

Winter / Spring, 2010

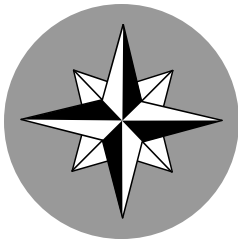
EXPLORATIONS Issue #60



# EXPLORATIONS



## FROM THE PRESIDENT



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It has been a busy time for the Norwegian Explorers. We had a great dinner at the Minneapolis Golf Club on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Al Hubin, our special guest and speaker talked about his involvement in the mystery field. The new Sherlock Holmes movie came out three weeks later and the Explorers had a day-at-the-theater on Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup> at the historic Heights Theatre. I have had inquiries about the Norwegian Explorers due to the movie and our attendance at the Heights. Then, yours truly was lucky enough to attend the Sherlock Holmes Society of London annual dinner at the House of Parliament on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Many others went to New York for the Baker Street Irregulars annual birthday celebration on the next weekend. On January 24<sup>th</sup>, the Explorers met at the Cooper Pub and Restaurant for our annual

Sherlock Holmes birthday celebration. We discussed the new movie, the New York dinner and the London dinner.

We are looking forward to the Red Throated League's performance at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. If you have not attended one of these performances, I urge you to go. The atmosphere is great, the performances are wonderful and a good time is had by all. Once again, I am going to add a plug for the Conference on August 6-8 this summer. These conferences are unique and every Norwegian Explorer should take advantage of a world quality conference at a local setting.

*"I think, Count, that it would be as well to have your friend Sam at this conference."*  
("The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone")

~Gary Thaden



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The deep freeze of Minnesota's winter has minimal impact (if any at all) on local Sherlockian activity. In this issue, a team of Explorers report on all the events mentioned in Gary's column. I think you'll enjoy the comprehensive coverage (pages 12-16) provided by attendees of the NYC birthday weekend festivities.

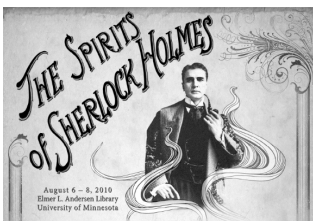
Other articles you'll find include Mike Eckman's recent Sherlockian "sightings" and Robert Brusic's Musical Mystery review. Mary Loving shares with us her experiences coordinating our movie outing. Steven Schier enjoys his Annual Dinner prize, while

Karen Murdock researches assonance in the Canon, and Charles Clifford provides a study group report.

Issue #60 of *Explorations* is a nice milestone for our newsletter. My appreciation goes to all our contributors.

As always, submissions for *Explorations* are welcome. Email them directly to me in plain text or in Word format to: [twinsfan1@earthlink.net](mailto:twinsfan1@earthlink.net)

~Tim Reich, Editor



## HOLMES SIGHTINGS

In Brian Hicks's book *Raising the Hunley*, the author writes about Clive Cussler's creation of Dirk Pitt. Cussler quit his advertising job and started to work in a dive shop and write. "Cussler dreamed of creating a literary figure who would hunt lost treasures in a series of books. He would be dashing, educated, deadly, and brave. Cussler wanted a kind of archaeological Sherlock Holmes mixed with the tough-guy bravado of Matt Helm."

Despite the evidence that Meriwether Lewis, of the Lewis and Clark expedition, committed suicide in 1809, there are conspiracy theories that he was murdered. In his book *Undaunted Courage*, Stephen Ambrose states that these theorists "need to deal with a 'dog that did not bark' aspect of the case." Ambrose goes on to say that if "William Clark entertained the slightest suspicion" or "if Thomas Jefferson had such suspicions" they would have done everything they could to find the murderer.

