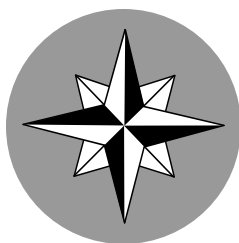




# EXPLORATIONS



## FROM THE PRESIDENT



### Inside this issue:

Land of the Wonderful Co	3
New Book Notes	6
Annual Dinner	7
Sigerson Award Winners	9
<i>The Game's Afoot!</i>	10
Book Review	11
Study Group	12
Investigating Political Life	14

As 2005 comes to a close, it's a pleasure to read this issue of *Explorations* and realize that the friendships within the Norwegian Explorers and our enjoyment of the Canon have added much to this year, and promise to do so during the upcoming new year. No matter what happens, as Sherlockian Bill Schweikert wrote in his poem, we can always "spend a long evening with Holmes." A brief recap of the events of this past year indicate that a number of our group have enjoyed Sherlockian travels, visited with friends made within the Sherlockian community, and spent many a happy hour at our meetings and study groups.

Paul Martin has written about our an-

nual dinner held on December 1, and the pleasure of having Bryce L. Crawford in attendance. Ninety-one years young, Bryce enjoyed his evening among old and new friends and was heard to give many a correct answer to the quizzes that evening. He indicated how pleased he is that we all carry on the traditions that he and his co-founders - "Mac" McDiarmid, Theodore Blegen, Wallace Armstrong and E.Z. Ziebarth - thought were important. Another important part of the evening was the election of the Board. Our thanks go to retiring Board member Randy Cox for his years of service and a welcome goes to Tom Gottwalt for volun-

(Continued on page 2)

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

In this third and final issue of *Explorations* for 2005, Dr. Paul Martin reports on our annual dinner and meeting. We print a toast delivered at the dinner by Ken Timoner and highlight the winners of our annual Sigerson Awards. Ruth Berman contributes a piece linking Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes and Lewis Carroll that could be considered a supplement to our 2005 *Christmas Annual*.

Steve Schier shares guidelines he hands out to his political science students at Carleton College to heed the investigative methods of the Master.

Gary Thaden reviews *Arthur & George*,

the second of a trio of Sherlockian or Doylean novels that have recently made the best-seller lists. Bob Brusica reviews a Sherlockian play by a local playwright, and we report on our latest monthly Study Group sessions.


Submissions for *Explorations* are always welcome. Please email items in Word or plain text format to [john.bergquist@gmail.com](mailto:john.bergquist@gmail.com)

Compliments of the Season!

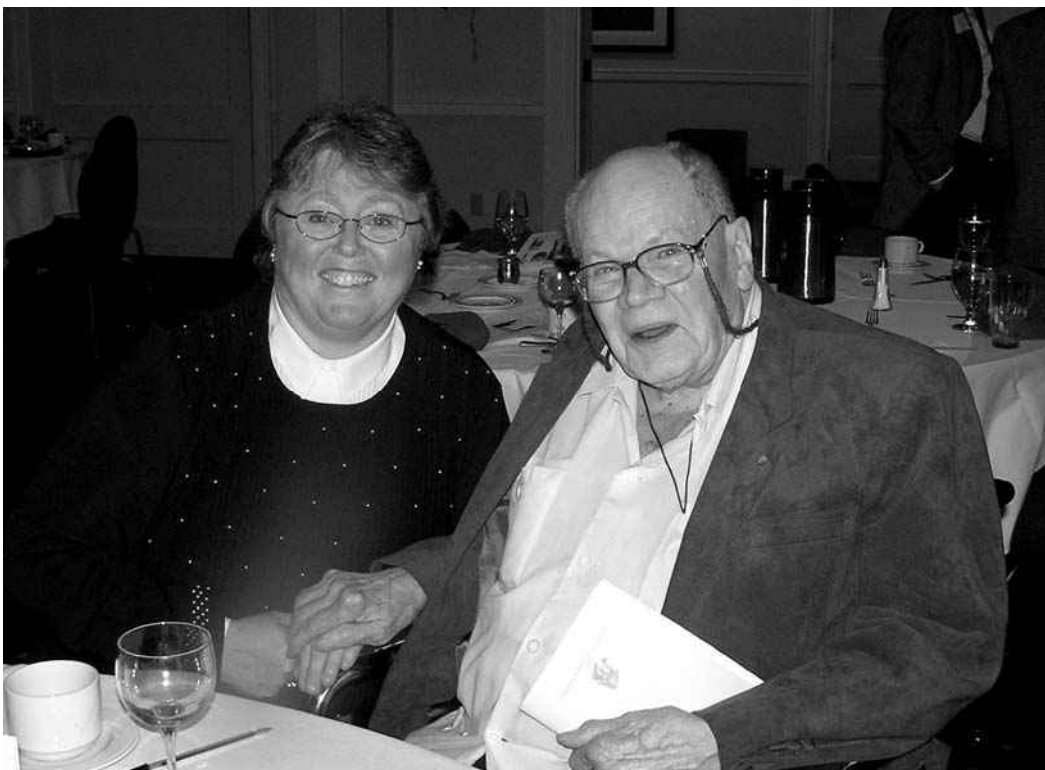
❖  
John Bergquist, BSI  
Editor, *Explorations*



## FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 1)*

**"Bryce enjoyed his evening among old and new friends and was heard to give many a correct answer to the quizzes that evening."**



*Julie McKuras and Bryce Crawford at the 2005 Annual Dinner of the Norwegian Explorers*

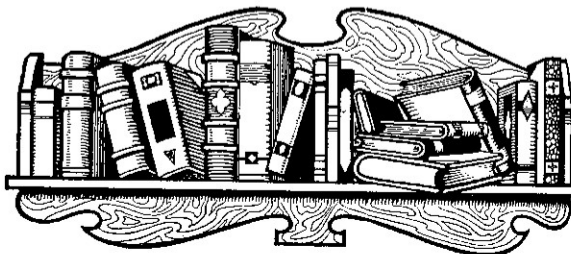
teering to serve on the Board. We were all pleased to see our newest member, Raymond Riethmeier, at the dinner as well as our most senior member, Bryce.

