



The Newsletter of The Cliff Dwellers

ON AND OFF THE CLIFF

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February–March 2014

The Cliff Hosts International Women's Day Event

By Eve Moran, CD'10 and Mike Deines, CD'03

Each year International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8, and thousands of events worldwide honor the social, political, and economic achievements of women. This year The Cliff Dwellers participated with a special luncheon program to mark IWD and this year's theme *Inspiring Change*.

The IWD theme suggests the idea that if young women are included in IWD celebrations, thousands of minds will be inspired globally. Hence, in addition to inviting women and retired women from the larger Cliff Dweller community, young girls and women studying at nearby schools and colleges were invited to attend as special guests of members. Over lunch they exchanged their unique stories and the challenges they have faced in moving forward in their careers and lives.

For the event Eve Moran CD'10 and Erin McCarthy CD'13 developed an exciting program, "Great Inspirations: The Power of Women's Stories."

Dorri McWhorter, the CEO of the YWCA of Greater Chicago, presented the keynote address. Through her personal experiences and efforts with the YWCA, she affirmed the importance of empowering women to move beyond the challenges and limitations to improve their lives. Her vision is to commit to creating a better world—one where empowered young women actively participate with corporations, government, and community organizations to achieve lasting results for positive change.

Erin McCarthy, from her perspective as a history professor at Columbia College, spoke about the power of "Oral History: the Art of the Interview" as a means of capturing women's accomplishments. Several students from her Oral History class shared the interviews they conducted to document women's activism and leadership in the Chicago area.

The final speaker of the afternoon was Mary Ann Johnson, President of the Chicago Area Women's Historical Council. She screened a sequence of historical photographs featured in *Women Building Chicago 1790-1990*.

In all, over 80 individuals attended the IWD program on the Cliff. Approximately half were students and guests sponsored by members to share a day of "great inspiration" among a host of interesting women ready to inspire, guide, and lead the next generation.



A full house for the IWD program on the Cliff.



Keynote Speaker Dorri McWhorter listens to one student's story and dreams.



Young women from nearby schools and colleges enjoyed their day in the Kiva.

Reciprocal Travel

By Bob Miller, CD '10

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "The uses of travel are occasional, and short; but the best fruit it finds, when it finds it, is conversation; and this is a main function of life". My wife, Mazy, and I have been fortunate to have savored many varied fruits of travel over the years and the conversations we have been privileged to experience at several of the reciprocal clubs available to Cliff Dwellers have added immeasurably to our lives.

Bob Thiebout, the Cliff Dwellers' fondly missed chief conversationalist, first regaled us with stories of the many famous and infamous members of both The Players and the National Arts Club, which are housed in adjoining Gramercy Park New York mansions originally owned by Edwin Booth and Governor Samuel Tilden. Both clubs welcomed us at their events where we mingled and enjoyed delightful conversations with Audra McDonald, Angela Lansbury, Phylicia Rashad, Kenny Leon and 99 year old saxophonist and writer, Les Lieber, among others. We have also used the Clubs to quietly converse with friends over food and wine, and enjoyed using their key to stroll through the private Gramercy Park. The picture shown is of a sketch made of us by a member of the National Arts Club at their 2011 Halloween party.

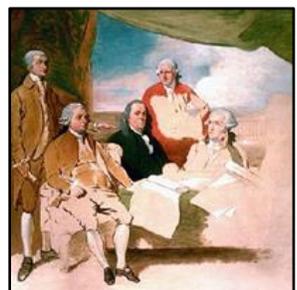
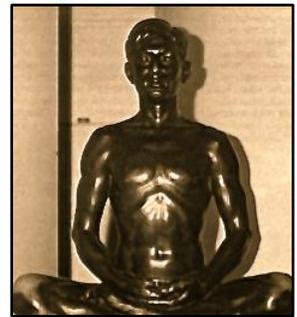
While staying at the St. Botolph Club in Boston we met a couple visiting from India. In the course of our conversations we learned that his father knew Mahatma Gandhi and in the 1930's noted sculptress Malvina Hoffman used his father as the model for her life-sized meditating Kashmiri Man, one of her 104 bronze pieces known as the Races of Mankind, shown in the photograph and found at our own Field Museum. Art exhibits at the St. Botolph Club line the mansion's stairway, as shown in another photograph.

The Cosmos Club located near DuPont Circle on Embassy Row in Washington, DC numbers among its members 3 Presidents, 2 Vice-Presidents, 32 Nobel Prize winners, 56 Pulitzer Prize winners and 45 recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. As a writer, I appreciated the opportunity to walk the halls in the still of night and spend some time in the Writers' Room where book jackets of members' works line the walls and you can almost imagine fascinating conversations volleying back and forth.