### SHERLOCK OF THE DESERT?

Before a jeep tour of Wadi Rum in Jordan, I viewed the exhibits in the visitor center. While listening to the piped in "El Condor Pasa," I read that Bedouin Tribal Law is centered on the honor of both the individual and tribe. It is a complex system inspired by the way of life in an arid landscape and dealing with a wide range of rights related to dignity, honor, and property. Tribal Law also depends on a judge gifted with wisdom, wit, and a good knowledge of life's affairs. As with most things Bedouin, coffee drinking is also involved. Finally, the exhibit noted that one "skill related to Tribal Law is the great ability of some individuals to detect the identity of people by the traces of their footprints. Some of these 'trackers' are so clever that they can tell the age, gender, marital status, tribe, and other sophisticated information about the individual who passed the spot where footmarks are being investigated."

I wonder if any of the 'trackers' have access to Holmes's "monograph upon the tracing of footsteps, with some remarks upon the uses of plaster of Paris as a preserver of impresses" that he mentioned in SIGN.

### A LESTRADE SIGHTING

John Ramsden is a professor of modern history at Queen Mary in the University of London. In his book *Man of the Century: Winston Churchill and his Legend since 1945* he quotes an unnamed *Guardian* reporter writing about the people around Churchill in his last days.

"...and Churchill's detective, 'as completely British as a pre-war five pound note...surely a brother under the skin of the great Lestrade.'"

This is one of the few Lestrade sightings I have found and the only one to use the adjective "great."

~Mike Eckman



## MYSTERY CHALLENGE

In *The Dancing Men*, Sherlock Holmes stated, "I am fairly familiar with all forms of secret writings, and am myself the author of a trifling monograph upon the subject, in which I analyze one hundred and sixty separate ciphers..."

The challenge is to identify the quote below that is coded with a monoalphabetic substitution cipher.

" [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 "L REVHUYH WKDW BRXU  
 [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 FLUFXODWLRQ LV PRUH  
 [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 DGDSWHG IRU VXPPHU  
 [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
 WKDQ IRU ZLQWHU."

Hint #1 on page 6,

Hint #2 on page 8,

Solution on page 10.

- Ed.



"one 'skill related to Tribal Law is the great ability of some individuals to detect the identity of people by the traces of their footprints.'"

## THE 2009 NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS ANNUAL DINNER

In keeping with the tradition of recent years, the Norwegian Explorers met at the Minneapolis Golf Club for their annual dinner and meeting on Thursday, December 3, 2009. Wade and Mary Manthie again made sure that we were treated well.

After some social time including a cash bar, we sat down to the British Buffet. As with the location, the menu of tossed salad, shepherd's pie, Yorkshire pudding, pea salad, carrots, fish and chips, and berry trifle has become a popular tradition. Bob Brusic's grace concluded with the thought that we would continue to play the game.

Steve Schier began the toasts with one to Mycroft that he reported was a "table effort." P.J. Doyle toasted Irene Adler as "the certain young woman" who proved that Holmes was not a misogynist. Karen Ellery recognized Watson as "the epitome of BFF" ("best friends forever" to the non texting crowd). Julie McKuras toasted Mary Morstan (Watson's second wife) and noted that it was 131 years to the day that Captain Morstan disappeared. Inez Bergquist offered a simple "Here's to Mrs. Hudson" while Paul Martin spoke a little longer in noting that Holmes was an experimenter, chemist, and the catalyst that brings us together.

Mike McKuras efficiently saw to the election of the officers and board. Tom Gottwalt is the new Vice President and Tim Reich has joined the board. Gary recognized Phil Bergem's many years of service as Phil is leaving the board in anticipation of his move to Bemidji. The elected officers and board members are shown below.

Treasurer Mike Eckman reported that the Explorers have a healthy bank balance and gave Tim Johnson a \$442 (twice 221) contribution for the Collections.



Photo by Tim Reich with permission from the Collections

Larry Czarnecki donated his Sigerson-Award-winning original artwork during the dinner to the University of Minnesota Sherlock Holmes Collections. Tim Johnson is pictured accepting this gift from Larry.

