

A Short History *and* Description of Keens Chophouse

While standing in the shadow of the Empire State Building you can discover the spirit and flavor of turn-of-the-century New York. Keens Chophouse, the New York City landmark, was established in 1885 and is famous for its mutton chops, steaks, single malt Scotches, and the world's largest clay smoking pipe collection.

Prior to 1885, Keens Chophouse was a part of the Lambs Club, a famous theater and literary group founded in London. Its manager was Albert Keen. In 1885 Keens Chophouse opened independently under the ownership of Mr. Keen, who by then was a noted figure in the Herald Square Theater District. Keens soon became a lively and accepted rendezvous of the well known. Actors in full stage make-up hurried through the rear door to "fortify" themselves between acts at the neighboring Garrick Theater. You could glance into the Pipe Room to see the jovial congregation of producers, playwrights, publishers, and newspapermen who frequented Keens.

Today, Keens Chophouse is the only survivor of the Herald Square Theater District. In an age that tears down so much of its past, it is comforting to find one landmark which endures.

The tradition of checking one's pipe had its origins in 17th century Merrie Old England, where a customer would keep his clay at his favorite inn-the thin stemmed pipe being too fragile to be carried in purse or saddlebag. Pipe smoking had been known since the Elizabethan times to aid in dissipation of "evil humors of the brain."

The Keens Chophouse Pipe Club originated with Albert Keen at the Men's Grill of the Lambs Club, when a lifetime membership could be secured for five dollars. A pipe warden was employed to catalogue the growing collection and several pipe boys delivered the numbered pipes to the members after their meals.

Our Pipe Club Register includes the signatures of Teddy Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, J.P. Morgan, Stanford White, John Barrymore, Babe Ruth, Billy Rose, John Drew, General Douglas MacArthur, Adlai Stevenson, George M. Cohan, David Belasco and "Buffalo Bill" Cody as well as contemporary celebrities such as Ted Turner, Glenda Jackson, and Issac Asimov.

If a member died, the stem of his pipe was broken and the pipe restored to its customary place. These pipes still rest in their honored places above the tables or in the glass case above the fireplace near the restaurant's entrance.

Ladies were not allowed in Keens Chophouse until Lillie Langtry, the infamous British actress and close friend of King Edward VII, ignored the "men-only" notice and entered the restaurant in 1901. Dressed in a satin gown and a feather boa, the beautiful Lillie asked to be served a mutton chop. The waiter refused. Lillie sued and won. Keens took its defeat graciously and exhibited the following sign: "Ladies are in luck, they can dine at Keens."



Today Keens Chophouse offers four private rooms, the Bullmoose Room, the Lambs Room, the Lincoln Room and the Lillie Langtry Room. The Bullmoose Room, named in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt, is a cozy room with a working fireplace and is ideal for executive or private parties. It is the quintessential American room. The Lincoln Room contains the original theater program of "Our American Cousin" which President Lincoln was holding when he was shot by John Wilkes Booth. A large painting by Alexander Pope dominates the largest of the private party rooms, the Lambs Room. Numerous photographs of the Shakespearean actors who form the original Lambs Club in London are on display. A pianist is available for the rooms Mason & Hamilton grand piano. The Lillie Langtry Room displays the most feminine touch at Keens. The walls and furnishings are of 19th century carved oak. One wall of the room is lined with the original poster for the Broadway show "Peck's a Bad Boy", one of the largest and earliest surviving American color woodcuts.



Keens Chophouse has rightly become famous for its collection of Single Malt Scotches. With over a hundred and fifty single malts, Keens has one of the largest collections in the nation.

Much of the elegance and sophistication of 1885 New York may be gone forever. At Keens, however, you can still dine in its former splendor.

The New York Times

DINING OUT *Regina Schrambling*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2001

The Great Escape, at Vintage Tables



NATIONAL GUARDSMEN were pacing the waiting room at Grand Central Terminal. A zipper in a newsstand was reeling out an update from a newspaper that read like an inscription on a Barbarian photograph: "Terror could come at any time."

And down on the concourse, time seemed to have stopped at the Oyster Bar. Sitting at a horseshoe-shaped counters, tucking into a pan roast with enough cream to stun a cardinal could have been lunching in 1928 or 1985 or on any one of those halcyon days before 9/11.

Strands of white Christmas lights accentuated the patina of age in the restaurant, opened with the terminal 88 years ago and a huge fire just four years ago. The exposed brick had the retro look of a New Jersey diner. The lettered signs listing the day's oysters had not been spewed from a computer printer. So about the place made me think of my mother grew up in the East 20's and could have eaten the same counter. And she's been gone from Manhattan since World War II and from this world for 10 years.

The notion that she and I walked the streets in a parallel city is part of the reason a weakness for vintage restaurants here. Much history has been overwritten by time, but that could be at home anywhere. But the weeks have made holdouts like Keens Steakhouse (established 1885) and the Bridge Cafe (1794, a tavern since 1829) seem even more of the cityscape.

Chasing the next new thing - another flying chef, one more designer doing business even in the bathroom - will always be part of New York life. That explains why so many restaurants rebounding these days: the reincarnation of already jammed, and every table was occupied. Lesplasse on Saturday night when I stopped by neighboring King Cole Bar for a nightcap. It is just something about a survivor that reassures. It's why I sought out the bar, the Regis hotel. It has been dispensing drinks since I have been alive.

The city has dozens of restaurants with an extended back story. Theres Bayard's, just from the smoldering World Trade Center where you can't help feeling a chill. It reminded that the building was erected 100 years ago. There's DeMonico's, from 1835, and Clarke's, from 1904, and Peter Luger, from 1888. And every one of them looks more valuable when the city seems so vulnerable.

The live I ate in during the last week of the war, the musty old relics serving tired food in smoky rooms. For the mist part, they wear their aprons proudly. The service staffs generally have a tag-team smoothness that is rare in so many restaurants where service is a way station, not a profession. The chefs

know how to dress a salad, not with some austere drizzle but with rich, creamy vinaigrettes, almost thick enough to stand a spoon in. These are places

But only the jacket is here 20 years. I am here one month.")

Keens, three blocks from the Empire State Building, is the Taj Mahal by comparison. The sleek, dark dining room, virtually every inch of its ceiling hung with clay pipes, almost reeks of history (although not as much as the pub, where steak aromas can't cancel out 116 years of smokers exhaling). It's so busy that it would never be mistaken for a museum, yet it has the high gloss of a Rockefeller room at the Metropolitan. Stepping in from 36th Street on Thursday night was like time-traveling, not to a more perfect world (Lillie Langtry famously sued the place in 1905 for excluding women) but at least to a more stable era.

The restaurant is almost a timeline for Herald Square, hanging on as the theater district moved north and department stores succumbed to the south. And it appears to have done so by staying true to its roots. Even in the last 10 boom years it continued to serve its signature mutton chop, a dish long ago supplanted by dainty lamb chops everywhere else. The huge slab is meaty but not gamy, and so richly flavored that the mint sauce served on the side, with fresh green leaves suspended in jelly, seems superfluous.

