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Chairman, Flag & Honors Committee
The Explorers Club
46 E. 70th Street
New York, New York 10021

Re: *Flag Report to The Explorers Club, Flag No. 132*
R.M.S. Titanic 2005 Scientific and Photographic Expedition

Dear Flag & Honors Committee:

It is my great pleasure to submit the following report to The Explorers Club on the *R.M.S. Titanic* 2005 Scientific and Photographic Expedition, for which I was awarded the privilege of carrying Explorers Club Flag No. 132.

I. Overview

The *R.M.S. Titanic* 2005 Scientific and Photographic Expedition consisted of 23 members from the United States, Britain and Russia. The group was comprised of veteran *Titanic* explorers, who had previously participated in multiple expeditions to the wreck site and more than 100 dives to the *Titanic* itself; veteran shipwreck explorers; historians; scientists; two representatives of the United States State Department, including Deputy Director Robert Blumberg, principal negotiator of the International Agreement governing exploration of the *Titanic*; and a film crew preparing a documentary on the expedition for The History Channel.

The expedition's participants included several Explorers Club members: David Concannon, Expedition Leader; Dr. Anatoly Sagalevitch, Head of Submersible Operations for the P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Ralph White, Principal Underwater Cameraman; and Valerie Moore, Expedition Coordinator; John Chatterton; Richie Kohler; and Tom Maddox.

Other expedition members included Donna Concannon; Jason Maddox, Cameraman; Carrie Kohler; Diver; Kirk Wolfinger, Producer; Rush DeNooyer, Writer/Producer; Simon Mills, Titanic Historian; Roger Long, Marine Architect; Kathy Bentley, U.S. State Dept.; William Lange, HD Camera Technician, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution; and a film crew from Lone Wolf Documentary Group.

The overall purpose of the expedition was to “look outside the box.” That is, to explore areas of the wreck site that had not been fully explored during 19 prior expeditions and, more importantly, areas unknown to previous explorers. Two primary objectives were to search for a relocate a new debris field one kilometer south of the southernmost section of the wreck site, and to gather evidence to either prove or disprove the “grounding theory” of the *Titanic*’s sinking.

The expedition departed from St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada on August 10, 2005, aboard the Russian Research Vessel *Akademik Mstislav Keldysh*. The *Keldysh* is the largest scientific research vessel in the world; she serves as the mother ship for two three-person deep-diving submersibles, *Mir I* and *Mir II*, which are capable of diving to depths of 6,000 meters.

The expedition arrived at the site of the wreck of the *R.M.S. Titanic* – 49° 56' 49" West Long., 41° 43' 57" North Lat. – on August 12, 2005. Three successful dive days followed, on August 12, 14 and 16, 2005. On each day, high definition video footage of the wreck site was captured, while non-dive days were used for analysis of the footage, study and debate. The expedition departed the site on August 16, 2005, just hours before a hurricane battered the site, and arrived in St. Johns, Newfoundland again on August 12, 2005.

Post-expedition research was conducted by William Lange at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, by Simon Mills at the archives in London, England, and Tom McCluskie at Harland and Wolff in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Roger Long used his years of experience as a nautical engineer while analyzing the video footage in Maine; Ken Marschall and Explorers Club member James Cameron lent their considerable knowledge and expertise in analyzing and interpreting those images in California; while Parks Stephenson and David G. Brown were also recruited to the team, partly for their knowledge of the *Titanic* and survivor testimony, but also because their 2001 paper on the “grounding theory” had been an initial boost for this aspect of the expedition.

The History Channel program, TITANIC’S FINAL MOMENTS: MISSING PIECES, aired in the United States on February 26, 2006. The show, which was based on the expedition, was one of the highest rated programs in the network’s history. It has since been re-broadcast several times in the United States and in England.

II. Purpose

The overall purpose of the expedition was to “look outside the box.” That is, to explore areas of the wreck site that had not been fully explored during 19 prior expeditions and, more importantly, areas unknown to previous explorers. Two primary objectives were to search for a relocate a new debris field one kilometer south of the southernmost section of the wreck site, and to gather evidence to either prove or disprove the “grounding theory” of the *Titanic*’s sinking.