Paul Martin reviewed the life and contributions of Dr. Howard Burchell in a "Stand upon the terrace." Among other accomplishments, Dr. Burchell was the Chief of Cardiology at the University of Minnesota Hospital, wrote 400 published articles in his field, and had interesting World War II experiences. Ruth Berman added that her father, who was also a doctor and also served in World War II, met Dr. Burchell during the war in circumstances that caused him to ask, "I know who I am working for, but who are you working for?" Paul offered that Dr. Burchell was probably investigating the effect of high altitude flying. Paul encouraged us to bring our special talents to the study of the Canon just as Dr. Burchell did.

Gary Thaden noted the passing of Tom Tietze. Although not a Norwegian Explorer, Tom did speak about spiritualism at our 2004 conference and was a contributor to *The Journal of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society*.

Gary Thaden, in introducing Allen Hubin as the featured speaker, related that at the 2009 Bouchercon, Al, a Minnesotan from White Bear Lake and a Norwegian Explorer, received a lifetime achievement award. Al had reviewed books for the *New York Times Book Review*,

(Continued on page 4)

### Sigerson Awards

#### Artwork

Larry Czarnecki

#### Poetry

Robert Brusic

#### Historical Essay

Patricia Nelson and  
Gail Jo Gardner

#### Literary Research

Karen Murdock

#### Best Cover Art

#### Research

Michael Eckman

#### Dogged Research

Don Wiese

#### Travelogue

Tim Reich

**President:** Gary Thaden  
**Vice President:** Tom Gottwalt  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Michael Eckman  
**At Large**

**Board Members:** John Bergquist, BSI, 2s  
Richard Sveum, M.D., BSI  
Robert Brusic  
Tim Reich  
and past presidents:  
Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI  
Pj Doyle, ASH, BSI  
C. Paul Martin, M.D., BSI  
Bruce Southworth, BSI



All of the Sigerson Award winning work is in the 2009 *Christmas Annual* that was edited by John Bergquist and was given to all attendees. John presented the awards. The Sigerson Award categories and winners are listed on the left of this page.

## EXPLORERS ANNUAL DINNER (Continued from page 3)

started *The Armchair Detective* magazine, and is the author/bibliographer of *Crime Fiction IV: A Comprehensive Bibliography, 1749-2000*. Al began his talk with the confession that he was not a Holmes expert, but “had read the canon at age 10 and never recovered.”

Each table had copies of the June 23, 1967, letter that Al sent to Vincent Starrett proposing a general fan publication for readers of mysteries and asking for Starrett’s opinion of the market for it. Al’s *The Armchair Detective* was well received. The first issue received a favorable review by Anthony Boucher in November of 1967 and as a result of the review the magazine had forty more subscribers the following week.

This success led to more work as Al was asked to review six mysteries a week for the *New York Times Book Review* from 1968-1971 and chose the mystery stories for the annual *Best Detective Stories of the Year* anthologies from 1970-1975. While doing all of this, working full time as a chemist at 3M, and raising a family, Al also started to add to and correct Ordean Hagen’s guide to mystery fiction. These additions and corrections led to forty years of work and a basement full of books. Al found, however, one job that he could pass on. He did not consider the editorship of *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine* as it would involve a move to New York.

In reviewing his efforts in the mystery field, Al said the highlight was the great people he had a chance to meet. The Q&A session produced the statement from Al that “tonight, Arthur Conan Doyle is my favorite author.” Al and his wife did confirm that a child was conceived even after Al took on his heavy workload. One of the more memorable moments for Al was when he was in a London bookstore making inquiries about a mystery and the clerk replied “I don’t know. I’ll look it up in Hubin.”

Julie McKuras presented “The quiz that has answers relative to Al Hubin.” Words relevant to Al such as “armchair,” “detective,” “typewriter,” “white,” “bear,” and “lake” were required to correctly complete the quiz. John Bergquist won first prize and Steve Schier, Ruth Berman, Tom Gottwalt, Doris Skalsstad, Tim Reich, and Tim Johnson all received prizes.