The rest of the menu reads like a steakhouse standard, with sirloin and porterhouse (for one, two-or three), with creamed spinach and baked potatoes, but there are also specials like filet mignon with scallops on bok choy. And the creamy dressing on the "three leaf" house salad, like the polished room itself, made me realize why classics become classics.

vintage uniforms. (When we asked one, a young one, what the yellow stripe on his sleeve symbolized, he said: "It's supposed to be how long I work here.")

And the classical entrees, many dating from his tenure in the kitchen in 1989, were a far cry from what any cutting-edge restaurant in Manhattan, or Brooklyn, was serving that night. In neat Virginia, which I expected to be as crudely satisfying as the Oyster Bar's was at least half a pound of good lump round tower over sautéed spinach on a light ette, with just a glaze of sauce to get all the o harmonize. Shrimp creole comprised six seasoned grilled shrimp on spicy sauce, all around a pyramid of white rice that looked I been molded in one of Madonna's bras. The time the owner stood in the middle of and ostentatiously cued the piano player in into the first of two renditions of "Happy fear and anthrax seemed a very long way

the night I trekked to the Bridge cafe, on the set near the Fulton Fish Market, forgetting happened to the city and the world was more difficult. The subway station smelled the sky to the north looked unnaturally and I felt more than a little trepidation. The s never been a beautiful place; it looks like a modest cafe in a gritty neighborhood not buffed all its rough edges even as restaurants like Mark Joseph steakhouse and have moved in.

The Bridge Cafe has history, its own and s is the restaurant where my consort and excited to spot James Beard, ensconced in a green and his green greatcoat at a corner where I career-counseled with Leslie ten one of the city's notable chefs, when king of giving up journalism for cooking. we always went - by cab, never subway - e there was a South Street Seaport.

ays feels more like San Francisco than New York that was especially true last Wednesday night made it seem such a refuge. The red ge in the window cast a warm glow that e young and the old who filled the room. the Brooklyn Bridge seemed almost close hear. Like so many vintage restaurants, it enough for conversation even when Louis g was belting away on a CD player. Only ngs and, old photographs of New York lls, above the white wainscoting, were a of where we actually were eating.

even though the menu seemed to have been ck when the Bush in the White House had e initials, that was not such a bad thing. We o condition to be challenged, only sated. ers and grilled trout with mango salsa the trick. All that mattered was that if this venerable restaurant could keep going, maybe we could, too.



The History and Stories of the Best Bars of New York

Written by Jef Klein

In 1977, historic Keens Steakhouse, a Herald Square landmark, was on the brink of demolition. Locals and regulars, as well as longtime employees, were truly depressed. Keens wasn't just a restaurant. It had a history, a real history. But Keens was dead, or about to be. The last chop was flame-broiled and served, the last pipe was smoked, and though no priest came to read the Last Rites, a reporter from the New York Times wrote about its passing. For it must pass. How could it be saved? Who could take on the hundred-year-old building, and its business, and repair it and make a go of it, during one of the worst economic crises New York has ever known?

When all else fails, call in the artists. They are the only ones with the imagination and vision, along with the practical skills, to pull it off. It doesn't hurt if it's an artist with some money, either.

A doctor and restaurateur, George Schwarz, and his wife, the late artist Kiki Kogelnik, fresh from their success at One Fifth in the Village, entered to save the day. Kogelnik and Schwarz, rushing in where no sensible angel has any business, took on the challenge. They bought the old place and lovingly refurbished it, retaining every nook and cranny and everything in them. Thanks to these folks, New York still has one of its most unique bars, restored and bustling for more than 20 years.

Keens was founded in 1885 by one Albert Keen, a well-known theatrical producer in what was then the Theater District in New York, Herald Square. The second floor of the restaurant housed the Lambs Club, a branch of the original theatrical and literary club in London. Keens Chophouse (as it was called at that time) soon became a favorite with actors and players in New York theater, and it was common to see actors in full makeup and costumes dash in from the Garrick Theater, which abutted Keens back-to-back, for a quick drink between acts. Producers, playwrights, publishers, and journalists (the New York Herald was on the Square) all crowded into the men-only bar and pipe room for a pewter mug of ale or a smoke, or both. This, plus the favored offering of two pound mutton chops, made Keens a Victorian man's dream.

This dream was shattered, of course, by a Victorian woman, none less than actress Lillie Langtry, who swept into Keens in 1901 and had to sue the restaurant to get her mutton chop. Keens recovered gracefully, mounting a sign that read, "Ladies are in luck, they can dine at Keens." Now women were free to don their dresses with

leg o'mutton sleeves and eat . . . mutton. They seemed happy enough, and as the years went on, customers of both sexes continued to patronize the place. In 1935, the one millionth mutton chop was sold, amid fanfare and mint sauce.

Albert Keen opened a Pipe Club as part of Lambs and continued the club when he opened Keens. With a lifetime membership for five dollars, a member would keep his pipe (or hers) at the club. The reason for the club stems as much

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from tradition as it does from practicality. In England, clay pipes, or "churchwardens" as they were called, were preferred. These pipes were too fragile to carry from place to place, and so the custom of leaving them at one's tavern or club became popular practice. Keens modeled itself on this old tradition, and had a pipe warden, who catalogued the collection, and pipe boys who delivered the pipes tableside. Numbered and stored hanging from the rafters, the pipes today, some 50,000 of them, started out their lives made of white porous clay, but are now brown with age and smoke. The ones with broken stems are those belonging to the faithful departed.

But back to Kiki and George, who came on the scene relatively late in Keens's life. Initially told that it would cost about \$30,000 to renovate the place, they forged ahead. Ahead into a restoration that ended up taking more than three years and costing more than \$1.4 million. When you have 50,000 pipes to take down gingerly before you can install an updated air conditioning system, it costs money. Nobody could stand in the cellar, so the ceiling needed to be raised. The bar was too short and it needed lengthening, and during its removal, the floor was discovered to be

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dangerously sagging. In the end it was worth every penny. Every artifact was cleaned and restored. There are a lot of artifacts here. Drinking at Keens is like drinking in a museum, only you can go up close to the exhibits. There are more than 500 pieces of theatrical memorabilia, postcards and playbills from more than a hundred years ago. Most precious among these is a playbill from *Our American Cousin* that is purportedly the one that

Lincoln was holding when he was shot. There are brown stains on the playbill, supposedly Lincoln's blood. A newspaper clipping from the era is framed on the wall and tells the story of how the playbill was retrieved from under Lincoln's seat after the assassination, and how it ended up at Keens. The Smithsonian may be very interested to examine this playbill closely, but for now, it's on display in Keens's Lincoln Room.