The year 2006 will soon be upon us. We're planning our BSI West dinner on Jan. 6, as well as our regular meetings in February and the study groups. The annual performance by The Red-Throated League of the Norwegian Explorers of an Edith Meiser radio

play should take place later in the spring. Our membership continues to grow through personal contacts and newspaper articles, which insures our group's future.

Have a safe and happy holiday season, and I hope to see many of you at our BSI West dinner on Jan. 6. ❖

**Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI**





**"The feeling that  
Arthur Conan  
Doyle must have  
appreciated  
Lewis Carroll is  
accurate."**

## HOLMES IN A CHRISTMAS ANNUAL WONDERLAND "THE LAND OF THE WONDERFUL CO. A TALE FOR CHILDREN"

(Although this entertaining yet scholarly piece by Ruth Berman was not included in our 2005 *Christmas Annual* for reasons of space, it certainly was worthy of inclusion. We print it here as what could be thought of an addendum to the annual. – Ed.)

To fans of Sherlock Holmes and Lewis Carroll, it seems obvious that the two should have met. After all, Holmes had told Watson at the end of their first adventure, *A Study in Scarlet*, "The grand thing is to be able to reason backward" – and even more than in Dr. Joseph Bell's medical classes in Edinburgh, that was a skill taught behind Alice's looking glass. Arthur Conan Doyle never met Lewis Carroll (which didn't stop mystery writer Roberta Rogow from teaming them up in recent years as the crime-solvers in a series of cases), but fans have cheerfully invented connections: Holmes as a student at the University met teacher C.L. Dodgson (e.g., W.S. Baring-Gould's chapter on Holmes' college-days in his 1962 biography, *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*, or Leonard Cochrane's "Sherlock Holmes and Logic: The Education of a Genius," *Baker Street Journal*, 17 [#1], 1967, 15-19); Dodgson was acquainted with his fellow mathematician, Professor Moriarty (e.g., my "The Case of the Missing Zincographer," in *Cultivating Sherlock Holmes*, ed. Bryce L. Crawford, Jr., & Joseph B. Connors, La Crosse WI: Sumac Press, 1978, pp. 62-67); Dodgson was Moriarty (e.g., Rolfe Boswell, "In Uffish Thought," *Baker Street Journal*, o.s., 1 [#1], 1946, 21-24; and "The Hunting of the Nark," *Baker Street Journal*, o.s., 1 [#4], 1946, 462-463,); or even – the Gardener from Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno* wandered out of Outland to England, where he got work at London's Regents Park and sang more verses of his mad song about his near-neighbor Holmes's adventures (Phyllis White, "Strange Effects and Extraordinary Combinations," *The Vermissa Herald*, April 1972, pp. 4-5).

And the feeling that Arthur Conan Doyle must have appreciated Lewis Carroll is accurate. John Dickson Carr (*The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, NY: Harper Brothers, 1949, p. 76) tells how Doyle devised a special Christmas treat for

his not-quite-four-year-old daughter Mary and the neighborhood children in 1892. Instead of dressing up as Father Christmas, as he usually did, "he spent much time devising a Jabberwock sort of costume, so horrible in appearance that one witness remembers it yet. This, he sincerely believed, would amuse and delight the children as he stalked imposingly in. The result, for everybody except the baby (Kingsley), was blind panic." Doyle had to sit up most of the night with Mary, "assuring her with many gestures that the wicked thing had been chased far away and wouldn't ever return." (Perhaps if he'd thought to supply the children with vortal swords of some non-lethal material with which to slay him?) And before that, in 1886, after sending the manuscript of the first Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, off on rounds to editors, Doyle took part as a Liberal-Unionist in campaigning for Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone's re-election, and substituted as a speaker at the last moment at a party rally that should have been addressed by Major-General Sir William Crossman. Carr says (p. 49) that when Doyle "long afterwards had lunch with the same Sir William Crossman, he confessed that a very regrettable parody took shape in his mind:

'You are old, Boozy William' the young man said,  
'And you drink something stronger than tea;  
But I cannot help thinking: If you are our head,  
Pray what can our other end be?'"

Carroll, as a staid mid-Victorian, would probably not have been much amused by this verse. Besides, Carroll was a Tory and preferred to find uncomplimentary anagrams for Gladstone, such as "Wild Agitator – means well!" (see Carroll's *Diaries*, vol. 6, ed. Edward Wakeling, Clifford Herts.: The Lewis Carroll Society, 2001, pp. 64-65). Doyle's speech, even without the inclusion of the irreverent parody lurking at the back of his mind, was successful – but Gladstone lost the election to the Tories, led by Lord Salisbury, anyway. *A Study in Scarlet*, however, got itself accepted by the end of the year, and duly appeared in the 1887 *Beeton's Christmas Annual*.

(Continued on page 4)

## HOLMES IN A CHRISTMAS ANNUAL WONDERLAND (CONT.)

(Continued from page 3)

So it is pleasant to note that one of the early Holmes parodies was an Alice-style story,

of the Copper Beeches" in June 1892.

"The Land of the Wonderful Co" cannot be claimed as a new discovery either, in Sherlockian terms – it's duly listed in the De Waal Bibliography. But it's little known and has several points of interest, especially in the fact that



One of the early Holmes parodies was an Alice-style story: "The Land of the Wonderful Co."

in Harry Furniss's *Christmas Annual 1905* (London: Anthony Treherne & Co.). "The Land of the Wonderful Co. A Tale for Children" (pp. 88-126), by Walter Kayess, was one of two Alice-style stories included. (The other was "Johnny in Thunderland," pp. 39-52, by Captain Robert Marshall.) The name "Walter Kayess" sounds like a pseudonym for a Walter K.S., although "Kayess" does exist as a family name. If the name was real, though, it seems odd that no other works by him are known, for the story seems too deft to be a one-off. And in getting contributions for what was intended as the first of a series, Furniss would probably have been seeking contributions from writers whose work he knew.