Bob Brusich read his poem “A Baker Street Visit from St. Nicholas” from the 2009 Christmas Annual. Garry Peterson and Mike Miller again proved that working an overhead projection can be a challenge in presenting their Groaner Quiz, also a tradition from prior annual dinners. The



Allen Hubin with Gary Thaden

challenge was to identify which of two monograph titles were canonical. Among the more interesting fakes were *I Wed Three Wives*; *Burke’s Peerage of Hunters*, some of them *Violet*; *The use of the Subjunctive in The Sign of the Four*; and *Irene Adler, Abroad*.

Bob Brusich’s “A Sherlockian Exercise” stumped the attendees as no one could identify the picture as a still from the 1931 movie *The Sleeping Cardinal* (Sherlock Holmes’ *Fatal Hour* in the US). The movie will be shown as part of Turner Classic Movies’ 24 hours of “Holmes for Christmas” at 12:15 AM CST on December 26. Many knew that Arthur Wontner played Holmes. The dinner attendees offered many poems, limericks, and captions based on the picture. Several, however, were based on misidentifying the air gun held by the character of Moran as a trumpet.

Tom Gottwalt closed an enjoyable evening with a reading of Bill Schweikert’s poem “When I Spend a Long Evening with Holmes,” another tradition of the annual dinner. As we left the dinner, light snow was falling (another even longer standing December tradition in Minnesota) and we anticipated many more long evenings with Holmes and fellow Sherlockians.

~Mike Eckman



**“In reviewing his efforts in the mystery field, Al said the highlight was the great people he had a chance to meet.”**

## SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON ANNUAL DINNER

London, Parliament and Sherlock Holmes. What could be better for an American Sherlock Holmes tourist? The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, like the Baker Street Irregulars, conducts events on the days surrounding the Saturday night dinner, but due to time constraints, the only event I attended was the main one: the dinner in the Palace of Westminster.

On Saturday night, January 9<sup>th</sup>, I took the tube for two stops from Victoria Station to Westminster Station. Since it was Saturday night the station was almost deserted as this area consisted of mostly government buildings. London had been receiving snow and ice for the last few days with the temperatures hovering around zero Celsius. The sidewalks and streets were slippery.

Standard attire for men is black tie, but since I was coming for overseas, they allowed suits. My black two-piece suit, white shirt with French cuffs and red/white checked bow tie would do. After finding the proper entrance, I was ushered through security (photo for my lanyard and a metal detector) and then walked through a great hall that is on the northeast corner of Parliament. This hall, as big as a football field and over five stories tall, is little used except for rare ceremonies. We walked to the Central Lobby which is where public visitors can meet with members of Parliament. To one side is the House of Commons and the other the House of Lords.

After assembling in the Central Hall we were ushered into a reception room on the southern end of the building, along the River Thames. There, 250 people mingled, talked and drank during the cocktail hour. By the end, the room was so crowded it was hard to move. Many pictures were taken as old friends met again.

Following the reception we were then guided to the dining room next door. There was a head table running the long side of this rectangular room. The rest of us sat at tables of eight with assigned seating. I sat with a couple from York, a couple of Canadians who now lived in northern London and three others from the London area. The dinner consisted of mushroom and tarragon pate with vegetables, beef wellington, and a wonderful pistachio meringue with raspberries and crème fraiche.

The program started with a toast to the Queen and Sherlock Holmes, in that order. Jonathan McCafferty (a speaker at our 2007 Conference) is Chairman of the Society and he was the master of ceremonies. Baroness Rendell of Babergh (more commonly known as the author Ruth Rendell) was the speaker this year. Her talk was lovely - about reading Sherlock Holmes early in life, his influence on her writing and the immortal nature of Sherlock Holmes. This was followed by introductions of all non-UK guests, including yours truly. (About ten were from mainland Europe, ten from Canada, a couple of us from the USA, and a couple from Australia.) Also introduced was the English actor Douglas Wilmer, who starred in the BBC *Sherlock Holmes* TV series in the 1960s (he turned 90 this year) and the English actor Tim Pigott-Smith, best known in the United States for his role in the PBS shown mini-series, *The Jewel in the Crown*. He is now writing a series of young adult novels titled, *The Baker Street Mysteries*. The evening ended with a toast to Dr. Watson and much applause.