While staying at the Lansdowne Club in London we entertained friends for cocktails and dinner, and drank in the presence of Benjamin Franklin in the historically significant Round Room, the only structurally unaltered room from the original 1763 Lansdowne House. The Round Room now serves as a cocktail lounge but, as shown in the photograph, still features the circular frieze on the ceiling as painted by Cipriani and J. F. Rigaud in 1776. In 1782, Lord Shelburne met with Benjamin Franklin in that very room and ceded independence to the colonies. Lord Shelburne's portrait is prominently displayed over the bar and a small fresco on the wall by the doorway reproduces an unfinished painting of Franklin and the American commissioners to the preliminary peace agreement. The photograph here shows that 1783 unfinished oil on canvas sketch by Benjamin West. The painting was never completed because the British commissioners refused to sit for the painting. That must have been an interesting conversation.

And so my fellow Cliff Dwellers, I highly recommend to you the reciprocal clubs available to us. There your travels can be enriched by engaging their members, past and present, in stimulating as well as imagined conversation.

(See Page 3 for a list of Reciprocal Clubs)



Chapter 1: The Book Club Begins

By Richard Reeder, CD '13

Although the polar vortex was hovering over Chicago on the morning of Saturday, January 25th, sixteen hardy and enthusiastic readers came out to successfully launch The Cliff Dwellers Book Club. The first selection, appropriately, was Henry Blake Fuller's 1893 novel, *The Cliff-Dwellers*, the book from which we took our club name more than a century ago.

Fuller's tale of capitalistic avarice set in *fin de siècle* Chicago created a lively discussion among the book club participants, as much sociological in comments and analysis as literary. Cliff Dweller member, Richard Reeder, an author and college humanities instructor, facilitated the discussion.

The book club will be meeting usually on the fourth Saturday of the month from 11:00 am until 12:30 pm. It is open to club members, friends and all those who love to read and discuss books. Afterwards, participants are encouraged to stay for lunch and continue the lively conversation with their fellow literati.

The selection of books was suggested by Don Evans of the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame and Mark Eleveld from the Society of Midland Authors. Both of these literary organizations have had a close association with The Cliff Dwellers in recent years. This year's picks are a mix of past and contemporary fiction all having some kind of Chicago connection.

The next book club meeting will be March 22nd. We will be discussing the legendary Ring Lardner's *You Know Me, Al*. The book can be purchased on Amazon, but your public library or favorite used book store may have copies. Advanced reservations may be made by email to reservations@cliff-chicago.org.

The Cliff Dwellers Book Club 2014 Reading List

- January 25: Henry Blake Fuller *The Cliff Dwellers*
- February 22: Patricia McNair's *Temple of Air*
- March 22: Ring Lardner's *You Know Me, Al*
- April 26: William Hazelgrove's *The Pitcher*
- May – No Meeting Due to Memorial Day Weekend
- June 21: Richard Babcock's *Are You Happy Now*
- July 26: Edna Ferber's *So Big*
- August – No Meeting
- September 27: Gwendolyn Brook's *Maude Martha*
- October 25: MacKinlay Kantor's *Diversey*

No meetings in November and December.

The Cliff Dwellers' Reciprocal Clubs

Arts and Letters Club Toronto, Canada	Cosmos Club Washington, DC	The National Arts Club New York, New York	Salmagundi Club New York, New York
Arts Club of Chicago Chicago, Illinois	Dunham Woods Riding Club Wayne, Illinois	The Players New York, New York	Sangamo Club Springfield, Illinois
Cactus Club Denver, Colorado	Franklin Inn Club Philadelphia, PA	Quadrangle Club Chicago, Illinois	The Savage Club London, England
City University Club London, England	Lansdowne Club London, England	Queen City Club Cincinnati, Ohio	University Club of Palo Alto Palo Alto, California
Coffee House New York, New York	Melbourne Savage Club Melbourne, Australia	St. Botolph's Club Boston, Massachusetts	Valley Lo Sports Club Glenview, Illinois



Cosmos Club--Washington

More complete contact information and addresses for Reciprocal Clubs can be found in the printed edition of *The Cliff Dwellers 2013 Membership Directory*.



The Players—New York

Recalling a Traditional Celebration at the Club

A Holiday Vignette by Richard L. Eastline, CD '73

Picture a winter scene in Chicago years ago. Snow has fallen—not as a blizzard but just gently, silently. Through the windows of the clubhouse is a picture-book representation of a holiday panorama as the park, the lake, and Art Institute gain a frosting of soft whiteness. It's the day of the Cliff Dwellers annual December party (called the members' Christmas luncheon back then).

