

Players Trivia

Fascinating facts about our Club ...

- Covert plans were fomented to unionize actors for the first time at The Players. In the room which was once the Library's Reading Room the Actors' Equity Association was formed.
- In 1906, charter member of The Players, Stanford White, the architect who at Booth's behest transformed 16 Gramercy Park from a townhouse into a clubhouse, took his last meal at The Players before visiting another of his triumphs, the original Madison Square Garden, and his mistress, the celebrated Evelyn Nesbit. Nesbit's husband Harry K. Thaw shot White to death on the crowded roof garden of the theatre.
- In 1892, Grover Cleveland gave the last Founders' Night address which Booth was alive to witness.
- Not incongruous when you think about it: the basic design for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC was conceived at The Players by Henry Bacon and Charles Platt. Bacon executed the design.
- Lynne Fontanne, after being honored with a Pipe Night for herself and her husband, Player Alfred Lunt in 1963, presented The Players with Sarah Siddons' reading desk.
- The brass foot rail at the base of the bar in the Grill Room was once in the bar of the National Theatre, located at the Bowery and Chatham Square in lower Manhattan. Edwin Booth made one of his earliest stage appearances there with his father Junius Brutus in *The Iron Chest*.
- The Players has long been renowned for its food -- both quality and quantity. It was served nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During the early years, a popular dish was called "Players' Stew." Oysters were involved.
- John Philip Sousa was The Players' last chess tournament champion. The year was 1917.
- Sarah Bernhardt was the first woman to ever be honored with a Pipe Night.
- What do *Doctor Doolittle* and *The Wizard of Oz* have in common? The authors of these children's' classics, Hugh Lofting and L. Frank Baum, were both Players.
- You heard it here: Player Avery Fisher contributed the (then) state-of-the art sound system when the Dining Room was renovated in 1961.
- What year were wives and other companions first invited to the Players New Year's Eve party? 1961. For decades New Year's Eve traditionally was reserved for another occasion? What was it? The celebration of Founders' Night.

- In 1963, 16 Gramercy Park was registered as a National Historic Landmark.
- Three British actors have served as President of The Players: Dennis King, Lynn Redgrave and Michael Allinson.
- Tradition was broken in 1966, when the celebration of Booth's birthday fell on a Sunday and ladies other than the female guest of honor were invited to attend.
- Many of Edwin Booth's stage costumes reside in the Theatre Collection of the Museum of the City of New York.
- "Save me, it's a Gilbert Stuart!" exclaims an awestruck Liz Imbrie in *The Philadelphia Story* by Player Philip Barry. A Gilbert Stuart also hangs in the Players. Where is it and who is the subject? The painting hangs in The Sargent Room: The portrait is of actor Thomas Abthorpe Cooper, whose daughter married President Tyler's son.
- John Singer Sargent did not paint Edwin Booth standing in front of the fireplace in the Great Hall. Booth posed first and the background was added in later. Sargent then repainted Booth's face because the subject didn't think the portrait looked like him.
- About whose picture did Peter Pan author James M. Barrie comment "A verra byutiful face. A verra byutiful face"? Mary Devlin, Edwin Booth's first wife.
- What two past Players Presidents share a birthday? Edwin Booth and John Drew, both November 13.
- The Players can boast of three Nobel Prize winners: Eugene O'Neill, Ernest Hemingway, and John Steinbeck.