"The Land of the Wonderful Co" wasn't the earliest Holmes parody – that may have been Robert Barr's "The Great Pegram Mystery," first published as "The Adventures of Sherlaw Kombs," as by Luke Sharp, in *The Idler*, May 1892, less than a year after the first Holmes short stories started running in the *Strand Magazine* to the public's delight. Of the first dozen, collected in 1892 as *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, "A Scandal in Bohemia" had appeared in July 1891, and the rest of the twelve were still coming out, concluding with "The Adventure

it was illustrated (as was the entire *Annual*) by Harry Furniss, an artist who is best known for illustrating Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889) and *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* (1893). One of Furniss's illustrations to "The Land of the Wonderful Co" includes Holmes – the man on the right in the detail above, with his violin in his pocket. Next to him in the procession is Alice, wearing a crown (left evidently from becoming a chess queen in *Through the Looking Glass*), and to the left of center are Furniss's old acquaintances Sylvie and Bruno.

Although Holmes is not the central character, he has a large enough secondary role to be important in the story. The procession turns into a trial, and Holmes elects himself foreman of the jury, where he sits "with his eyes shut and a blissful smile on his face, playing exquisite melodies on his violin with one hand, while with the other he injected a strong solution of prussic acid into the back of his neck" (p. 102), a somewhat extreme variation on Watson's descriptions of Holmes' absorption in music (e.g., *STUD*, Chapter 2, where he "would close his eyes and scrape carelessly at the fiddle," or "The Red-Headed League," where he listens with "gently smiling face" – an attitude that should

(Continued on page 5)

## HOLMES IN A CHRISTMAS ANNUAL WONDERLAND (CONT.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

not be confused with the “gently smiling jaws” of a wonderlandish crocodile) and of Holmes’ drug-abuse in *The Sign of the Four* (with an injection of “cocaine, a seven-per-cent solution,” Chapter 1). In his self-appointed role as foreman, Holmes tells the jury that the defendant’s father is a confectioner. The judge, startled, asks how he knows that. “I don’t know it,” says Holmes, haughtily. “I deduce it. That boy has been eating peppermints – I can perceive the odour even at this distance – and the inference is obvious” (p. 102). The prisoner, however, says that his father isn’t a confectioner. The emphasis on deducing is modeled on such passages as the exchange in “Scan,” when Watson asks how Holmes knows he has gone into practice, and Holmes says, “I see it, I deduce it.”

When Holmes re-appears later in the story, he is similarly full of deductions, all nonsensically and carefully modeled on the original. Asked to explain the disappearance of a cab passenger, he announces that he has nineteen clues “and twenty-four theories which will account for the disappearance. All that remains now is to find out which is the right one” (p. 111). The emphasis on multiple approaches is like Holmes’s strategy in “The Missing Three-Quarter,” where he “had seven different schemes for getting a glimpse of that telegram.” The simplicity of solving a problem by eliminating 23 wrong theories recalls Holmes’ much-repeated maxim: “How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, *however improbable*, must be the truth?” (That is the version in SIGN, as Holmes sets about solving the locked-room murder mystery of Bartholomew Sholto’s death. As it happened, he had already said as much to Watson earlier in the same adventure, when he deduced that Watson had sent a telegram, saying “Eliminate all other factors, and the one which remains must be the truth,” and earlier still in “The Beryl Coronet,” written later but set earlier than SIGN, when he called the rule “an old maxim of mine.” In the last two Holmes books, *His Last Bow* and *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*, he was to repeat his favorite

axiom twice more, in “The Bruce-Partington Plans” and “The Blanched Soldier.”)

Like the Conanical Holmes, Kayess’s Holmes worries about explaining his deductions too freely, because then they look simple. For example, in REDH, when Jabez Wilson thinks at first that Holmes “had done something clever” but sees “there was nothing in it, after all,” Holmes says ruefully, “I begin to think, Watson, that I make a mistake in explaining.... My poor little reputation, such as it is, will suffer shipwreck if I am so candid”). Similarly, Kayess’s Holmes’ complains, “I used to explain my methods to that idiot Watson, and he went and gave me away in one of the magazines. So much for friendship! Pah!” (p. 112). As the examples indicate, Kayess was attentive enough to his Sherlockian details to make for an on-target parody.

An additional point of Holmesian interest in the *Annual* is the lead contribution, by Furniss’s schoolmate from Dublin boyhood, George Bernard Shaw’s one-act spoof, “Passion, Poison, and Petrification; or, the Fatal Gazogene. A Tragedy” (pp. 11-24) (reprinted in Shaw’s *Translations and Tomfooleries*, NY: Brentano’s, 1926). Shaw had written it at the request of actor Cyril Maude, to perform at a benefit for The Actors’ Orphanage, July 14, 1905. It was one of a series of deliberately “dreadful melodramas” (as Maude explained in his autobiography, *Lest I Forget*, NY: J. H. Sears & Co., 1928, p. 186). In 1907, the benefit melodrama was “The Desperado Duke: or, The Cruel Countess,” co-authored by Robert Marshall, who wrote the 1905 *Annual*’s other Alice-style story, “Johnny in Thunderland,” and Alfred Sutro. Unlike the Sherlockian gasogene, which is an instrument of hospitality (e.g., SCAN), the Fatal Gazogene is poisoned, and used as the murder weapon.