Modestly decorated for the holiday season, the Kiva nonetheless was brimming with the sounds of a festive gathering. The mood was one of good cheer. And why not? World politics was not a major talking point—there were few instances of aggressive religious action emanating from the Middle East. Americans in general were optimistic about the future and this surely was a time to celebrate the old year and offer toasts to the new. A pre-holiday luncheon at the club therefore was not to be missed. Santa Claus caps and bright red clothing items might not have matched the sartorial splendor of other events during the year, but no one would deny that they were entirely appropriate for this occasion.

Standing tall and only slightly bent was the custodian of the egg nog station. There was Mr. Grimes performing his yearly duty of dispensing the Cliff Dwellers' liquid version of holiday spirit. Just one version, of course, the one with alcohol. As he offered a cup to you his hand wavered ever so slightly but you overlooked this sign of aging frailty in deference to his stately character. Senior member of the help staff, he had a bearing that reflected past decades as a Pullman Porter, a vocation characterizing many others who served club members those days. His face was a chiseled sculpture that expressed a mainly solemn countenance. Yes, he smiled at times—not a wide grin but a slight upward twist of the lips. And he was always Mister Grimes, even to the club president, make no mistake. “How long has he been around?” was a question guests frequently asked. “Forever” was the typical member response. Who would guess that this would be the last time he would repeat that honored task for the club?

Seasonal music was standard fare at these events. Usually, George Estevez, a member who founded and conducted a well-established choral ensemble in Chicago, would bring some of his group to serenade members and guests during a break in the dining. These professional singers delivered a brief program of lesser-known music from the past before inviting the audience to join in on the most familiar carols. Gallantly, members and guests put forth their best-remembered lyrics while falling back on mumbled (but equally loud) sounds to fill in for the forgotten words. It was all done with the best of intentions and George was never known to chastise the slackers.

Mid-December brings the shortest daylight periods of the year and by early afternoon the skies were already darkening. The first departures began, perhaps reluctantly, as some Cliff Dwellers felt a touch of guilt in being away from their offices just a bit too long. Then, after another cup of coffee or else a lingering sip of what was left in the wine glass, others would begin a slow procession to the door. As quickly as a table was vacated, staff members would begin clearing it. Mr. Grimes sat in a chair next to the emptied egg nog bowl assuring protection for this honored artifact. He gave the impression of being lost in thought, probably reflecting on prior replicas of this same scene.

And so our group left the almost-last table, each of us bidding the others best wishes for the holidays. On the way out one of us looked in the direction of the conspicuous egg nog station and, encouraged by a cup too many, shouted out “Have a merry Christmas, Mr. Grimes!” And, following that, another said—unknowingly prophetic—in a more restrained voice, “Goodbye, Mr. Grimes.”



Members' Table Facelift

By Bill Bowe, CD'97

A number of Cliff Dwellers who occasionally dine at the Members' Table recently agreed that the Table's ancient Lazy Susan was on its last legs.

Bill Bowe summed up the group consensus, "Over the years it had ceased to be a Lazy Susan. It had become a Catatonic Susan. The usually lively Members' Table had become a no spin zone. The poor thing had compound fractures and was held together with unsightly surgical pins and duct tape. Its once elegant wood finish looked like someone had spilled a bottle of Nair on it. We had reached a point where another Lazy Susan rehab would be as useless for it as it would be for Lindsay Lohan."

Bill urged an informal replacement kitty to fund a Members' Table makeover, telling all who would listen, "What goes around should come around." He put in \$10, as did Club president Charlie Hasbrouck, past presidents Brian Bernardoni and Leslie Recht and members Al Alongi, David Chernoff, Bill Drennan, Richard Eastline, Bill Getzoff, Tim Herwig, David Mann, Bob McCamant, Deirdre McCloskey, John Notz and Larry Okrent.

After Bill bought a new Lazy Susan, a little money was left over and the group authorized him to splurge on upmarket Lazy Susan accessories, including a replacement peppermill and new holders for chits and pens.

In his final report to the oversight committee that had been set up to prevent his filching, Bill was forced to admit that the fund still had a surplus of \$13. Committee chair Virginia Harding immediately marched Bill into the Club manager's office and personally witnessed him putting a ten-spot and three singles into the petty cash box.



Restoration Completed



Robert Datum of The Conservation Center finished repairs on the Louis Sullivan mural Wednesday, February 5. His work is meticulous and imperceptible.

MEMBERS WISHING TO CONTRIBUTE TO
ON AND OFF THE CLIFF
CAN SUBMIT STORIES, REFLECTIONS, ARTICLES, POEMS, PHOTOS
AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE ARTS TO EDITOR:
MIKE DEINES 1512 TYRELL AVE. PARK RIDGE, IL 60068
Or e--mail mjdeines@yahoo.com

A New Note

Chef Victor Perez has created a new menu to compliment the regular fare of the Club. Small plate orders can be placed at the bar when having a beverage or as appetizers to accompany a meal. Sample them all and enjoy.