There's a huge painting by Alexander Pope and a lithograph billboard for *Peck's Bad Boy*. There are nineteenth century political cartoons from *Puck* and *Punch* in the Lincoln Room. There are photos of the Shakespearean actors who formed the original Lambs Club in London and a Mason & Hamlin grand piano. There is a room devoted to Keens regular Teddy Roosevelt, that old Knickerbocker, with Bull Moose Party and Rough Rider memorabilia. There's an authentic British Royal Coat of Arms, carved in oak, that came from Hearst Castle. There are pipes, lots and lots of pipes, everywhere you look. The ones owned by famous people are kept in display cases in the foyer. Buffalo Bill, Herbert Hoover, Babe Ruth, General MacArthur, Adlai Stevenson, Will Rogers, Florenz Ziegfeld, Albert Einstein, and practically every mayor since the turn of the last century are represented.

The food at Keens has remained true to its history. Now a chop and steak house, Keens continues to enjoy a loyal following. The theaters may have moved uptown long ago, but Madison Square Garden and midtown are just a couple of blocks away. The pipe smokers are gone, though once in a while someone comes in to claim a pipe. Manager Bonnie Jenkins, who's been with Schwarz for fifteen years, says that recently a woman came in for her grandfather's pipe. It took a bit of doing to track it down. (There are 90,000 of them, after all.) "We were on chairs with the liashlights, peering at numbers," says Jenkins good-naturedly. They found it, and the inheritor brought it home to proudly display. Is it hard keeping watch over so many objects, so much history? Jenkins smiles. She clearly loves her job. "There are times when I ask Kiki (who died in 1997) for help," she says. Kogelnik put so much creative and hands-on energy into Keens, it became a labor of love for the artist, and her mark is still there more than 20 years later. Thanks to her, an Austrian-born citizen, and Schwarz, who was born in Frankfurt and escaped the Nazis as a child, New York has preserved some key moments in its own, and the nation's, history.

The New York Times

RESTAURANTS *Frank Bruni*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2005

Where the Lore Is Part of the Lure

There's a secret to the surprising mellowness of the "legendary mutton chop" at Keens Steakhouse, a restaurant long synonymous with that gargantuan slab of meat. (The menu announces it with a verbal trumpet blast.)

There's a simple reason it has none of the gaminess that diners expect of mutton, which is sheep, and instead reminds them of lamb, the younger version they know and trust.

Nix the trumpet and commence a drum roll: it is lamb. The mutton lore is a mutton lie. For at least two decades and perhaps many more, the legendary mutton chop has indeed been a matter of legend. The following sentence is inevitable, as is the one on its tail. Diners have had the wool pulled over their eyes.

But they haven't been fleeced. The mutton chop at Keens, a 26-ounce saddle of lamb, skirted with fat and nearly two inches tall, can wear whatever label it pleases, because it provides about as much pleasure as a carnivore could want.

So, for that matter, does Keens, a meaty Mecca since 1885, artery-clogging proof that not all good things must come to pass, though they may indeed have to adapt to new times by toying with certain traditions.

In the case of Keens, those traditions include true-blue mutton chops, which it once served. It kept the name even after it lost the sheep. It's nostalgic like that.

No restaurant in New York City pays the kind of lavish, often kooky, sometimes even touching tribute to the past that Keens does.

Look to the ceilings of various dining rooms, which are spread over two floors of three connected townhouses, and behold row upon row of clay pipes. There are more than 50,000 of them, the property of Keens customers who, in tobacco-friendlier times, stowed and used them in the restaurant.

Keens had what it called a pipe club, with members including Babe Ruth and Theodore Roosevelt. Even after smoking in restaurants went the way of absinthe, Keens inducted honorary members into the club, famous customers as diverse as Dr. Ruth Westheimer and Dr. Renee Richards, Liza Minnelli and Stephen King. There are pipes bearing their

signatures in a glass case beside the main entrance.

Keens is a trove not only of protein but also of memorabilia. Its dark-paneled walls display vintage photographs, vintage political cartoons and vintage playbills.

On a poignant note, in a room often used for private dining, Keen has what it identifies as the theatrical program that Abraham Lincoln was holding when he was shot.

On a humorous note, in the main vestibule, it has what it identifies as "dinosaur sirloin," supposedly a fossil from the Red Rocks area of Utah. It looks like reddish-brown marble, and a sign with it says that in the opinion of Keens, it has not yet been aged long enough to be cooked.

Keens expertly dry-ages its beef, which it serves in an array of cuts, all of them memorable and almost all of them mammoth: sirloin, filet mignon, prime rib, porterhouse for two, porterhouse for three.

On my visits the restaurant put a nice char on any and every cut that was supposed to have it, and it cooked everything to its requested temperature. It proved itself to be not only one of the city's most charming and diverting theaters for testosterone cuisine but also one of its most reliable.

And it presented a few surprisingly effective cameos, most notably a fried chicken salad available only at lunch. Morsels of tender breast kept company with hunks of Stilton cheese, several kinds of lettuces and a sparingly applied vinaigrette.

Keens doesn't consign a diner to iceberg with blue cheese, though that's a very happy fate. It also serves a salad of arugula, bibb lettuce, basil and watercress, and both times I had it, the greens and herbs were springy and fresh.

Other digressions from the beefy, lamby norm proved perilous. A half chicken had been left on the rotisserie at least 10 minutes too long. A gigantic wedge of salmon had an impressively silken texture but a muffled flavor. (Was it really wild, as the menu claimed?) Fried calamari were a rubbery wreck.

It could be argued that a person who orders these dishes in a steakhouse gets what he or she deserves. But a steakhouse should come through with a stronger lineup of desserts than Keens did. Most of the

ones I tried were instantly forgettable.

The service was usually a graceful departure from the studied gruffness of some other traditional steakhouses. Keens paid attention to details.

A glass of iced tea arrived with a fresh mint leaf floating on its surface. A refill wasn't a refill: it was a new glass with a new leaf. Water was poured from a pewter pitcher. In deference to the holiday season, a big stuffed moose head wore a little red Santa cap.

Keens is mischievous like that. Cue the mutton.

Because Keens changed ownership in the late 1970's, a definitive comprehensive mutton history seems to be out of reach. But the restaurant's current manager, Bonnie Jenkins, investigated the matter at my request.

Keens began with real mutton, which is often defined in this country as sheep of about a year or more in age. In 1935, the restaurant reached and publicly celebrated a milestone: one million mutton chops served. Apparently, Keens was an early, upscale McDonald's of mutton.

World War II came. Deprived Americans ate more mutton than they wanted, and as it later fell farther and farther out of fashion, getting fresh mutton of reliable quality became iffy. At some point Keens had to turn to lamb, choosing a cut with a winged shape that mimicked the mutton chop of yore.