Shaw’s Fatal Gazogene is the one of the few non-Sherlockian appearances of this device in literature. (A gazogene – gasogene, as it is spelled in the Sherlock Holmes stories – was a device with compressed carbon dioxide that could be squirted into a drink to carbonate it, maybe as much for the fun of the fancy modern – or by now perhaps melodramatically old-

*(Continued on page 6)*

**“Like the Conanical Holmes, Kayess’s Holmes worries about explaining his deductions too freely, because then they look simple.”**

## HOLMES IN A CHRISTMAS ANNUAL WONDERLAND (CONT.)

(Continued from page 5)

fashioned – gadget as for any advantage in fresh bubbles. Holmes hospitably pointed out the gasogene to Watson and suggested a drink in both SCAN and “The Mazarin Stone,” and the word so caught the attention of Sherlockians that “Gasogene” became the title for the president of the Baker Street Irregulars and for the equivalent officer in many of the scion societies. The very first issue of *The Baker Street Journal* in 1946 included as part of “The Editor’s Commonplace Book” section Jay Finley Christ’s diagram and explanation of the workings of a

gasogene.) Furniss provided three stylish pictures of the Shavian gasogene: in the heading to Shaw’s “Notes” (p. 24) – along with a portrait of GBS as a footer (shown here) – in a design for a poster for the play (p. 12), and in a drawing of husband, wife, and lover drinking the toast fatal to the hapless lover (p. 16).



From Beeton’s *Christmas Annual* in 1887 to Furniss’s *Christmas Annual* in 1905 – “I hear of Sherlock everywhere,” said his brother Mycroft (in “The Greek Interpreter”). An “Alice” parody seems a wildly improbable venue, at first, for Holmes. But Carroll and Holmes were both notable logicians, and Kayess’s combination of the two turned out to be congruent, as well as incongruous, after all . ❖

Ruth Berman

## NEW BOOK NOTES

*Note: I have not seen this book nor do I necessarily recommend it. As a courtesy, I am merely passing along information supplied by the publisher. – Ed. )*

**GRAPHIC CLASSICS: ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE** is the second volume in the GRAPHIC CLASSICS series of comics adaptations of great literature. New to this edition are comics adaptations of Sherlock Holmes in “The Adventure of the Engineer’s Thumb” by Rod Lott and Simon Gane, and Brigadier Gerard in “The Castle of Gloom” by Antonella Caputo and Nick Miller. Plus Doyle’s fearsome pirate “Captain Sharkey,” illustrated by John W. Pierard, “The Ghosts of Goresthorpe Grange” by Peter Gullerud, and “The Great Brown-Pericord Motor” by Milton Knight. Returning from the first edition are Sherlock Holmes in “The Copper Beeches” by Rick Geary and stories illustrated by Roger Langridge and J.B. Bonivert. With a dramatic new cover by Rick Geary.

**GRAPHIC CLASSICS: ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE** is available in bookstores, comics shops, or direct from the publisher at <http://www.graphicclassics.com>.

Edited by Tom Pomplun  
Published November 2005, Eureka Productions  
Distributed by Diamond Book Distributors  
(ISBN 0-9746648-5-5)  
144 pgs, 7 x 10”, paperback, b&w, 4c cover, \$11.95

The Graphic Classics series:  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: EDGAR ALLAN POE  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: H.G. WELLS  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: H.P. LOVECRAFT  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: JACK LONDON  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: AMBROSE BIERCE  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: BRAM STOKER  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: MARK TWAIN  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: R.L. STEVENSON  
HORROR CLASSICS: Graphic Classics

Volume Ten  
GRAPHIC CLASSICS: O. HENRY  
ADVENTURE CLASSICS: Graphic Classics  
Volume Twelve





## ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER OF THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS OF MINNESOTA, INC.

Unseasonably cold weather, even for Minnesota, greeted members and guests of the Norwegian Explorers as they gathered in the ballroom of the Minneapolis Golf Club on the first evening of December, 2005, for the annual meeting of the scion society. Sixty-eight Sherlockians assembled to enjoy each other's company and partake of the Victorian conviviality.

President Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI, began the meeting by greeting the assembly and introducing noted Norwegian Explorer Dr. Bryce Crawford, Jr., BSI, the sole surviving founder of our society, who honored us by his attendance. Explorer Mary McDiarmid, daughter of our beloved Sigerson, E.W. "Mac" McDiarmid, introduced her cousin, John McDiarmid, who was attending his first Norwegian Explorer meeting. John's father was Mac McDiarmid's

brother, also named John. Julie then presented society chaplain Reverend Robert Brusic, who intoned an appropriate blessing upon the group and the meal with prayers creating a canonical acrostic. A British buffet was then served which included the traditional fare of shepherd's pie, Yorkshire pudding, fish and chips, berry trifle, and associated side dishes.

Explorer Phil Bergem then called for the traditional toasts,

which were canonically presented by:

Phil Bergem to Dr. John Watson  
Steve Cribari to Irene Adler  
Tim Reich to Mycroft Holmes  
Regina Harris to Sherlock Holmes  
Ken Timoner to Mrs. Hudson (See sidebar.)

The business meeting of the Explorers, notable by its brevity, commenced with secretary-treasurer Mike Eckman reporting a satisfactory fiscal year. He then validated his report by presenting a check for \$300 to Dr. Richard Sveum, BSI, president of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and librarian Tim Johnson (in absentia). Dr. C. Paul Martin, BSI, then presented the candidates for election for 2006 as officers of the society; such nominations were moved, seconded, and passed unanimously. Serving in 2006:

President: Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

Vice-President: Gary Thaden

Sec-Treasurer: Michael Eckman

Editor: John Bergquist, BSI

Officers At Large include Phil Bergem, Rev. Robert Brusic, Tom Gottwalt, Tim Johnson, Richard Sveum, M.D., BSI, and past presidents Pj Doyle, Allen Mackler, BSI, C. Paul Martin, M.D., BSI, and Bruce Southworth, BSI.