THE CLIFF DWELLERS

Small Plate/Appetizers Menu

Crispy Artichoke Fritters

Basil Pine Nut Aioli \$8

Warm Goat Cheese

Garlic Cherry Tomato and Herbs
On Crostini \$8

Chicken Liver Pâté

Caramelized Onion, Cornichons, Parsley
Toasted Baguette \$8

Chilled Shrimp Cocktail

Cocktail Sauce and Lemon \$9

Fried Stuffed Mushroom

Piquant Fennel Sausage \$8

Cliff Notes

- March 18 will be the second Members' Table Lunch. Newer members are invited to join in at an extended Members' Table for good food and conversation. Chef Victor is preparing a special St. Joseph's Day menu (though a day ahead of the holiday) for our Tuesday buffet at the Club. Reserve a spot.
- Since our last publication 5 individuals interested in literature and the arts have become new members of The Cliff Dwellers. We welcome them and look forward to their active participation in Club activities and events.

**Tiphania Spenser Babinet, Robert H. Hunt, James C. Munson,
Trisha Jean Ricketts, David Woodhouse.**

Thanks go out to the following Cliff Dwellers for recently sponsoring new members to the Club. Zivio!

**Bill Bowe, Mike Deines, Bill Drennan,
Dominic Johnson, Walker Johnson, Trish Vanderbeke.**

- On March 5 the current art displays *Sacred Spaces* graphic drawings by Marikay Peter Witlock and *four women sculptors* including pieces by Nicole Beck, Elena Rakochy, Victoria Fuller, and Christine Perri opened at the Club. A special thank-you goes out to Connie Hinkle CD '01, Art Committee Chairman, who plans, coordinates, and hangs art in the gallery each month for the benefit and enjoyment of our members.
We also extend our appreciation to Christine Rojek CD '12 who has been working with Connie as the Club's Sculptor Curator over the past four years. Christine just won a national competition in Philadelphia for the Womrath Park Gateway Sculpture commission—a large and demanding project that will require much of her time and attention. In addition Christine will continue teaching at Columbia as well as serving on Columbia's Internal Committee for the Wabash Arts Corridor. Zivio, Christine.
- The record-setting cold and snow of 2014 has not prevented two of the Club's newest activities from getting off to solid starts. The Book Club is headed towards its third meeting on Saturday, March 22 at 11:00 when Ring Lardner's *You Know Me, Al* will be the topic of discussion. The second gathering of movie-lovers will be on March 29 at 10:30 when the coming attraction will be *The Thin Man*. Both activities are open to members, friends, and those who enjoy the pleasures of reading good literature and viewing great films. Enjoy the day and stay for lunch.
- On a sad note: James A. McKechnie, Jr. CD '86 passed on January 9, 2014. Jamie devoted nearly all of his professional life to helping others meet the challenges of disease and bridging cultural divides. From his career in non-profits to his love of the arts, from his pride in his Scottish heritage to his intimacy with greatness in the field of sport, Jamie embraced the positives of the human spirit. He shared his talents and times with many service and community groups as well as being a member and former board member of The Cliff Dwellers. His memorial service was held Saturday, February 8, 2014 at St. Chrysostom's Episcopal Church, Chicago.
- The Hypocrites Theater Company's production of *Into the Woods* is being extended through April 5 at the Mercury Theater. "Anyone that questions the creative force of Chicago storefront theaters has to look no further than The Hypocrites ingenious re-imagining of Stephen Sondheim's 1986 musical *Into The Woods*...That incredible vision and talent is what makes The Hypocrites part of the fabric that makes Chicago theatre a beacon for others to follow." Show Biz Chicago. A new code for Cliff Dwellers members to see the theater company's performance is available by typing the code "wolf" on the ticket ordering website to get \$10 off any show.
- On Friday evening, March 28, 2014 author Patrick McBriarty will provide a multi-media presentation on his book *Chicago River Bridges*. It will chronicle his personal journey into this fascinating topic and relate the importance of the bridges in the development of the Windy City as the Drawbridge Capital of the World. Partnering with Chicago filmmaker Stephen Hatch, McBriarty created and independently co-produced the documentary, *Chicago Drawbridges*, which has been broadcast on Chicago and Milwaukee public television. Copies of his book, as well as his DVD on *Chicago Drawbridges* will be available for purchase and signing. The social hour (cash bar) begins at 5:30 pm with dinner (\$35) at 6:30 pm. The presentation will follow dinner. Please make reservations in advance at 312-922-8080.
- And, one more entry of note: at the Newberry Library, Walker Johnson and the History Committee uncovered files and floppy disks that contained (when decoded and combined by Bill Bowe's Britannica tech staff) the complete membership roster for The Cliff Dwellers dating back to the Club's inception. **Zivio to our treasure hunters!**