Keens was using lamb in place of mutton when its current owner reopened it in 1981 following several years of extensive renovations. It was using lamb when subsequent newspaper and magazine articles about Keens appeared under headlines like "Mutton Place" and "Of Mutton and Men."

And it is using lamb now, although it tries to get lamb around 10 months in age, which is older than most of the lamb we eat, including the thickcut rack at Keens.

That doesn't make it mutton, but it does seem to give it a more robust taste, like lamb with an exponent, lamb on steroids. Call it near-mutton. Call it extreme lamb. Go ahead and call it legendary. In more ways than one, it warrants that tag.



MIDTOWN TIME CAPSULE Keens Steakhouse has been drawing meat lovers to West 36th Street since 1885.

Keens Steakhouse

★★

72 West 36th Street, Midtown; (212) 947-3636.

ATMOSPHERE Its various rooms teeming with memorabilia, paneled in dark wood and decorated with a dense canopy of clay pipes, the restaurant is a cozy time capsule, a kooky tavern on testosterone.

SOUND LEVEL Variable. Extremely loud, for example, in the Lambs Room, but moderate in the Bullmoose Room.

RECOMMENDED DISHES Iceberg with blue cheese; fried chicken salad; sirloin steak; prime rib; mutton chop (saddle of lamb); porterhouse; apple crisp.

WINE LIST Befitting a steakhouse, an emphasis on big reds, especially from California. American and French wines dominate a concise international list.

PRICE RANGE Lunch appetizers, \$7.50 to \$16; large salads and other entrees, \$14.50 to \$42.50. Dinner appetizers, \$7.50 to \$16; entrees, \$24 to \$42.50; desserts, \$7 to \$8.50.

HOURS From 11:45 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. From 5 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Saturday and to 9 p.m. Sunday. Full menu available only in pub room and bar between 3 and 5:30 p.m. most days.

RESERVATIONS For prime dinner times just before events at Madison Square Garden, call a few days in advance.

CREDIT CARDS All major cards.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS Entrance to bar at street level; a few steps down, with ramp available, to tables in adjacent pub room. Restrooms are inaccessible.

WHAT THE STARS MEAN:

(None) Poor to satisfactory
★ Good
★★ Very good
★★★ Excellent
★★★★ Extraordinary

Ratings reflect the reviewer's reaction to food, ambience and service, with price taken into consideration. Menu listings and prices are subject to change.

ON THE WEB

PAST REVIEWS from The Times, with additional capsule reviews by Times critics:

nytimes.com/dining

THE TASTING PANEL

By Marguerite Richards

JUNE, 2009

Keens on Brown Spirits

Enter Keens and you may understand the definition of time warp. Step through the polished brass entryway into 1885 and you'll hear more tales about the place than there are cuts of USDA prime on the menu. Decorating the various dining rooms are such collectibles as Lincoln's own playbill from the night of his assassination, and a giant moose head, a gift from Teddy Roosevelt. But it isn't until you stumble upon a framed piece of filet mignon, "dry-aged for over 75 million years," that you stop trying to figure out what's true and what's myth; it's just too much fun to go along for the ride. Originally a smoking club, the restaurant boasts more than 50,000 pipes, registered to celebrated members such as Babe Ruth and Will Rogers, covering the dining room ceilings. The wait staff is all New York character and charm, and no plain Jane has ever survived that crew. A thousand touches make this place unique—and to top the list, an incredible whisk(e)y menu with which only a few Manhattan bars can compete.

Tim McBride, whisk(e)y expert and spirits buyer for Keens, met with THE TASTING PANEL to share his favorites.

Scotch Stop

There's no doubt that because of the 250-single malt selection, many people actually come to Keens just for the scotch. While single malt drinkers tend to be more mature—and willing to pay for what they like—curious 20-somethings are eager for an education as well. "A scotch novice will start with The Glenlivet, and eventually want to start tasting more complex whiskies, like Laphroaig, Lagavulin and Talisker," McBride notes. "For people who really enjoy single malt, it becomes an obsession." In 1905, actress Lillie Langtry was refused service in the gentlemen-only club, so she took Keens to court to gain access for all women, and won her case. According to McBride, "Women that come into Keens are pretty knowledgeable about spirits and tend to choose more accessible whiskies with a lot of complexity like Cragganmore and Glenmorangie."

Taste Trends

The rebirth of the cocktail wasn't just about gin replacing vodka; it was also about rye replacing bourbon. McBride brought rye back to the Manhattan at Keens. "Rye brings a spice to the drink that bourbon doesn't, adding complexity to the Manhattan," he says. Old Overholt rye is the well choice at Keens because "a bourbon drinker wouldn't object to it; it bridges the gap between bourbon and rye with a nice kick of spicy oak. It's easy to work with," says McBride.

Over the last decade, distillers have also been experimenting with the flavors people have come to expect. A single malt lover



used 'to be able to tell where a whisky came from by the way it tasted: smoky and peaty from Islay; honey and heather, often Speyside; Lowlands, always oily. But now, "people are pushing the envelope everywhere," McBride advises, like with Benriach's Curiositas. It hits you with an initial sweetness characteristic of Speyside, but it's peated. Why are they changing it up? "They saw a way to distinguish themselves from the other Speyside distillers, which all pretty much have the same flavor profile," McBride opines.

House Favorites

Today, the popularity of Jameson Irish whiskey is phenomenal, making it a top-seller at Keens. "It's smooth, it's sweet, it's easy to drink, but it's not a whiskey you sit and contemplate things over, like The Glenlivet. The Glenlivet is a lot of things that Jameson is—sleek and smooth, but with flavors you're never going to get with Jameson. It's something you savor and enjoy on a deeper level." McBride offers Keens bar patrons the cask-strength Nadurra, his favorite Glenlivet, claiming that back in 1850, "this was how it tasted; non-chill-til-tered, it's The Glenlivet in its most natural state."

McBride's most recent single malt crush, Glenmorangie Astan has "the sweetness you would expect from a bourbon, but all the subtlety and nuance you find in a single malt." As with any connoisseur, McBride likes to be surprised, as he was with Longrow Campbeltown malt, a peated whisky unusual for the Springbank distillery where it's made. "You get the characteristic oiliness, and that maritime influence you don't usually get with Springbank."

McBride is on a mission to bring the Keens whiskey list to 300, and with 260 and counting, there are several dozen more discoveries to be made—certainly enough to keep the Keens bar in the spotlight for another hundred years.