Dr. Martin also announced that Mrs. Dorothy Stix, BSI, had given a copy of a 1987 television interview featuring deceased Irregulars Tom Stix, Jr., BSI, "Wiggins," and John Bennett Shaw, BSI, whose collection constitutes a great portion of the present Sherlock Holmes Collections, to the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries.

The interview was presented to Dr. Sveum and Tim Johnson (in absentia) to be placed in the collections.

The Sigerson Awards were then presented by Julie McKuras to Andrew Malec, BSI, Cecelia Heffron, Pasquale Accardo, BSI, Stephen J. Cribari, Regina Harris, Karen Murdock, Rev. Robert Brusic, and Michael Eckman. (See Page 9 for more information about the winning entries. - Ed.) Writings of all the authors are included in the 2005 *Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual*, ably edited, designed, etc. by John Bergquist, editor of "Explorations." All in attendance received a copy, and copies will be given to attendees of the BSI Dinner, the Baskerville Bash, and "The Woman" Dinner in New York City at the Birthday Weekend in January. Explorer Phil Bergem also provided laminated bookmarks featuring an interesting Sherlockian advertisement from a 1921 issue of the *Strand* magazine for the assembly.

"Stand with me here upon the terrace," our tribute to the recently deceased members of the Explorers, was presented by Dr. Richard Sveum, reviewing the life of Ray Reister, a retired lawyer and bibliophile.

The canonical scholarship of the members and guests was then tested by an interesting quiz based on travel mentioned in the Canon, deviously composed by Dr. Sveum. Achieving high honors in the quiz were John Bergquist,

(Continued on page 8)



**"Sixty-eight  
Sherlockians  
assembled on a cold  
evening to enjoy  
each other's  
company and  
partake of the  
Victorian  
conviviality."**



*Dr. Martin Presenting the Candidates*



**"A conference  
("ACD@35") will  
occur in Toronto in  
October, 2006, and  
the Norwegian  
Explorers plan a  
conference in  
2007."**

## ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER (CONT.)

Allen Mackler, Ruth Berman (a perennial winner), Phil Bergem, and several other students of the Canon; all received appropriate rewards for their skills.

Explorer John Bergquist, BSI, "The King of Scandinavia," then presented a narrated pictorial travelogue of his experiences in the Sherlockian world during 2005. He led us through his journeys to the BSI Weekend in New York City, the London Mini-Festival sponsored by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, visits to Edinburgh, the Sons of the Copper Beeches and Mycroft's League in Philadelphia, the Speckled Band of Boston, the Swiss Pilgrimage of the SHSL, and visits with collectors on the East and West coasts. Julie McKuras described some of her travels this past year, and she listed some of the planned Sherlockian events for 2006, 2007, and 2008. A conference ("ACD@35") will occur in Toronto in October, 2006; the Norwegian Explorers plan a conference in 2007, and the Baker Street Irregulars are in the planning stages for a trip to Salt Lake City in 2008.

The annual "Groaners' Quiz" featuring Sherlockian crossword clues in the manner of John Bennett Shaw, masterfully and uniquely formulated by Dr. Garry Peterson and Mike Miller, elicited the usual sighing utterances and pleas for more – or less – next year!

Yet another jollification for the evening, assembled by Reverend Bob Brusic, concerned Mr. Holmes, "a second stain," and Albert Einstein's works. Several tables of Explorers constructed comments and whimsical limericks regarding the illustration for the entertainment (?) of those assembled.

Closing the meeting, explorer Gary Thaden read the introspective poem "When I Spend a Long Evening With Holmes," which aptly summarized the feelings of all good Sherlockians eager for another year of Victorian detective adventure. ♦

C. Paul Martin, M.D., B.S.I.

## A TOAST TO MRS. HUDSON

We have all learned from Sherlock Holmes that the best disguise is often insignificance. Holmes, the Master, could adopt that disguise to wonderful effect. And



when the case was closed and the masks could come off, Watson made some of those effects into wonderful theater, to our lasting delight.

We learn from Holmes that circumstances and people can be far more than they seem. A dog's bark that did not occur, parsley that melted to a certain depth into the butter, a rust-colored sediment precipitating out of the liquid in a test tube – these can be the indexes of life and death, of national calamity – or of an enormous rodent for whose tale the world is not yet prepared.

We have learned that we must look, and strive to see. But sometimes, as happened even to Holmes, we must remain baffled, knowing that we have missed something of great importance, or what is worse, not knowing *whether or not* we have missed something of great importance.

There was one person who was as close as anyone to the enigma that is Holmes, one person who must always, by her nearness to the center of the mystery, be a woman of mystery herself. We know of her what we have been told. We know that, like Watson, she was devoted and staunch. We know that Holmes could rely on her, and that she, or someone very like her, was beside Holmes in one of his last and greatest endeavors. We know that we have not been told much.

Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed fellow Explorers, I give you: The *Other Woman* – Mrs. Hudson. ♦

Ken Timoner



## SIGERSON AWARD WINNERS

(AS PRESENTED BY PRESIDENT JULIE MCKURAS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER ON DECEMBER 1, 2005)



The late E.W. "Mac"  
McDiarmid, BSI, 2s  
Sigerson

Presenting the annual Sigerson Awards is always a pleasant task. The winning essays, articles, poems, quizzes, memoirs, and pastiches represent what our own Dr. Bryce L. Crawford has called "the purest form of scholarship," done not for any professional or financial reason, but for the pure pleasure of it. This year we have a number of awards to present, and the reasons why each author won have their roots in the Canon.

The pastiche "Holmes on Tour" explores the strange case of Mr. James Phillimore and the lost possibility of Holmes going on the lecture circuit. In failing to pursue such a theatrical subject, as Holmes said in the Adventure of the Mazarin Stone, "...what the law had gained, the stage had lost." The award goes to Michael Eckman.

A Toast to Violet Hunter was originally presented at the Sons of the Copper Beeches in Philadelphia last year. We are happy to honor the lady and equally happy that it wasn't, as indicated in *The Valley of Fear*, "the quarrelling toast of the lodge" at the Copper Beeches. The award goes to Steve Cribari.

