827.

Clubs in St. James Square were: The East India Club, est. 1849 and Pratt's, est. 1857.

Clubs in Piccadilly were: The Turf Club, est. 1861; Guards Club, est. 1810; The In and Out Naval and Military Club, est. 1862; Stratford Club, est. 1815; Portland Club, est. 1825; Badminton Club, est. 1875; and Burlington Fine Arts Club, est. 1866.

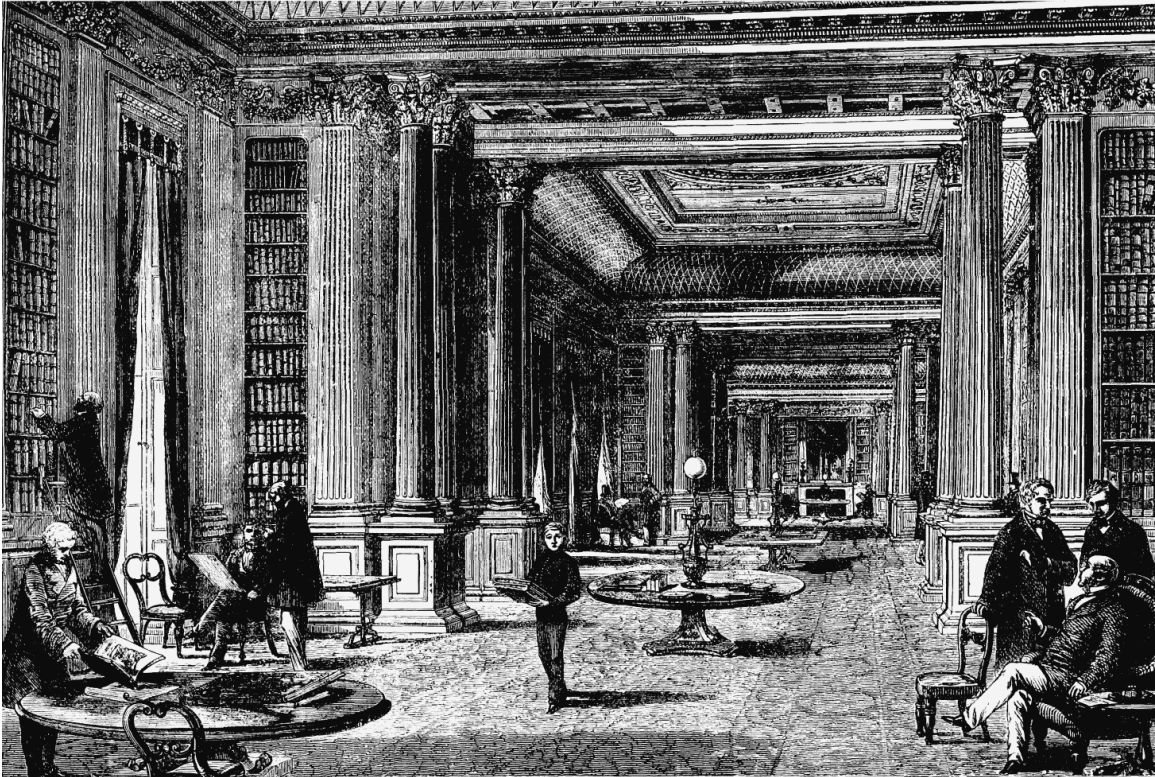
Because the Explorers Club is a special interest club, special interest gentlemen's clubs are included in the listings above, such as the Travellers Club, the Badminton Club and the Burlington Fine Arts Club. Not included are the smattering of clubs outside London central, except for the Savile.

Photos of typical gentlemen's clubs of the era follow. The first group are of interiors of London gentlemen's clubs in the late 19th century, appointed and furnished per the descriptions in the stage directions. Some photographs were taken during that era and some are current, showing meticulously and authentically restored interiors.

The second group are exteriors, and the third shows examples of taxidermy from the Victorian Era, as well as the trophy room of the Explorers Club in New York City, a model for the Explorers Club in the play.