The New York Times

WEEKEND IN NEW YORK *Seth Kugel*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2007

Lift a Wee Dram All Over Town

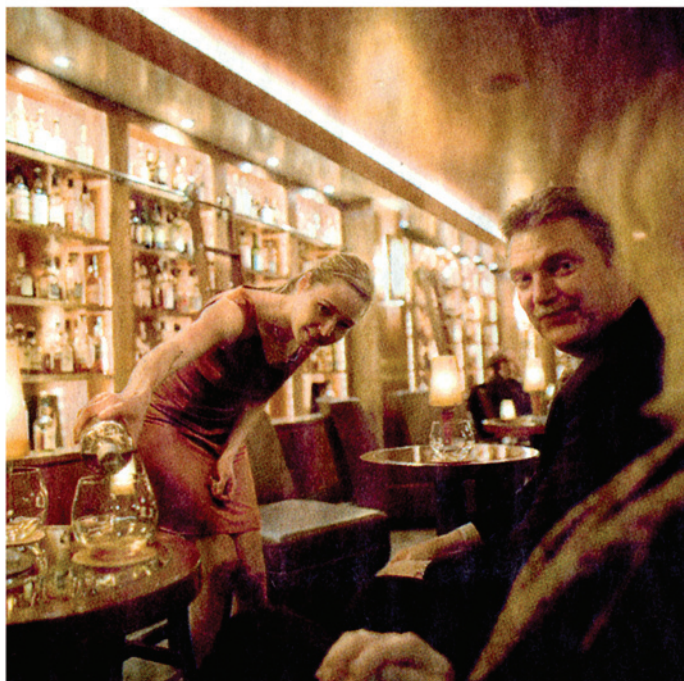
IF your knowledge of Scotch begins with Johnnie Walker and ends at "on the rocks," a weekend spent tasting expensive single malts at whiskey bars around the city might seem pointless, even intimidating.

But you would be underestimating the evangelical fervor of the New York City Scotch enthusiast. Unlike the wine world, where sophisticates frown upon bumpkins who cannot distinguish a muscadine from a super-Tuscan, the inability to tell a Highlands from an Islay (or even a single malt from a blend) will hardly cause you grief. Be it a bartender, a waitress or the guy grinning on the next stool over, there is always somebody ready to give advice (this is New York, after all), hoping to bring another drinker into the figurative folds of the Scotch-lover's collective kilt.

No one may do it better than Ethan Kelley, the (kiltless) spirit sommelier at the Brandy Library in TriBeCa. The nightspot is warmly lit, practically sepia-toned, and the male-female ratio is balanced beyond all expectations, given that it's a place that has 10 pages of single-malt Scotches on the menu, including the 20-year Bruichladdich, the 12-year Cragganmor and the very rare 25-year Talisker.

And Mr. Kelley is a down-to-earth guy with a knack for sensing your (pitiful) knowledge and tailoring his advice to your needs (and not pushing expensive whiskeys on those who would not appreciate them). He runs a free tasting every Saturday from 5 to 8 p.m. The rest of the night, he appears to be connected to an alarm that sounds when a patron opens to the single-malt section of the menu. You can't smoke inside the Brandy Library, though it will sell you a cigar. But those for whom Scotch and cigars go together like beer and pretzels need not fear New York City's smoking ban: several places were grandfathered in and specialize in just such a lung-and-liver-damage combination.

At Club Macanudo on the Upper East Side, you can puff on a long list of cigars and choose from about 50 single malts. Smoking a cigar with your Scotch does come with a risk: the ash of your cigar falling into your Scotch glass might add a few new (and unwanted) smoky notes to your 12-year Laphroaig.



Robert Caplin for The New York Times

Lisa Gutting Pours a drink at the Brandy Library in TriBeCa

SCOTLAND'S GIFT TO THE WORLD

Brandy Library 25 North Moore Street (Hudson and Varick Streets), (212) 226-5545.

Club Macanudo 26 East 63rd Street (Madison and Park Avenues), (212) 752-8200.

d.b.a. 41 First Avenue (Second and Third Streets), (212) 475-5097.

Hudson Bar & Books 636 Hudson Street (Horatio and Jane streets), (212) 229-2642.

Macanudo has just relaxed its no-jeans dress code (still no sneakers), but other places can be more annoying. Lexington Bar & Books, also on the Upper East Side, sticks to its blue-blood neighborhood pedigree by sticking hard to the dress code posted at the entrance. (Dress shirts tucked in, no sneakers, jacket preferred.) What's it like inside? Um, couldn't tell you.

At least at its sister location, you don't have to dress up. Hudson Bar & Books is worthy of the West Village, and its 50 or so single-malt options worthy of a visit. But there is a two drink minimum on weekends that

Keens Steakhouse 72 West 36th Street (Fifth and Sixth Avenues; sign reads "Keen's Chophouse"), (212) 947-3636.

Lexington Bar & Books 1020 Lexington Avenue (73rd Street), (212) 717-3902.

St. Andrews Pub 120 West 44th Street (Broadway and Sixth Avenue), (212) 840-8413.

might not work for those participating in a Scotch hop.

Those interested in the full Scottish experience should head to St. Andrews Pub in Midtown, where the bartenders wear kilts. Saturdays from 9 p.m. to midnight the pub has live Celtic music in the bar area. The menu has some Scottish flair, with items like haggis - ground sheep organs served at St. Andrews with mashed potatoes and turnips. (Don't worry, there are plenty of non-Scottish items, too.) The waiters and waitresses are trained in Scotch awareness, and your server would be happy to put together a

three-Scotch flight for the reasonable price of \$15.

One place where the old-school décor oozes Scotch. (alas, not literally) is the bar at Keens Steakhouse near Herald Square, the perfect place for your post-Macy's single malt. A crowd diverse in age and dress helps diffuse any stuffiness, as do the trivia questions posed on the chalkboard. Even if you insist on Japanese whiskey over all others, Keens can still accommodate you.

KEENS even posts a list of whiskey's positive properties. It was written in the 16th century, so the medical science behind it might be bit outdated. Among the curative properties? It helps digestion, eliminates lispings, prevents the heart from swelling and, most important, keeps the mouth from snaffling. (Snaffling? The Scotch Whisky Association in Edinburgh says the document is probably suggesting that whiskey is good for clearing the throat.)

Still, if you ask John Hansell, publisher and editor of Malt Advocate, a quarterly magazine for whiskey enthusiasts that's based in Pennsylvania, what his favorite Scotch spot in New York City is, you won't get one of these places with leather seating, an air of sophistication or an upscale clientele.

He goes for d.b.a., an 'East Village bar that is just a step above being a dive and is probably better known for its mind-boggling, if not mind-altering, beer selection. But its Scotch collection is no slouch, and Mr. Hansell recommends testing d.b.a.'s stock of well-regarded whiskeys from defunct distilleries like Port Ellen' while you still have a chance. The only disadvantage is that on weekends it might become too hectic to get sound Scotch advice.

Those who catch the Scotch bug have nine months to tune their palates before the 10th annual Whisky-Fest New York, at the Marriott Marquis on Oct. 30. There will be about 200 kinds of whiskey available to test your expertise, including plenty of single-malt and blended Scotch. If it turns out that you still can't tell Cutty Sark from Glenlivet, no problem: Halloween is the next day, and you can at least masquerade as a Scotch connoisseur.