III. Findings

Each dive day was dedicated to fulfilling a specific objective. On Day 1, David Concannon, John Chatterton and Anatoly Sagalevitch ventured south in *Mir I* to search for and

relocate a new debris field discovered one kilometer south of the southernmost section of the wreck site by Concannon, Sagalevitch and another diver in August 2000. As the team traveled south away from the known area of the wreck site, at an average depth of 12,460 feet, the divers searched for large sections of the *Titanic*'s double bottom hull. The presence of such debris could have established the validity of the "grounding theory," which posits that the *Titanic* actually beached itself on the iceberg that fatal night in April 1912, rather than simply suffering a glancing blow, as is generally accepted. Meanwhile, Ralph White, Richie Kohler and Genya Chernaiev explored in and around the bow and stern sections of the *Titanic* wreck in *Mir 2* to look for evidence to support the "grounding theory."

Concannon, Chatterton and Sagalevitch did not find any large hull sections to the south. They did, however, rediscover the southern debris field. Only it was not a field. After several hours of exploration, the divers discovered that they had happened upon what is actually a large corridor of debris leading away from the wreck site for a distance of more than two kilometers. At the end of this trail, new geographic formations and evidence of landslides was also discovered.

On Day 2, both submersibles explored in and around the wreck site. Tom Maddox, Carrie Kohler and Victor, their Russian submersible pilot, obtained detailed high definition images of the bow and stern sections; while Ralph White and Roger Long explored the bow and stern sections, as well as the newly explored southern debris trail.

On Day 3, both submersibles ventured east of the stern section of the *Titanic*. This area to the east is the last truly unexplored area of the *Titanic* site, and Concannon, Sagalevitch and Lange knew it contained large hull sections based on their earlier dives to this area in 2000 and on other expeditions. Shortly after leaving the stern section on an easterly course, Kohler and Chatterton in *Mir 1* came upon two large sections of the *Titanic*'s double bottom hull, almost 90 feet in length and in almost pristine condition. These hull sections had been observed on previous expeditions, including by Concannon and Sagalevitch in 2000, but they had never been closely studied. *Mir 1* was soon joined by *Mir 2*, containing Bob Blumberg and Kirk Wolfinger, and both submersible teams spent several hours analyzing these hull sections and obtaining high definition digital imagery for later study.

Overall, the expedition achieved its objectives, although each dive day revealed many unexpected surprises about the *Titanic* and its sinking. The expeditions findings have been published in several articles, including articles by Concannon, Stephenson and Simon Mills. These articles attached hereto. Also attached are two articles which formed the basis of the "grounding theory," including an article by Explorers Club member Robert Williams, and the original Stephenson and Brown white paper, which was presented for consideration by the Marine Forensic Panel (SD-7) chartered by The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers in Arlington, Virginia on May 31, 2001. Finally, a documentary on the expedition has been seen by millions of people around the world, lending further to the general body of knowledge in the public domain and, hopefully, motivating a new generation of explorers to try and not be afraid to fail.

IV. Conclusion

The *R.M.S. Titanic* 2005 Scientific and Photographic Expedition successfully achieved the objectives of an Explorers Club Flag expedition. The expedition contributed to the body of unique scientific knowledge that has been obtained by exploration of the *Titanic* site, it led to a new architectural and sociological understanding of the sinking of the *Titanic*, and it pushed back the known boundaries of the *Titanic* wreck site by more than two square kilometers to the east and south.

This expedition proved there is still more to explore in this world, even in an area where doubters think we already know everything there is to know. Flag No. 132 was carried with dignity to the *Titanic* wreck site, where it served as a symbol of exploration that is older than the *Titanic* itself, and as a testament to what the human spirit can achieve.

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to carry Explorers Club Flag No. 132 on this historic expedition.

Sincerely,

/s/ David G. Concannon

Attachments