The Italianate Saloon of the Reform Club as it still exists, with stairs leading to the Gallery



Library of the Reform Club in a 19th century etching



A staircase in the Travellers Club today, preserved from 1819, when the club was established



Travellers Club Reading Room today, preserved from 1819, when the club was established



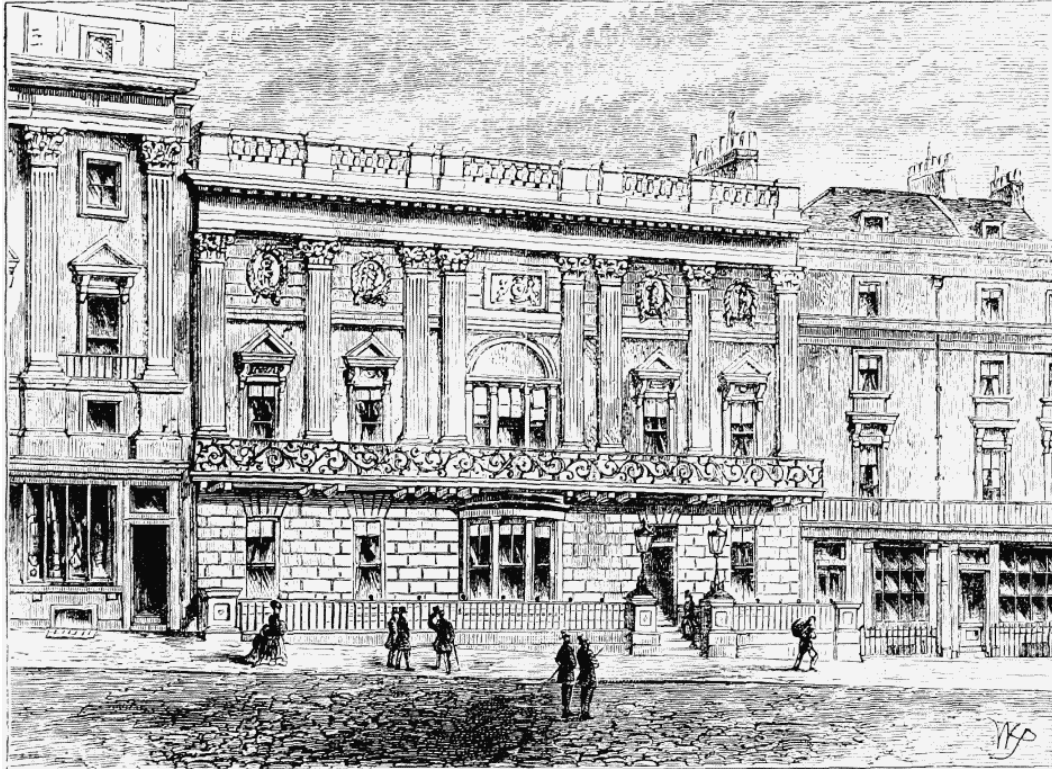
Illustration from the cover of *London Clubland: A Cultural History of Gender and Class in Late Victorian England* by Amy Milne-Smith



The coffee room at White's on St. James Street during the Victorian Era



The card room at White's on St. James Street during the Victorian Era



Exterior of White's on St. James Street from an 18th century sketch



Exterior of White's as it appears today



Taxidermy from the Victorian era, from the collection of Ryan Matthew



The Trophy Room of the Explorers Club in New York City, founded 1912



Vintage Taxidermy

THE EXPLORERS CLUB, NEW YORK CITY



The Explorers Club in the play is a cross between a Victorian gentlemen's club and a scientific society. The Explorers Club in New York City, though established in 1904, a quarter century after the year of the play, is probably most like it in terms of purpose, membership and time frame.