NEW YORK POST

FOOD *Steve Cuozzo*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2002

Mutton Place

MAYOR Mike, interviewed by the BBC last year, offered this advice for a long life: "If you want to stay healthy, stay out of the sun, don't eat red meat and don't smoke."

Keens Steakhouse delivers on one-third of Dr. Bloomberg's prescription: It definitely keeps you out of the sun. It's hard to find a restaurant that feels more subterranean, thanks to dark wood, low ceilings and windows frosted to near-opacity.

But the 50,000 clay smoking pipes hanging from the ceiling commemorate lung abuse down the generations. And Keens' awesome mutton chop, the house special, ranks as Public Artery Killer No. 1. It's the best reason I know to look forward to autumn's shortened days, when the quickening chill calls for the richest red meat your system can take.

"At Neiman Marcus," the lady at the next table said over a working lunch, "they have a saying - not that the customer is always right, but the customer is never wrong." At Keens, mutton-eaters have not been wrong since 1885, when the place opened as a hangout for the theater district then concentrated around Herald Square.

In 1935, it sold its one-millionth order of mutton. In

1995, it changed its name from "chophouse" to "steakhouse," but hedged its bet by keeping "chophouse" on the awning.

The wood paneling and leather banquettes and booths, although not quite as old as the room itself, cast you back in time. So do vintage theatrical and vaudeville posters; we can only wonder what we missed not being around for The Turkish Harem or Kelly & Leon's Minstrels.

The act to catch today is the mutton chop (\$35 at lunch or dinner), the four-star king of carnivorous joy. The meat of mature sheep (at least 2 years old) is a singular pleasure - as superior to lamb as a textured older Bordeaux is to a promising but unrealized younger bottle from the same chateaux.

Keens likes to serve it medium; let them. After 117 years, they've got the hang of it. The specimen, an inch and a half deep, arrives in a pool of its juice. If you worry about gaminess, don't: Mutton is mustier than lamb, but it isn't organ meat. Nor does it have the moldy quality dry-aged beef acquires if it's hung a day too long.

Of course, it isn't chicken, either. Expect deep, fat-sweetened flavor and surprisingly pliant texture. It doesn't need mint jelly, but Keens' is the best anywhere - freshly made, not green but amber

and sharp enough for a mojito.

The rest of the menu is predictable - like shrimp cocktail (\$14), hard to tell from the ice it's served with, and nicely-marbled T-bone steaks (\$37.50) bigger than some neighborhoods. Prime rib (in \$23 or \$35 cuts), like prime rib everywhere, recalls your last hotel wedding. Fresh limeade (\$3.50) at lunch is a rare treat.

You can have steak anywhere, although the intense-flavored, Certified Angus Beef recently introduced at Bull & Bear in the Waldorf-Astoria throws down the gauntlet to other steakhouses.

But only Keens has mutton on the menu all the time. And the cold nights are coming.



Jonathan Barth

Fifty thousand clay pipes hang from the ceiling and the mutton chop is awesome at Keens

Of Mutton and Men

Keen's Chop House

By JAMES BEARD, FEBRUARY 1950

James Beard made his GOURMET debut in the summer of 1942 with a piece on barbecue cooking and wrote several New York restaurant reviews before he and the publisher had a falling out. Word drifted up to the magazine's offices in The Plaza hotel about Beard whooping it up in the Oak Room several times too many. Beard, in the doghouse for 20 years, was a household name by the time he was welcomed back with a cooking series.

THIS WOULD SEEM to be the month for old times' sake. We have been chophousing again. But let me say right here that the art of the chophouse per se, as it was known in the days of Henry Irving or Olive Fremstad or others who enjoyed the glories of well-cooked, well-aged meat in a pleasantly clubby atmosphere, is all but gone. Nowadays, in this chromium and plastic age, the comfortable, massive atmosphere of wood and leather and mellowness seems to have vanished. There are, however, a handful of real holdouts in this greater New York of ours, and I have sought out one of them with the first days of winter, actually upon us at last.

Uptowners are dangerously wont to forget **Keen's English Chop House** at 72 West 36th Street. Its geography is ideal for the opera or one of the theaters below the mid-forties. Here is the true chophouse, more or less as it has been since 1885. That's 65 years ago! Naturally, there has been expansion over the years, but there still lingers on the aura of smoky wood, the same old theatrical posters and pictures, the same racks upon racks of pipes marked with the names of many past and present great. It is a nostalgic setting.

I have only one thought when I think of Keen's—mutton. I am certain that at this point no other restaurant in New York exists where one may feast on such pedigree mutton chops as those at Keen's. They are of well-aged Canadian or northwestern mutton, carefully



selected and trimmed to about three quarters of a pound each. Then the chops are slowly broiled under a low flame, placed in a slow oven, and broiled a second time. As a consequence, there is a mutton chop which is well cooked and appetizingly pink without having its outside charred and its inside raw. It is really neither well done nor rare, but a medium chop of hot, hearty juiciness. Its essential muttony flavor puts everyday chops momentarily in the pale. A giant baked Idaho potato, with literally ounces of butter on it, bursts out from its crisp brown shell, steaming fragrantly alongside its good companion.

As if that were not enough, there is also a robust mutton-chop combination, including kidney, sausage, and bacon with the gargantuan chop. Here is simplicity in food in gourmet terms! No sauce, no other embellishments, just sheer good food and good cooking. A mug of beer or ale with this, please.

Is it roast beef you crave this brisk winter evening? Keen's again hits man's vulnerable spot with really superb

ribs of beef. For a truly Brobdingnagian appetite, there is an extra cut which is almost enough for a small family.

If you would toy with steak, Keen's serves some of the best aged beef in New York, perfectly cooked and served. If you wander in with a small appetite, let me suggest the sirloin steak sandwich, which is in reality a minute steak of excellent flavor.

But you need not choose such weighty things at Keen's. There is a huge menu featuring fish and seafood and such homely dishes as old-

fashioned chicken with ham Virginia-style. The desserts are of the more traditional chophouse variety, and very good they are. You'll find apple and other fruit pies along with such familiar items as rice pudding and ice cream. On Mondays there is a famous beefsteak and kidney pudding which has been ordered and reordered endlessly down the years.

KEEN'S TODAY

Keen's gigantic mutton chop is still a magnificent piece of meat, richly gamy, crisped and brown at the edges, a bouncy, beautiful rare—and flanked on each side by flaps of meat whose shape leaves no doubt where the term "mutton chop" sideburns comes from. Some culinary relics are worth holding on to.

—Jonathan Gold

72 West 36th Street
212-947-3636

Lunch weekdays, 11:45 A.M. to 3 P.M.
Dinner Monday through Friday, 5:30 to 10:30 P.M.; Saturdays and Sundays, 5 to 10:30 P.M. Dinner: main courses, \$21.50 to \$37.50. ☐

The New York Times

By Rita Reif

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1982

Restoring Keen's: It Just Looked Easy

IT seemed to Kiki Kogelnik and Dr. George Schwarz that it would be a cinch to reopen one of New York's oldest restaurants, Keen's Chop House, at 72 West 36th Street.