After more pictures, talking, and thanking of the Secretary of the Society Catherine Cooke, the Chairman and many others, I was directed by friendly security officers out of the building. I floated on air back to Westminster Station, then floated on rails to Victoria Station, and fought the wind, cold and sleet back to our B & B.

~Gary Thaden



**"The program started with a toast to the Queen and Sherlock Holmes, in that order."**



## GUIDANCE FROM THE MASTER

Good fortune rewarded me with an intriguing Sherlockian book as a quiz prize at our 2009 Norwegian Explorers Annual Dinner. It's the *Sherlock Holmes Handbook* by Ransom Riggs. When I brought the little red book home (shades of Chairman Mao?) my wife's initial reaction was "That's an old one!"

Not exactly, the book has an embossed, faux-Victorian look that might cause one to mistake it for an aged volume. But it's copyright 2009, from the appropriately titled Quirk Books press in Pennsylvania.

So what sort of advice did Sherlock provide me, courtesy of Mr. Riggs?

First, let's dispense with the specialized advice that just doesn't apply to my circumstances. I am a peaceful fellow living a relatively uneventful – but far from unpleasant – life. So several "how to" chapters seem unlikely to apply to me or most other Sherlockians. These include how to "examine a body," (I'll probably only ever examine my own) "analyze bullet evidence," (I only see projectiles on TV) "crack a safe," (don't have one) survive a waterfall," (can't swim, so forget that) "raise bees," (too painful), "interact with royalty" (unlikely, other than my greeting the "King of Scandinavia" at our yearly banquet) or "fake your own death" (I'm too innocuous to need to do that).

Then there are those chapters dwelling on topics where Holmes's advice might actually be a bit dubious. Is he the font of wisdom on how to "deal with friends and relatives"? As far as we know, his friends were few and his relatives numbered one – the unobtrusive Mycroft. Seems he had an easy time of it, but that hardly equipped Holmes with the experience to deal with continual domestic tempests, as some of us must. And "manage children"? His solution was to not have any. I have two daughters, so his experience doesn't help me much. "Deal with women"? Sherlock's approach was to be sure they were seldom seen or heard. I live with three of the opposite sex, so that's not an option either.

But the book addresses several topics of great use for many of us. How to "cover your tracks" provides skills we often need. Who hasn't been required at times to "sneak, skulk

and steal," as the book advises? Sadly, the chapter provides no specific guidance about covering one's tracks with the Internal Revenue Service.

And who hasn't had to "question a suspect"? As a teacher, that label fits most of my students. Here, Holmes offers invaluable advice to teachers everywhere: "act as if you know the truth – even if you don't." I practice that on a daily basis in my line of work.

All of us, at one time or another, need to "stage a dramatic entrance." I particularly appreciated the suggestions to "reveal key evidence in an unusual manner" and "use alarming props." I have resorted on occasion to squirt guns in my classes, but Holmes clearly advises that I up my game in this regard.

And who doesn't need to improve their ability to "sniff out a hoax"? Holmes advises that we "question the suspected con man in a friendly manner" but also to "look for out-of-character details" and to "perform a background check." Sound advice indeed.

No one was better at "keeping your mind sharp" than Sherlock, and his advice on this mercifully avoids recommending any seven-percent solution. But here some of the advice seems dubious: "starve yourself," (that will only sharpen your mind on the subject of your stomach) and "smoke copiously" (which over time won't sharpen your body at all). Still, his guidance to "ignore that which is unimportant" and "always keep your mind occupied," including by playing a musical instrument, seems sound for everybody.