The Explorers Club in New York City was founded by seven leading polar explorers of the era who were brought together in 1904 at the invitation of renown journalist, historian, and explorer Henry Collins Walsh (1863-1927). The explorers, including himself, were Adolphus Greely (1844-1935) a US Army officer, polar explorer, recipient of the Medal of Honor and first president of the club; Donaldson Smith (1866-1939) an American doctor, hunter, and explorer of Africa; Carl Lumholtz (1851-1922) a Norwegian explorer and ethnographer; Marshall Saville (1867-1935) an archeologist who explored the Yucatan, Honduras, Mexico, Ecuador and Colombia, and was director of NY's Museum of the American Indian; Frederick Dellenbaugh (1853-1925) an explorer of the American West, topographer, and artist who painted the views of the places he explored and discovered, and David Brainard (1856-1946), an arctic explorer and US Army officer who fought in the American Indian Wars, the Spanish–American War, and World War I.

After a series of meetings where the founders endeavored "to form an organization to unite explorers in the bonds of good fellowship and to promote the work of exploration by every means in its power", the Explorers Club was incorporated on October 25, 1905.

The stated purpose of the club is to "foster the scientific exploration of land, sea, air and space," the latter two added over time. Famous honorary members have included Theodore Roosevelt, John Glenn, Jim Fowler, Walter Cronkite, Prince Philip, Duke of

Edinburgh and Albert I, Prince of Monaco.



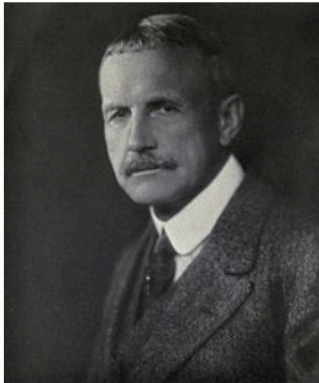
Henry Collins Walsh



Adolphus Greely



Donaldson Smith



Carl Lumholtz



Marshall Saville



Frederick Dellenbaugh



David Brainard



"Zion Canyon" by Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, 1903

Founders of the Explorers Club in New York City; painting of Zion Canyon in Zion National Park, Utah, by Frederick S. Dellenbaugh (bottom left)



Teddy Roosevelt and his son Kermit, also a club member, during a hunting expedition in Africa. The club's archives contain a massive collection of photographs from expeditions. In the early 1900s, viewers back home saw slide presentations of expeditions sent from the field.

The Explorers Club has a history of "famous firsts," achieved by its members:

First to the North Pole in 1909, in an expedition led by Matthew Henson and Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary. Henson (1866 –1955) was an American explorer who went on seven voyages to the Arctic over a period of nearly 23 years with Robert Peary. Together they spent a total of 18 years on expeditions. On April 6, 1909, Henson became the first of the party to reach the geographic North Pole in the 1908-1909 expedition. He was born in Nanjemoy, Maryland, to sharecropper parents who were free people of color before the Civil War. He met Robert Peary in Washington, D.C., where he worked as a salesclerk at an upscale department store.

Peary (1856 –1920) was an American explorer and US Navy officer who made several expeditions to the Arctic in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He became well-

known for having reached the geographic North Pole with his expedition on April 6, 1909. Matthew Alexander Henson (August 8, 1866 – March 9, 1955) was an American explorer who accompanied Robert Peary on seven voyages to the Arctic over a period of nearly 23 years. They spent a total of 18 years on expeditions together. He is best known for his participation in the 1908-1909 expedition that reached the geographic North Pole on April 6, 1909. Henson was the first of the party to reach the pole.

First to the South Pole in 1911. Roald Amundsen (1872-1928) was a Norwegian explorer of polar regions and a key figure of the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. He led the first expedition to traverse the Northwest Passage in 1906 and the first expedition to the South Pole in 1911.

First solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean was on May 21, 1927, flown by “Lucky Lindy” Charles Lindbergh (1902 –1974), an American aviator, military officer, author, inventor, explorer, and environmental activist. In 1927, he went from obscurity as a US Air Mail pilot to immediate world fame by making a nonstop flight from Roosevelt Field, Long Island, NY, to Paris, France. Lindbergh covered the 33 1/2-hour, 3,600-statute-mile flight alone in a single-engine purpose-built Ryan monoplane, the Spirit of St. Louis.

Lindbergh's flight was not the first transatlantic flight, but the first solo, non-stop transatlantic flight made between two major cities by a man barely 25 years of age.