Many people enjoy reading and writing pastiches set in the Victorian era of Holmes and Watson. Far fewer attempt to place the two and their adventures in a different time setting, but Holmes himself, although now retired to beekeeping in Sussex, would appreciate that effort. As Watson said of Holmes in "The Speckled Band," he "refused to associate himself with any investigation which did not tend towards the unusual, and even the fantastic." The award goes to Regina Harris for her science fiction pastiche "Mythos Draconis."

One winning entry this year is what we believe to be a pastiche but may be a true story. The author has written about his surplus of Holmes pastiches and a subsequent discovery in his own basement that involved Beethoven, hair, a fore-and-aft cap and a number of bad puns. By the author's involving the musician Beethoven, we can only repeat the statement from "The Greek Interpreter" that "art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms." The award goes to Bob Brusich for his pastiche "A Lock Without a Key."

Several other winners of the Sigerson Awards can't be with us this evening. One is teaching, one lives in Richmond, Virginia, one is at his son's high school concert, and for one special author it's a school night. But we would like to recognize them all here.

Andrew Malec has again used the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota to find a subject to write about. His article "An Interesting William Gillette Letter" explores several fascinating characters and proves that we can say of the Collections, like Holmes said of his own letters in "The Dying Detective," "My correspondence, however, is, as you know, a varied one."

Pasquale Accardo has shown himself to be a student of both canons in his essay "A Wooden Narrative." He has put forward his own theory as to the true identity of Henry Wood and his relationship to Nancy Barclay in "The Crooked Man." He concludes his essay by theorizing about Wood, as Watson wrote in "The Priory School," that "the boy's sympathies are known to have been strongly with his mother."

Karen Murdock's quiz regarding onomatopoeia challenges our knowledge of this figure of speech and its use in the Canon. As Baron Gruner asked of Dr. Hill Barton, known to us as Dr. John Watson in "The Illustrious Client," "Might I ask you a few questions to test you?"

Many in the Sherlockian movement have lamented the lack of young enthusiasts in our aging group. The Norwegian Explorers are very lucky to have a young enthusiast and author in our midst. In "The Naval Treaty" it is written "Lighthouses, my boy! Beacons of the future! Capsules, with hundreds of bright little seeds in each, out of which will spring the wiser, better England of the future." Eleven-year-old Cecilia Heffron has written of her first meeting with Sherlock Holmes and proved herself to be a beacon of the future, one who will carry on the appreciation of all things Sherlockian. Cecilia can't be with us as it's a school night and she's busy doing her homework, but her grandfather Bill Turley, who introduced her to the Great Detective, will proudly accept her award. ❖

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

## THE GAME'S AFOOT!

A ONE-ACT PLAY FEATURING LAWRENCE RIPP AND ROSE JOHNSON,  
STAGED JULY 15-17, 2005

(Although this drama was performed on only one weekend this past summer, we still wanted to publish Bob Brusic's review in the hope that the play may resurface at a later date. - Ed.)

The temperature hovered in the low 90s outside the Northern Vineyard Winery, and the view of the St. Croix River from the second floor was inviting. But inside this Stillwater, Minnesota winery John H. Watson complained about the thick fog which dampened his spirits and caused the old wound in his shoulder to ache. This was the setting of an amiable 45-minute conversation between Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes to which an audience of about 50 observers was privy. And it was good talk.

Watson, earnestly played by Rose Johnson, not only set the scene, but she/he also bounced off Holmes, scoring points in both banter and biography. That is, Watson told us a great deal about the cases, the personality, and the early life of Holmes during the discourse. At one point he twitted Holmes by referring to other practicing detectives like Dupin and Lecoq (both of whom Holmes, as expected, dismissed). But Watson wryly went on to mention Martin Hewitt, another contemporary detective (which seemed to surprise Holmes and cause him a bit of unease). Hewitt, it must be noted, is a red herring, for he is not mentioned in the Canon.

Holmes, for his part, gave as much as he got in this good-natured exchange between friends. When Watson remonstrated at Holmes for his continuing to take a 7 percent solution of cocaine, Holmes knowingly replied that it was only a 5 percent solution, for he was aware that Watson was diluting it. Their friendly banter expanded to include references to well over a dozen cases, including a synopsis of "The 'Gloria Scott,'" Dr. Mortimer's cane sequence from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and generous swatches of *A Study in Scarlet*.

Because the play compressed so much into so relatively little time, many cases and villains were not mentioned. Lawrence Ripp, who played Holmes and co-wrote the play, mentioned afterward that he has written longer dramatic versions that pack in more canonical freight. He also acknowledged that he had writ-

ten the play(s) in the early 1980s and at the time relied on the counsel of 'Mac' McDiarmid, so the production has scholarly and sentimental pertinence for Norwegian Explorers.

Played against a simple set that included some chairs and pipes, newspapers and books, a full hat and coat rack, and a serviceable chemical apparatus, the congenial conversation roamed through the Canon and the lives of the two principals. Frequent humor emerged in the exchanges; and Holmes doffed an occasional disguise. In the sparkling three-quarters of an hour we got to know Holmes and Watson; and we became familiar with their personal and professional relationship.

For Holmesian novices this production would be a splendid introduction to the world and character of Holmes and Watson. Those who are more steeped in the lore would doubtless find an agreeable challenge in identifying the cases and characters referenced in the witty exchanges between the detective and the doctor.

At one point in the play Holmes gave a biographical account of Watson's early life. During this recitation the confident detective made use of a red book that supposedly contained the facts of the matter. In fact, however, I noticed that the prop was really a *Service Book and Hymnal*, an old worship resource for Lutherans. While something of an anomaly, it nonetheless was a nice touch. It occurred to me that Holmes might not have been too far off the mark to use such a reference work. He could have been pressing all the Watsonian juices out of hymn 206 in the book, *O Splendor of God's Glory Bright*, translated by Robert Bridges.