The volume contains some interesting sections on Conan Doyle and the Canon and is festooned with Sherlockian quotes. It is a thoroughly enjoyable and instructive book. If I had to pick some summary advice from the master contained in this volume, it would probably be this:

"Education never ends, Watson. It is a series of lessons, with the greatest for the last."  
– "The Adventure of the Red Circle"

~Steven Schier



**"No one was better at "keeping your mind sharp" than Sherlock, and his advice on this mercifully avoids recommending any seven-percent solution."**

### Mystery Challenge

Hint #1:

It is a quote from  
Sherlock Holmes to  
Mr. Henry Baker.  
(BLUE)

## NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS AT THE MOVIES

American Sherlockians and movie fans were treated with a present on Christmas Day, 2009 with the premier of Guy Ritchie's "Sherlock Holmes." Two days later, Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, nineteen Norwegian Explorers and friends gathered at the gorgeous Heights Theatre for the 4:05 p.m. showing.

The Height's owner, Tom Letness, let our president Gary Thaden have the microphone before the movie. Gary introduced our group to the audience and explained how our name came to be. He announced upcoming events and invited people to learn about our group through handouts provided in the lobby by a couple thoughtful members.

Explorer Mary Loving took the initiative to pick the Heights as a venue for our outing. It's wonderful to have members such as Mary who are willing to step up. I asked Mary about her experiences coordinating this event. — *Ed*.

**TR:** What has your over-all impression of the evening?

**ML:** I think everyone had a good time. I was impressed with the turnout considering it was a holiday weekend. Fortunately, the weather cooperated, too, by not snowing! I'm also happy we weren't the only ones in the theatre. The only thing that would have made it better would have been an organ recital before the film although I'm not sure what music he would have played: songs from the 1890s? The theme from the Jeremy Brett series?

**TR:** How was your experience working with the owner of The Heights in setting up the event?

**ML:** Excellent. I had attended some special showings at the Heights last Fall and knew from those that the owner, Tom Letness, was open to enriching the movie-going experience for his patrons. I emailed Gary Thaden in early December inquiring as to whether or not the Explorers were planning on seeing the new movie as a group. I thought it would not only be fun, but would also be a good opportunity to promote the Explorers, the conference next summer, and the Collections. After I got the go-ahead from Gary, I emailed Letness and explained what we wanted to do. We discussed it by phone and he was pretty much open to just about anything reasonable.

**TR:** What did you think of the movie?

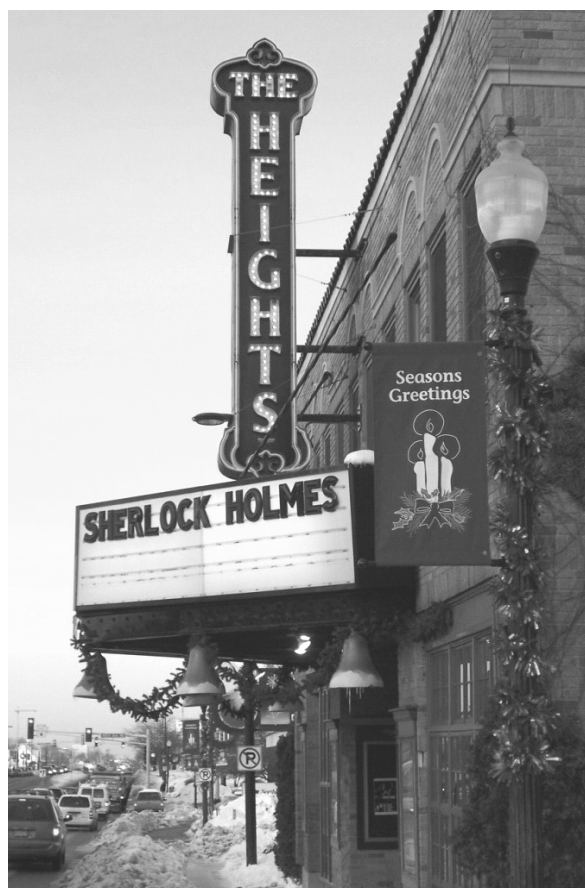
**ML:** My first reaction was, "Who is that scruffy guy and why does he keep quoting Sherlock Holmes?" -- just kidding. I actually liked it better than I thought I would from seeing the trailers. It's pretty much the comic-book version of Holmes and Watson. I didn't expect the movie to be canonical (when are they ever?) but I was pleasantly surprised to see the effort they did make in salting the script with quotes from the Canon. I especially liked Jude Law as Watson.