First to the summit of Mt. Everest in 1953, in a feat accomplished by Tenzing Norgay and Sir Edmund Hillary. Tenzing Norgay (1914–1986) was a Nepali-Indian Sherpa mountaineer often referred to as Sherpa Tenzing. On May 29, 1953, he and Edmund Hillary were the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest. Time named him one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century.

Sir Edmund Percival Hillary (1919–2008) was a New Zealand mountaineer, explorer, and philanthropist. He and Sherpa Tenzing were part of the ninth British expedition to Everest, led by John Hunt, when they climbed to the summit. From 1985 to 1988 he served as New Zealand's High Commissioner to India and Bangladesh and concurrently as Ambassador to Nepal.

Following his ascent of Everest, Hillary devoted himself to assisting the Sherpa people of Nepal through the Himalayan Trust, which he established. His efforts are credited with the construction of many schools and hospitals in Nepal. He was given a state funeral in New Zealand when he died.

First to the deepest point in the ocean in 1960 were Lt. Don Walsh of the US Navy and Jacques Piccard. Walsh, who was born November 2, 1931, is an American oceanographer, explorer and marine policy specialist. On January 23, 1960, he and Jacques Piccard were aboard the bathyscaphe Trieste, near Guam in the North Pacific Ocean, when it made a record maximum descent into the Mariana Trench, the deepest

location on the surface of Earth's crust, into the Challenger Deep, the deepest known point in the Earth's seabed hydrosphere. The depth was measured at 35,813 feet but later and more accurate measurements have measured it at 35,798 feet.

Jacques Piccard (1922 –2008) was a Swiss oceanographer and engineer, known for having developed underwater submarines for studying ocean currents, including the bathyscaphe Trieste, which he and Don Walsh were aboard when they reached the deepest point of the ocean. His and Walsh's historic dive received worldwide attention, and Piccard wrote an account of it, *Seven Miles Down*, with Robert Deitz, a renowned geologist who had helped plan the mission.

First to the surface of the Moon on July 21, 1969 were Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. Neil Alden Armstrong (1930–2012) was an American astronaut and aeronautical engineer who, together with Buzz Aldrin, was the first person to walk on the Moon. When his foot reached the Moon's surface, he spoke the now-famous words, "That's one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind". He was also a naval aviator, test pilot, and university professor.

Buzz Aldrin, born Edwin Eugene Aldrin Jr. on January 20, 1930, is an American engineer and a former astronaut and fighter pilot. He was lunar module pilot on the Apollo 11 Moon mission, and stepped onto the Moon's surface after mission commander Neil Armstrong. His first words on the Moon were "Beautiful view".

First recovery of an authenticated pirate ship, the Whydah Gally, in 1984 by Barry Clifford. The Whydah Gally, commonly known simply as the Whydah, is the only fully verified and authenticated pirate shipwreck from the Golden Age of Piracy that has ever been discovered in the world. It was a fully rigged galley ship, originally built as a passenger, cargo, and slave ship. Barry Clifford, born in 1945, found the Whydah's wreck in 1984, using a map made in 1717 of the wreck site by Captain Cyprian Southack, a local salvager and cartographer.

The club had several locations in New York City until 1960, when Lowell Thomas purchased the 1910 Jacobean revival mansion originally built for Stephen Clark, grandson of the co-founder of the Singer Sewing Machine Company, after he died. Thomas (1892-1981), a famed writer, broadcaster and Explorers Club member, gifted the building, which now bears his name, to the club. He worked as a war correspondent in Europe and the Middle East when he was in his twenties, eventually following T. E. Lawrence, the legendary Lawrence of Arabia, into the Arabian Desert and filing the exclusive story and pictures of the Arab revolt.

The Lowell Thomas building, at 46 E. 70th Street, became the club's international headquarters in 1965; it displays the bounty from a century's worth of exploration. The Explorers Club has 19 chapters in the US and six more around the world.