Indeed, the turn-of-the-century interiors were seedy but intact. All the elements that had charmed visitors for 80 years — the Elizabethan facade with its leaded casement windows, the paneled walls covered with theatrical memorabilia, the sturdy banquettes, the robust mahogany and brass bars, the ceilings lined with 50,000 clay pipes and the bare-bulb lighting — were in place.

And so, Miss Kogelnik and Dr. Schwarz reasoned, all it needed was a thorough cleaning, a coat of paint and the slight alteration of an entrance way, and they would be in business within a month or two.

"The architect we asked to check out the building told us, 'No problem — it should cost \$20,000 to \$30,000 to fix it up,'" Miss Kogelnik recalled. That was a masterpiece of understatement, as Miss Kogelnik, an artist, and Dr. Schwarz, a radiotherapist and her husband, soon discovered.

What proved necessary was a cellar-to-attic restoration of the six-story building, a meticulous renovation that took three and a half years and cost more than \$1.4 million. A major saving was Miss Kogelnik's contribution: she served as designer and contractor.

The revelation that there was far more than met the architect's eye came when they tackled what they thought would be the largest job. "We started work in the first bar," Miss Kogelnik said, explaining that the entrance to that space was too small and would have to be enlarged. While they were about it, they decided to move the

wall dividing the bar and the kitchen. It was when the wall was ripped out that they discovered a major problem: the floors sagged in the kitchen and the first and second bars.

Engineers were called in to decide what should be done. For starters they said that those floors would have to be replaced, as would the worn-out sewer line in the basement. There was more. "The building levitated," Dr. Schwarz said, explaining that the footings in the foundations had to be repaired to prevent the building from shifting. Since the basement ceiling was too low — no one could stand there — it was decided to excavate, enlarging the space to eight feet high from four.

Speaking of the building, Miss Kogelnik said, "It had been rebuilt so often it's no wonder that these structural problems remained." The building, a series of three brownstones renovated at different times from 1902 on, had supporting walls missing so that beams on the second floor were unsupported.

The antiquated 1936 air-conditioning had to be replaced, necessitating the temporary removal of the 50,000 clay pipes to open the ceiling above them. Other major projects included rewiring, rerouting the sprinkler system and installing new plumbing, a boiler, ice-making machines, kitchen appliances and a laundry. The biggest job of all was the removal of six staircases and the installation of a cement and metal staircase that goes from the first to the sixth floor.

The theatrical memorabilia covering the walls were painstakingly restored by Jayne Bliss Nodlund. She cleaned and rematted each of the more than 500 items, a task that took a year.

Other changes start on the exterior — no longer gray but white, a logical



The New York Times / Gene Maggio
Two folk portraits from about 1840, which Kiki Kogelnik renamed Mr. and Mrs. Keen, hang amid memorabilia.

color for the castle that became an image in Miss Kogelnik's mind the first time she saw the building on New Year's Day 1978. "It looked like a castle in a fairy tale," she said. "There was snow on the roof and all over the building."

At that point the restaurant had been closed for eight months. It came into being as the dining room of the Lambs Club within a decade after the club was founded in this country in 1874. The establishment has been in one of its present buildings since 1902, when Albert Keen, its manager, moved out of the Lambs building at 78 West 36th Street to open his chop house next door.

A gathering place of theatrical personalities, newspaper people and political figures, it displays long-stemmed churchwarden pipes that were smoked by Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft and Herbert Hoover, by John Barrymore, Florenz Ziegfeld and Will Rogers, and by Grace Moore.

There is no pipe for Lillie Langtry, who is remembered for a particular reason. Keen's, originally a male stronghold, changed when, at the turn of the century, Mrs. Langtry was refused service and sued on grounds of discrimination. She won.

Keen's Has a Way With Mutton

Chop, With Ale in Pewter Mug, Is Hungry Man's Meal; 'Stereoscope' Brings the Menu to Life



Joe Engels

Adolph A. Hageman, president of A. A. Hageman, Inc., a frequent guest at Keen's Chop House for the last thirty-five years, takes a peek through the menu viewer, then as always tells waiter Thomas Wright, forty years with the restaurant, "Make mine mutton"

By Clementine Paddleford

What cooks? French pictures? The waiter handed us a black box affair which looked like the old-time stereoscope, you know—look and behold! Niagara Falls in full color, change the card, there's Pike's Peak—sometimes bathing beauties and strip-tease artists, for men only, of course.

This little box—oo la la—mutton chops! A beautiful chop sliced down showing the red meat, this accompanied by a baked potato, a pounder, no less, split and holding a big square of melting butter. A mixed green salad on the side, a pewter mug crested in foaming ale.

Change the slide and, "soothe the cockles of the heart" as rare

roast ribs of beef come into full view. And broiled ham steak: "Let sweet contentment spread upon the cheeks." Each time the waiter slipped in a slide another menu special was presented full color and in three dimensions, exactly as it would appear on the table if ordered.

Seven menu choices are presented in this "viewer for victuals" and more set-ups now in preparation. Eventually every specialty of Keen's English Chop House, 72 West Thirty-sixth Street, may be seen viewer style. The only trouble for us is that to view such savory viands makes choice most difficult. The point is that the guest unfamiliar with the dishes of the house may see what's what before ordering. Folks come from all parts of the world, having heard of

Keen's fame, then don't know what to order once they get there. Now when a waiter sees a "doubtful" pondering the menu he hands him a viewer. Since the novelty was introduced early this week the seven viewers have been in constant circulation. Every guest wants a peek.

MATTER OF MUTTON—Old-timers—and Keen's specialize in customers who return and return—need no viewer, no menu. They know what they want—mutton chops, or roast beef, or beefsteak, or steak-and-kidney pie when the day is Monday. We know what we want, a mutton chop always. These come from Canada and the Northwest, from sheep weighing seventy-five pounds and upward, no light-weights, if you please. Some 200 mutton chops are prepared there daily, chops which before cooking tip the scales at two pounds and over. At the finish there is about three-fourths pound of edible lean meat to the portion. These chops are truly tender, and because they are most people think there is some secret trick in the cooking. The secret is in the aging, which continues over a period of two to five weeks. This conditioning is the great pride of Chef Natali Mairano, who plumes himself on his talent as did Victorian butchers. Meat au point is an art lost—but not at Keen's Chop House. There the mutton tradition goes on in full bloom.

"Gently stir and blow the fire, lay the mutton down to roast"—but if it's a chop first to broil twenty minutes to sear in the juices. Then in to roast a moderate twenty-five minutes, out and again under the broiler heat for twenty minutes longer to melt the fat to moisten the flesh.