**TR:** Any other thoughts about the night that you want to share?

**ML:** I know from my conversations with the owner that he's trying to get some of the restored Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes films for a special showing at the Heights. So, perhaps we will have another opportunity to promote ourselves during those showings!



**"I was pleasantly surprised to see the effort they did make in salting the script with quotes from the Canon."**



The Heights Theatre, Columbia Heights, Minnesota

# HOLMES AND WATSON: A MUSICAL MYSTERY

A PLAY BY JAHNNA BEECHHAM

AND MALCOM HILLGARTNER

The writer of Ecclesiastes was right when he or she observed: "Of making many books there is no end..." (chapter 12, verse 12). This comment is certainly true with respect to the production of Sherlockian pastiche, as my groaning book shelves attest. A similar assertion may be made with respect to the staggering number of dramatic productions featuring the great detective and his faithful companion.

Holmes and Watson have trod the boards countless times since a one-act musical satire, *Under the Clock*, was staged in 1899. Amnon Kabatchnik has attempted the herculean task of chronicling the Holmes plays in his *Sherlock Holmes on the Stage: A Chronological Encyclopedia of Plays Featuring the Great Detective*. But, while his book is admirable and encyclopedic, he could not possibly list and discuss all the stage productions, for many plays are continually being written and performed. Of the drafting of plays, it seems, there is no end.

One example that escapes Kabatchnik's net is a new play, *Holmes and Watson: A Musical Mystery* – a play, it would seem, in the tradition of *Under the Clock*. Starring Richard Farrell and Michael Santo, this world premiere production ran from November 13, 2009 to January 3, 2010 at the Stackner Cabaret in Milwaukee. One could – and we did – take the Megabus from Minneapolis and arrive in ample time to enjoy a leisurely stroll along the Milwaukee River to the theater. There one could enjoy a hearty meal (I had the "Sherlock's Favorite," a creditable pork loin chop) and enjoy the show, the play beginning at 8 p.m. Once the two-man play began, the rigors of travel disappeared, because, as Holmes sang, "The Game's Afoot and There's No Turning Back."

Initially Watson was nervously pacing in a handsomely realized 221B. He read from one of his recorded cases, "Hound of the Grimpen Tight Ram's Bottom." From that very first groaner the audience knew it was witnessing an unabashed musical parody. That impression was amplified when Holmes stealthily entered through a window singing "When Evil Lurks,"

after which he playfully engaged Watson in a lively fencing match. In the fray, however, Holmes was struck in the head and experienced an extended moment of amnesia during which he did a music hall turn dressed as Mortimer Chips, part of the comedy team of Fish and Chips.

While it was all silly and pun-filled, the play was, in its way, as enjoyable as the pork loin chop. The repartee was swift and a little corny. At one point Watson referred to "The Strange Case of the Cheese That was Left Out All Night." Later Watson declared, "When it comes to deduction I need some instruction;" and Holmes obliged by singing a song on the "Science of Deduction."

The action was not all fish and chips, though. Holmes really was engaged in a case at the behest of The Nightingale of Nuremberg (a.k.a. the Prince Albert, the Queen's consort). This august personage was being blackmailed by none other than Hugh P. Fullbuck (a fiendishly clever anagram for James Moriarty). At the end of Act 1 Holmes and Watson were locked in their rooms with poisonous gas seeping through the keyhole. Death seemed imminent, causing Holmes to gasp: "We can't escape, Watson, this is it...this is The Final Problem."