Exterior of the Explorers Club in New York City. The metal sign shown at the top of this document is at the left of the front door

Passing through the double wooden entry doors is the ground floor reception area, which leads to the member lounge, which houses a few of their polar artifacts.



A view to the member lounge from the reception area, where Thor Heyerdahl's globe can be seen

The front sitting room is suffused with history, including many 15th- and 16th-century fixtures from Europe. The wood coffee table was originally a hatch cover on the United

States Coast and Geodetic Survey (USC&GS) Explorer, a survey ship and research vessel that was one of the few ships to survive the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack.



Ground floor member room. The coffee table is made from the Explorer's hatch cover.

In the member lounge is the giant globe, shown below, which Thor Heyerdahl (1914-2002) used to plan his famous Kon-Tiki expedition.



At the entrance of the first room on the second floor is Percy, the polar bear, shown below. The taxidermy bear was a gift from Rudolph Valentino, and is a visitor favorite. The actor hunted the animal on the Chukchi Sea in 1969. If you press a button, the bear roars.



Percy the Polar Bear

Above the fireplace mantle in the library is *The Rescue of Greely*, painted in June 1884. The painting depicts Adolphus Greely, the Explorers Club's first president, as well as the last remaining members of an 1881 polar expedition he headed. Two previous rescue attempts—in 1882 and 1883—had failed to find the explorers, who were stranded by ice. When the US Navy party finally located the seven emaciated men, survivors of the original party of twenty-five, they were on the brink of death.

The second-floor library holds only a small fraction of the 13,000 books in the research and archives collection.



The second-floor library, with the painting, *The Rescue of Greely*, above the fireplace