Bridges, it seems, was a skilled physician who retired in 1882 to devote himself to literature and music. During his medical career he worked at St. Bartholomew's Hospital in London. The imagination boggles at the possibility that Bridges was on duty that New Year's Day in 1881 when young Stamford introduced Dr. Watson to Mr. Sherlock Holmes (an event mentioned in the play). It is an unlikely possibility that Mac McDiarmid would have relished. When the game's afoot, as it was that muggy July evening in the winery, anything, however improbable, is imaginable. ♦

Rev. Robert Brusic



"In the sparkling three-quarters of an hour we got to know Holmes and Watson; and we became familiar with their personal and professional relationship."

## BOOK REVIEW: *ARTHUR & GEORGE*

*Arthur & George*, by Julian Barnes (Knopf [available in the U.S. January 10, 2006]; \$25) [available now in the U.K.; £17.99]

One of the joys of reading Sherlock Holmes is the recreation of the world of Victorian London. With *Arthur & George*, be prepared to enter the world of George Edalji, a quiet, country lawyer whose preacher father was East Indian and his mother Scottish. Julian Barnes recreates the time and atmosphere using the alternating title characters as narrators. A new chapter brings a new narrator, which under the pen of many would be confusing and disjointed. Here the narrators move the story forward beautifully with differing perspectives on many of the same events. Categorizing this book is difficult. It has the authenticity of non-fiction, but the fluidity of a novel.

The story begins with Arthur and George's childhood, schooling, work and the life they had before Edalji's conviction and imprisonment for cattle mutilation. Eventually the two meet in a wonderfully descriptive scene. The two dance around their differences: status, eth-

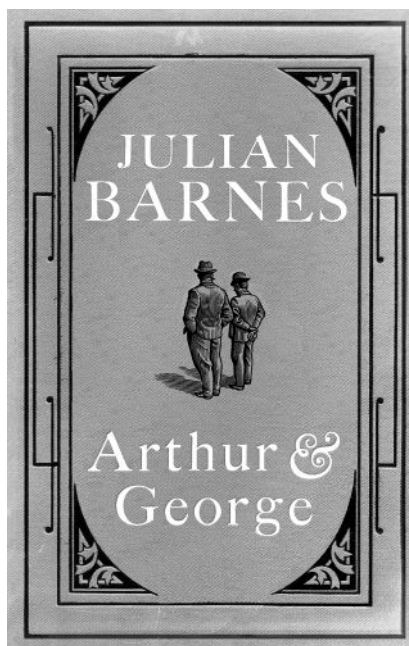
nicity, religion, and notoriety. Then quickly we are off on Doyle's crusade. Using the modern techniques of publicity, Doyle not only overturns Edalji's conviction, but shames the authorities into setting up a whole new level of

courts to handle appeals for those convicted of crimes in the rural England.

In interviews, Barnes has said he came upon the story while wanting to write about race. The Doylean and Sherlockian worlds are fortunate that he chose George Edalji's case and that Doyle could go along for the ride. For in the end, this beautifully written book is about a quiet country solicitor, who because of his race, was sent to prison and then thrust onto the national stage in order to gain his freedom. ♦

Gary Thaden

(Note: The British edition of this book is beautiful to hold as well as to read. It is bound in embossed boards appropriate for the period of the events of the story, *sans* dust jacket. I hope the U.S. edition follows suit. — Ed.)



**"Categorizing this book is difficult. It has the authenticity of non-fiction, but the fluidity of a novel."**

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP

### THE DISAPPEARANCE OF LADY FRANCES CARFAX

The Norwegian Explorers Sherlock Holmes Study Group met on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the University Club Saint Paul to continue our study of the Canonical short stories in order of original serial publication. The story for October was "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax," published in two parts in the *Strand Magazine* in March and April of 1911 and included in the collection *His Last Bow* in 1917. The chronologists differ on their dating of the tale, ranging from Bell's 1895 to Baring-Gould's 1902.

Our discussions can get a bit heated, and this one was no exception, but happily we were able to maintain more decorum than Messrs. Green and Watson and the French *ouvrier* in the above *Strand* illustration by Alec Ball.

Although you will not find this story in any of the "Baker Street Dozen" lists of favorite Canonical tales, this month's study group leader John Bergquist said that – at least for him – Watson's narrative of travel on the continent in vain search of the missing lady is a redeeming feature. John passed around photos taken this summer on the Sherlock Holmes Society of London pilgrimage to Switzerland. The photos, from Lausanne, show the promenade by Lake Geneva where Lady Frances was accosted by the Hon. Philip Green and the building identified as the "Hotel National," including the commemorative plaque recently

placed there by French-Swiss Sherlockians. (See photo below.)



John brought up the following points for discussion:

1. Did Watson really do all that badly on his mission? Was Holmes's rebuke justified?
2. Was Holmes justified in forcibly entering Shlessinger's home without a warrant?
3. Could Lady Frances really have fully recovered from her ordeal without suffering brain damage?

We discussed those and other questions, with some harsh criticism of the tale being heard. Many participants seemed to side with Owen Dudley Edwards, who adroitly encapsulated the creakiness of the plot in his introduction to the Oxford edition of *His Last Bow*: "[Holmes] squanders a client's money in sending Watson on a journey whose fruits could have been gathered by the local police, [and he] is absurdly abusive – and even more absurdly in disguise – when he finds Watson (and is consequently absent from London when the criminals return there with their victim). Lady Frances almost loses her life as a result of Holmes's failures." At least at the end of the case Holmes chastises himself for the "temporary eclipse to which even the best-balanced mind may be exposed." Holmes's self-chastisement is only fitting: Edwards postulates that "whenever Holmes is particularly rude to Watson he will have to do penance for it." ♦

John Bergquist, BSI

**"Our discussions can get a bit heated, and this one was no exception, but happily we were able to maintain decorum."**





## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP

(CONTINUED)

### THE ADVENTURE OF THE RED CIRCLE



*Charles Clifford Inspecting the 221B Room*

The Study Group met on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at the home of Allen Mackler. We thank Allen for the use of his home and the opportunity to view his re-creation of the sitting room at 221B Baker Street. I, personally, had tears in my eyes while viewing that room. All it lacked at the time were Holmes and Watson, and to tell the truth I'm not sure that they don't spend a lot of their time there.

