

think that if you're driving a car on an icy road then you're going to get stuck somewhere," Kim said.

"Too many twists," complained one partygoer, when the lights went back on. Waiters bearing cherry-marmalade foie-gras gougères were increasingly log-jammed by celebrities—Sarah Paulson, Zosia Mamet, Anna Kendrick, Hailee Steinfeld. One waitress counselled a col-



So Yong Kim

league, "I just say, 'Excuse me, or I am going to spill this on your coat.'"

Kim, dressed in Miu Miu—a long black coat with a jewelled collar over a black belted dress—and looking very clean, camped out in a booth with Paul Dano, on whose lap the actress Zoe Kazan was perched. A man snapped photographs of the singer Solange Knowles ("Oh, my God, I love her so much it hurts," he said), then spotted Kim and gasped. "That's the director! We've got to get a picture with her." Lackawaxen seemed like a dream.

—Emma Allen

YO-HO-HO A PIRATE'S LIFE



Barry Clifford, the only person known to have recovered pirate treasure dating from the so-called golden age of piracy, around the turn of the eighteenth century, recently exhib-

ited a small selection on the second floor of the Explorers Club, on East Seventieth Street. "That's a syringe," he said, indicating a bratwurst-size pewter cylinder, which someone had guessed might be a bosun's whistle. "It was filled with tincture of mercury and was used to treat syphilis. Those are shoe buckles. Pieces of eight. A blunderbuss, still loaded. Cannonball. Broken porcelain. Pirates threw Ming vases overboard. My wife saw pieces in the water and said, 'Look at all the pretty blue-and-white clamshells!'"

Clifford found his first pirate ship, the *Whydah*, off Cape Cod, in 1984. It went down in a storm in 1717, and just eight of the hundred and eighty men aboard survived. (Two were defended in court by Cotton Mather, and were acquitted. The six others were hanged.) Clifford's main ongoing recovery effort is on and near Île Sainte-Marie, a slender island off the east coast of Madagascar. "We found Captain Kidd's ship *Adventure Galley* here," he said, pointing to a spot on a (modern, photocopied) map. "And we found the Great Mahomet right about here." At the site of the *Whydah*, a member of Clifford's crew uncovered a shoe, a stocking, and a leg bone, which Clifford, using primary sources, eventually identified as having belonged to the pirate John King, who at the time of his death was nine or ten years old. (The key piece of evidence was the shoe, roughly a size 6.) On another dive, Clifford disturbed a layer of silt above part of a wreck and was overwhelmed, through his face mask, by the smell of three-century-old pirate pee.

The event at the Explorers Club was a party to celebrate "Black Sails," a television series about pirates, on the Starz cable network. Clifford had just watched the first four episodes, twice, and he pronounced them not only dramatically compelling but also faithful to history. Minor exceptions included the condition of almost everyone's teeth. Jonathan Steinberg, a co-creator of the show, was standing near the bar. He said, "Pirates are a genre that everyone thinks is trodden-over and cliché, but, once you start reading the history and understanding what that world was like, you realize there's never been a story about those people as people who wake

up in the morning and have to do a job." Piracy, as a theme, also resonates in an interesting way with a TV genre that really has been trodden over: the Old West. "The rules for cowboys and pirates are identical," Steinberg continued, "because they're both on the edge of a civilization that can't police them. It's all the same stuff, except the pirates have ships." They also have sex, a narrative engine that hasn't always been available to television producers. (Imagine "Gunsmoke" with a naked Miss Kitty.)

At dinner, someone asked Clifford whether he kept pirate stuff just lying around his house, and he produced a three-hundred-and-twenty-year-old silver coin—a piece of eight—and passed it around the table. Hannah New, who plays Eleanor Guthrie, a beautiful and intermittently fully clothed fence for plundered cargo, asked the person sitting next to her to take a picture of her biting the coin, so that she could show her sister, a jeweller. Zach McGowan, who plays the pirate Charles Vane and was sitting directly across from New, rolled the coin over and under his fingers, a trick he'd taught himself for the show. His hair was pirate length, and he was wearing an earring and a belt with a skull buckle. "I've switched from whiskey to rum," he said.

After dessert and coffee, Richard Wiese, a former president of the Explorers Club, and also the youngest person ever to hold that position, who climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro when he was only a little older than John King was when he died, led an ascent to the club's trophy room, on the fifth floor. The room contains an elephant skull with two double tusks, the skin of a lion shot by Teddy Roosevelt, and a stuffed whale penis, among other treasures. Various guests asked to be photographed next to various treasures—mainly, the whale penis—and after that the party began to disperse. Down in the lobby, near the coat-check room, were several "Black Sails" press kits, which contained screeners of the first four episodes. The DVDs included repeated reminders of "a concern to all in our industry," and requested that viewers not sell or copy the recordings, and "return or destroy" each disk after viewing it. The concern? Piracy.

—David Owen