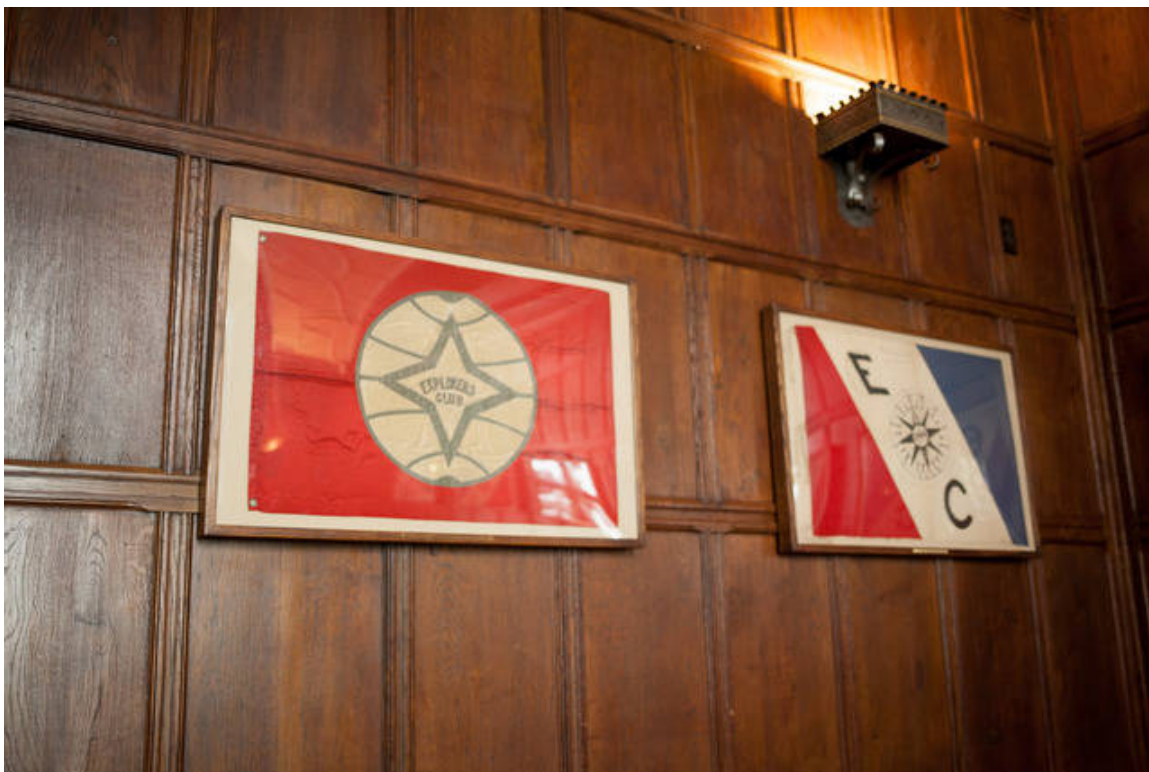


Close-up of *The Rescue of Greely*



One of the reading rooms that hold some of the club's thousands of books

All lectures and events are held in the Clark room. A few of the retired expedition flags from historic explorations are framed and hung on the walls. Club members planning an expedition must apply to carry an Explorers Club flag with them to their destination, submitting a proposal outlining the goal of their expedition.



Retired exhibition flags in the Clark room

Flags often go on multiple expeditions. The flag below has been on 19 expeditions, including Mount Everest, the highest point in the world, and Challenger Deep, the lowest.