That chop before carving looks like an entire loin so big and brown on the plate. Then the waiter carves, plunging the knife through the golden fat into the rosy lean. Here is the perfection of simplicity, the blandness of the baked potato a foil against the fattened meat—a hungry man's meal.

ECONOMY TRICKS—Toasted rolls are as much a part of Keen's daily menu as the big chop. These had their beginning back in the teen years as an economy measure to use the leftovers. Day-old rolls were split and lightly toasted, then served warm, wrapped in a napkin—just as a trial. Immediately toasted roll orders exceeded rolls plain. Now all rolls, around 1,200 daily, are split and broiled toasted.

Keen's is a place of robust ideas, their foods favored by men. The

business started as the men's grill of the Lambs Club back in 1878, managed by Albert Keen, a theatrical figure of the day. Then the Herald Square area was Manhattan's white way. No Macy's, no Gimbel's. The old Garrick's back door faced the back door of Keen's. In the little Green Room set aside for actors the cast straggled in nightly for quick fortification.

Keen's was a man's place only in the beginning. Then one day, oblivious of the printed notice prominently displayed at the entrance, a woman was intruding. And not merely a woman, but a young woman, a beautiful woman. It was Lily Langtry asking to be served. An outrage, but delicious to every beholding male. The waiter refused service and Lily Langtry took Keen's into court and won the case for the ladies. Promptly the restaurant advertised: "Ladies are in luck, they can dine now at Keen's."

Today the restaurant occupies three old brownstones and uses both upstairs and downstairs. The walls of the dining rooms, the tap room, the bar are plastered to the low-beamed ceiling with framed posters, with old theatrical hand bills, with pictures of the famous who have spent hours at the old tables. The ceilings are covered with clay pipes, row upon row of long "church wardens," over 2,600 in all, each one inscribed by its owner who may call at any time for his pipe for a smoke after dinner. Notice a few are white and new, more are stained brown by time and tobacco.

The custom of checking your pipe at the inn had its origin to "Merrie old England." The long-stemmed clays of early times were too fragile to carry about, so guests who frequented a tavern would check their pipe with the proprietor for safekeeping until the next visit. To have a pipe hung at Keen's means joining their pipe club. It's easy if you know some one who is in to propose your name. Many are the famous members in the register who will call no more for their pipes: William Howard Taft, Diamond Jim Brady, Theodore Roosevelt, Buffalo Bill, David Belasco, Floyd Gibbons—the list is long. Their "clays" still wait in their honored places above the tables or repose in the glass case over the fireplace.

The viewer is Manager Herman Zuch's idea. He saw the three dimensional stereoscopes used by corset salesmen. "Aha," said Herman to himself, "why not use it for menus?" And that's just what he did.

No Pipe Dream, He Minds 52,000!

The fastidious housewife who glares when hubby gets out his pipe, should consider the plight of Mrs. Peter Woods. Her husband not only owns an enormous pipe collection, but, as warden of a Manhattan pipe club, has charge of 52,000 more.

Since the club pipes are over a foot long and made of fragile clay, smokers leave them at the club. Wood's job, is to see that each one is properly filed away under the owners' name so that it can be produced at an instant's notice.

An Old Tradition

"The pipe club tradition goes back to the 17th century in England," Woods said yesterday in his offices at 70 W. 36 St.

"It was shortly before the Great Fire of 1666 that London's pipe makers became famous. Smoking, introduced earlier by Sir Walter Raleigh, had become highly fashionable."

Although pipes were then made of many materials, clay, native to England, became the favorite, Woods pointed out. They were lightly fired to keep them soft and porous and stems made long to cool the smoke. This style was called a "churchwarden" or "clay"

Stored at the Inn

Too easily broken, to be carried in purse or saddlebags, they were tenderly stored at the smoker's favorite inn, where the host cared for them. So popular were these pipes, that by the 18th century more than a million were produced yearly.

"The Elizabethan English considered smoking beneficial because it would 'dissipate evil humors of the brain,' Woods continued. "The populace emulated Shakespeare and Ben Johnson who would leisurely smoke their clays after dinner as they talked the evening away."



NEWSfoto
Pipe Warden Peter Woods hands club member Walter Nabor his favorite clay at the club.

Today, the pipe club presided over by Woods meets at Keen's Chop House, which still carries on the traditions of the ancient Mermaid Inn, which was later called the Old Cheshire Cheese.

"Here's Looking at You"

In addition to thousands of clays, the club has a supply of glass-bottomed pewter beer tankards. These go back to the Elizabethan mugs whose transparent bottoms enabled the cautious diner to watch his "friend's" sword hand while drinking. From these glasses sprang the expression, "Here's looking at you!"

Woods, 72, was born in Minnesota of English-Scotch ancestry and he worked at waiter at the old Waldorf-Astoria. He was always interested in pipes, however, and switched to Keen's 25 years ago. He started as a waiter and worked up to pipe warden in six years.

Today, he is considered an authority on pipes and old English eating customs. He numbers among his club members Raymond Massey, Rudy Vallee, Orson Wells, Eddie Rickenbacker and Sir Cedric Hardwicke.



The New York Times

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1935

1,000,000TH MUTTON CHOP.

Keen's Serves It With Procession
and Blowing of Bugle.

Keen's English Chop House, at 72 West Thirty-sixth Street, served its 1,000,000th mutton chop last "night with a colorful ceremony.

Many old-timers were present, some old enough to have vivid recollections of the days of the old playbills and theatrical programs that decorate the walls of the chop house. The dinner hour had progressed to 7:45 P. M. before the 1,000,000th chop was served and it went to Warren T. Godfroy, who is in the insurance business at 30 Broad Street.

Enthroned on a huge platter the chop was served to Mr. Godfroy, a patron of the house for a quarter

of a century, with royal service, which included a procession and the blowing of an ancient English bugle, said to have been use in the War of the Roses, by a beefeater in the traditional bright red costume. Tommy Wright, the waiter, dressed in the costume of the seventies, carried the platter and T. Catherall, the manager, made a brief presentation speech.

With Mr. Godfroy were Mrs. Godfroy, his brother-in-law, Dr. Thompson T. Sweeney of Forest Hills, Queens, who has eaten at Keen's for thirty-eight years, and Mrs. Sweeney. When Mr. Godfroy called for his check he was told that the meal was "on the house."

bon appétit

SEPTEMBER, 2009

Must-visit classic restaurants

Some restaurants never go out of style. They follow no trends. They're stubborn, charming, quirky—and we love them for that. Here are our favorite old-school spots that are every bit as good today as the day they opened. ANDREW KNOWLTON

Keens Steakhouse NEW YORK

There may be better steaks in New York, but in terms of atmosphere, service, food, and historical significance, no steakhouse can equal this 1885 Herald Square stalwart. The bar mixes up one of the city's best Manhattans. 72 West 36th Street; 212-947-3636; keens.com