Back in Allen's living room, a group of about fifteen Norwegian Explorers, led by Phil Bergem, gathered to discuss "The Red Circle." (Baring-Gould placed the story in 1902). Several of us found the story quite fulfilling, but others were disappointed in it. What those detractors found lacking were some of the common elements of Canonical stories. While the story does begin in 221B, it begins "in progress." Mrs. Warren is already conversing with Holmes as we begin reading. We are thus robbed of our common introduction in which Holmes often makes a brilliant deduction or two at Watson's expense. Then, at story's end, we only get a very partial wrap-up of the mystery by Mrs. Warren's lodger. A conversation between Holmes and Gennaro would have been very enlightening, but for some reason Watson did not see fit to share it with us.

What were some of the other problems with the story that the group needed to critique? How could the code have been used as described by Watson, given that some letters of the English alphabet are not used in the Italian

language? One explanation proposed was that Gennaro used the English alphabet in order to confuse his pursuers. We wondered why Gorgiano was able to trace the couple to London so quickly. We wondered if indeed Gorgiano's people were expecting Gennaro, not Emilia, when they kidnapped Mr. Warren, and how much the fellow had told them. We wondered about the difficulties of signaling with the candle. Allen recounted a demonstration he helped perform at a meeting of The Red Circle scion society in Washington, D.C. some years ago, when they determined the actual time needed to signal the message. Why did a red circle (of blood) surround Gorgiano's head? We wondered about how the incident with the mirror in the hallway was staged. We also might have wondered what the criminals who were watching the Warren residence thought of Sherlock Holmes's appearance on the scene. Why didn't Gennaro go directly to Emilia? We thrashed these things about, but were not able to come to any definite conclusions.

I have since found some help at the web site [www.Sherlockian.Net](http://www.Sherlockian.Net). An article posted there, "Reading Between the Lines of 'The Red Circle'" by Don Dillistone, seemed to address these issues – at least for me. I found a lot of plausibility in what was said there, although there are no definitive answers. Well, at any rate, no story is perfect, and we thank Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for his inconsistencies.

The next meeting of the Study Group will be on the third Saturday of January, when we will discuss "The Adventure of the Dying Detective." ♦

Charles Clifford



*Illustration by H.M. Brock*

"All [Allen Mackler's 221B room] lacked at the time were Holmes and Watson, and to tell the truth I'm not sure that they don't spend a lot of their time there."

## INVESTIGATING POLITICAL LIFE



**"There is no better example of reasoning carefully with empirical evidence than Sherlock Holmes, so I present him to my students as a role model they should emulate."**

(Explorer Steve Schier, a professor of political science at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, writes, "I hand out this set of guidelines at the beginning of student group projects in my introductory American Politics class. In their groups, the students must analyze quantitative datasets concerning aspects of American politics. So, they must learn how to reason carefully with empirical evidence. Of course, there is no better example of this than Sherlock Holmes, so I present him to my students as a role model they should emulate." – Ed.)

The police hurriedly examine individual crimes as they occur and quickly move on to the next one. Sherlock Holmes was different, taking particularly important crimes and examining them in depth in order to explain what happened in a comprehensive fashion. Journalists aspire to be good cops in reporting public life, but political scientists aspire to explain as Holmes did.

Many citizens don't understand public life well, for two reasons, revealed in quotes from Holmes:

**"You see, but you do not observe."** People pass by significant events taking casual notice and not noting their broader importance.

**"It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts."** Both ideologues and casual observers of public life draw grand conclusions without much knowledge. This is sloppy thinking at its worst.

Many political scientists, in seeking deeper explanations of public life, follow Holmes's methods of investigation:

**"Once you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."** Political scientists gather evidence for several possible



explanations of important features of public life, and then sift through them like Holmes looking for the likely cause of political events and behavior. Only by eliminating rival explanations can one have confidence in a conclusion. Much of our discipline focuses on how to eliminate rival explanations to get at the truth.

**"Data, data, data. I cannot make bricks without clay."** The key is good evidence, meticulously examined. The quality of the explanation must turn on the quality of the evidence.

**"It is of the highest importance in the art of detection to be able to recognize out of a number of facts which are incidental and which vital. Otherwise your energy and attention must be dissipated instead of being concentrated."** The challenge of explanation lies squarely in this. As you examine the evidence, you must figure out what may have caused the phenomenon you wish to explain. This requires continual sifting, and rejecting rival explanations that evidence does not support.

The search for important findings, then, is the search for those factors (we call them variables) that explain the phenomenon at issue. The search is fascinating, and never-ending.

**"Education never ends, Watson. It is a series of lessons, with the greatest for the last."**



Steven Schier



**The Norwegian Explorers**

Suite 111  
Elmer L. Andersen Library  
University of Minnesota  
222 21st Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

**John Bergquist, BSI**  
**Editor, EXPLORATIONS**  
3665 Ashbury Road  
Eagan, MN 55122  
Phone: 651-688-6970  
Fax: 651-905-9536  
Email: john.bergquist@gmail.com

“YOU MAY HAVE  
READ OF THE  
REMARKABLE  
EXPLORATIONS  
OF A NORWEGIAN  
NAMED  
SIGERSON, BUT  
I AM SURE IT  
NEVER  
OCCURRED TO  
YOU THAT YOU  
WERE RECEIVING  
NEWS OF YOUR  
FRIEND.”