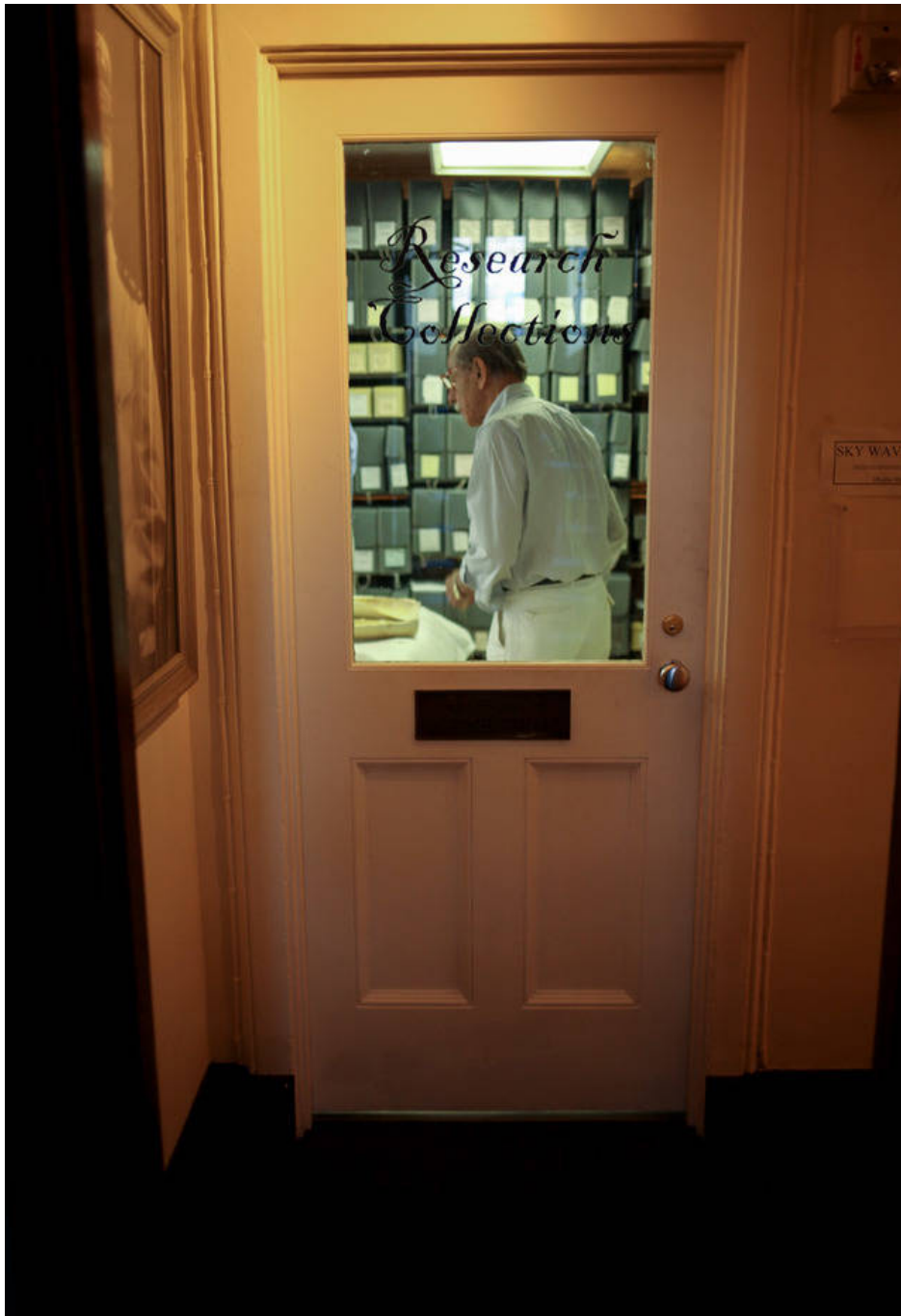


Robert Peary and Matthew Henson's sleigh from their expedition to the North Pole in 1909 (above) and an extremely rare set of double elephant tusks from the Congo (next page) can also be found in the Clark room.



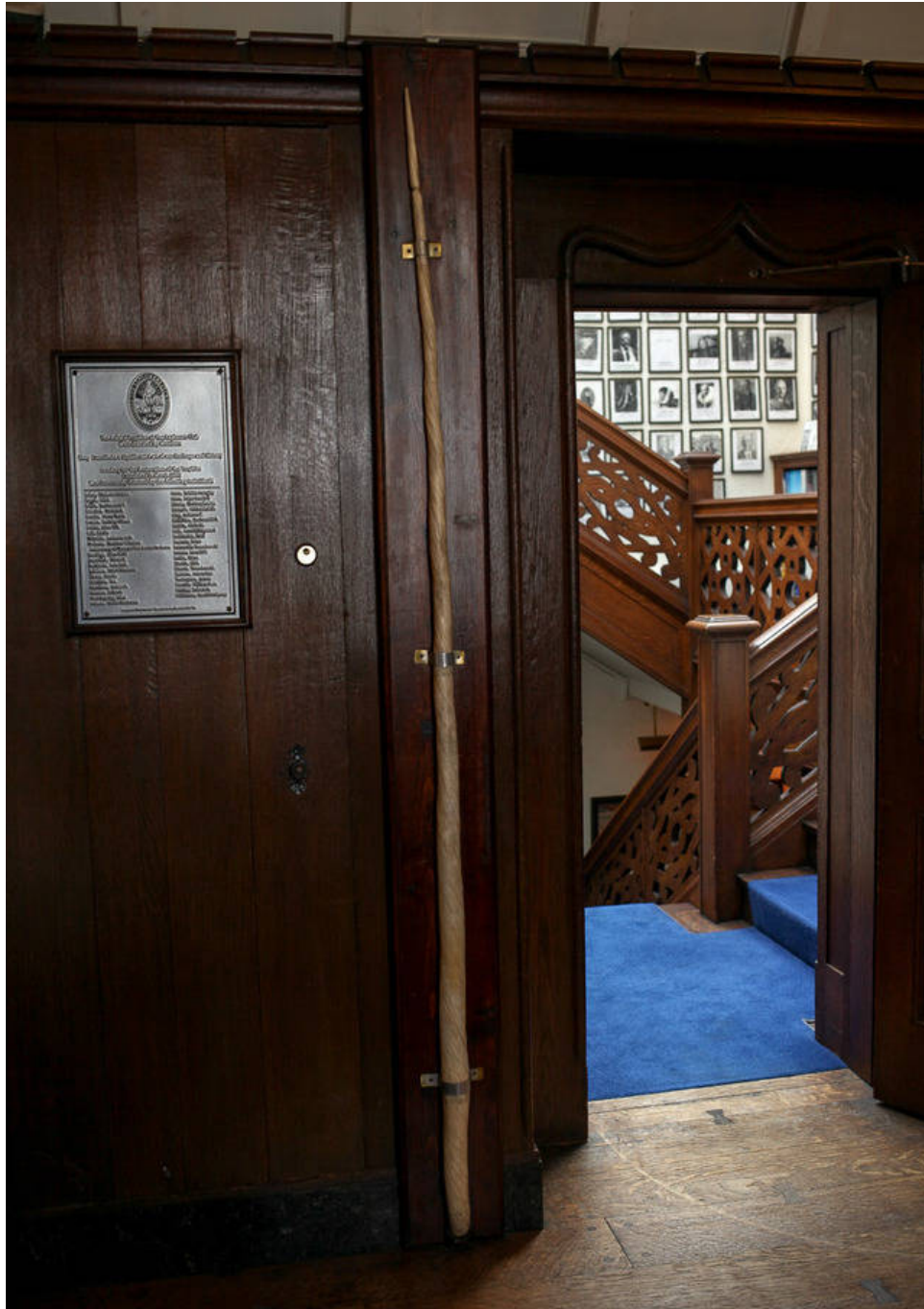
The Club's uppermost floor is home to the research archives, holding the club's impressive collection of 13,000 books, 1,000 museum objects, 5,000 maps and 500 films.

Each member from the club's long history has a file in the archives containing their application, flag reports, news clips, photos, and artifacts they brought back from the explorations.



This room contains the file of Carl Akeley, the father of modern taxidermy.

The Gallery on the top floor displays a large collection of taxidermied animals from many decades past. In the earlier days of the Explorers Club, when travel was difficult and field photography was relatively new, hunting and taxidermy were thought to be the best way to preserve animals for education and research. Objects from the far corners of the world, including the long front tooth of a narwhal, the scalp of a Yeti, and the tusk of a woolly mammoth, make it the most popular room for visitors, who are welcome during the open hours of the club.



The long front tooth of a narwhal, which resembles a tusk



Yeti scalp (on right), brought to the Explorers Club from a remote Himalayan Monastery in 1960



The tusk of a 250,000-year-old woolly mammoth that the club served at its annual dinner in 1951. Reverend Bernard Hubbard, a reputed explorer but not a club member, provided the meat.

The club is known for serving exotic foods at its annual dinners. In recent years, dishes have included whole cooked alligators, tarantulas, goats' eyeballs, maggots, and earthworms. Tickets for the event run from \$375 to \$1,200. About 1,400 people usually attend.



A top-floor Gallery room set up for the annual dinner



Taxidermy in a Gallery room



Another view of the room on the previous page, closer to the window



A closeup of the taxidermy penguin from the window of the room above



Teddy Roosevelt shot this lion on one of his many expeditions to Africa



Gallery Room

While its members were once known as big game hunters, the club has since aimed to distance itself from that part of its past. Instead, they have become champions of environmentalism and conservation.

The club's offshoots around the world, from Poland to China, serve as local contact points for explorers, scientists, and students. Many chapters hold monthly dinners, lectures and seminars, award field-research grants to students, publish newsletters and organize expeditions, field trips and educational events.

The average age of the club's 3,000 members is 65, according to *Outside* magazine. Not all are scientists, mountaineers, and astronauts; many are simply wealthy travelers.

Women were admitted in 1981, and now comprise one-quarter of the club's membership. Among the first women to join were Sylvia Earle and Kathryn Sullivan. Sylvia Alice Earle (née Reade; born August 30, 1935) is an American marine biologist, explorer, author, and lecturer. She has been a National Geographic explorer-in-residence since 1998. Earle was the first female chief scientist of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and was named by *Time Magazine* as its first Hero for the Planet in 1998. She is also part of the group Ocean Elders, which is dedicated to protecting the ocean and its wildlife.



Sylvia Earle



Kathryn Dwyer Sullivan

Kathryn Dwyer Sullivan (born October 3, 1951) is an American geologist and a former NASA astronaut. A crew member on three Space Shuttle missions, she was the first American woman to walk in space on October 11, 1984. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on March 6, 2014 as Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Sullivan's tenure ended on January 20, 2017 when President Donald Trump took office. Following completion of her service at NOAA, she was designated as the 2017 Charles A. Lindbergh Chair of Aerospace History at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, and has also served as a Senior Fellow at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.

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