Of course there was life after gas in Act 2, as the indestructible duo neutralized the deadly fumes by blowing a smoky counter agent into the air from a hookah. Having recovered their balance and breath, the team sifted the evidence to discover that Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, was not really dead. Having lost his wits, he was being kept locked in a sanitarium. I saw the punch line coming a mile away, because it helped shaped my pipe-smoking youth: the Queen was keeping, so to speak, Prince Albert in a can. But she couldn't let the public know, for it would (somehow) imperil the empire. Thus Holmes had to defeat the blackguard blackmailer and protect Victoria's Secret. All of which he deftly did, with puns, songs, dance, and gaiety in abundance.

(Continued on page 9)



"From that very first groaner the audience knew it was witnessing an unabashed musical parody."

## Mystery Challenge

Hint #2:

Use a three-place  
shift cipher alphabet.



## HOLMES AND WATSON (Continued from page 8)

Clearly this kind of musical production does not suit everyone's taste. But the sold out house savored it; and so did the Milwaukee critics. One newspaper critic, Rip Tenor, wrote in the *milwaukeeexpress.com*, "This two-man show...gathers steam and rolls toward a combustible climax energized by the captivating chemistry between Santo and Farrell...We're talking show biz here, pure and simple, and that's *Holmes and Watson*, an elementary evening of entertainment, of a kind not found often enough. Case closed."

With a light heart we returned to Minneapolis the next day on the Megabus with a sense of satisfaction that Holmes had yet again solved another case. Moreover, we fostered a fond hope that this production might someday be staged in the Twin Cities. If so, then in our home territory people would discover (as we did) that as a youth Prince Albert studied in Bonn; and audiences would surely be enlightened by learning that, as a consequence, he was once a member of the Bonn Vivants. Case not closed?

~Robert Brusica



## STUDY GROUP MEETING REVIEW

**Discussion leader: Kristi Iverson**

**Date: November 21, 2009**

**Location: Merriam Park Library**

*The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual* took place early in the career of Sherlock Holmes. Chronologists place it in about 1878. Reginald Musgrave introduces the problem to us and Holmes. Musgrave had been an acquaintance of Holmes at "the university;" possibly Christ Church, Canterbury, Kent. Musgrave had been a very visible, "Don Juan" character there. Dr. Watson and Sherlock had not even met at the time of this case.

This story is different from the later adventures of the Canon, in that Sherlock Holmes narrates the story to Dr. Watson. Watson does introduce the story to us, and so we do get to enjoy some of the usual pre-case banter, which takes place in the famous apartment on Baker Street. On one quiet "winter's night," Watson had suggested that Holmes "might employ the next two hours in making our room more habitable." As a means of avoiding any cleaning, Holmes mentions the case, and follows that by chiding Watson; "And leave the litter as it is," and "Your tidiness won't bear much strain, after all, Watson." Watson gained a story and Holmes had his way, concerning the untidiness of the apartment.

Holmes related the case of "The Musgrave Ritual" then, as a means of appeasing Watson, and luckily so, as the case is one of our favorites. Our study group was in agreement, that this story is one of the best of the Canon. However,

Sherlock Holmes made no great deductions in this story, other than realizing that the ritual might be a form of treasure map. Why then, is the story such a favorite? Maybe some of it is Watson's introduction, at Baker Street, that gives us rare insights into the Holmes/Watson relationship. However, what seems to captivate the reader is the "riddle" contained within the "Musgrave Ritual"; "Whose was it?"; "His who is gone." None of us could have solved the riddle, but Sherlock Holmes, with aid from Reginald Musgrave, and the butler, Brunton, did.

Actually, it was by luck that Holmes solved the riddle so easily. His friend Musgrave gave him the important fact that the elm tree was 64 feet high. Musgrave also realized that "and so under" was a reference to the cellar below. It is also a coincidence that Brunton, the disgraced butler, had trusted his former fiancée with his life. Brunton had been clever, but only a fool would trust a former lover. If he had chosen a different ally, he might have escaped to the continent, treasure in hand, days ahead of Holmes. Our group thought it therefore fortunate that Musgrave had come to Holmes so soon after Brunton's disappearance. Otherwise, when the sun would have been "Over the oak," the shadow would not have been at the correct starting place, "Under the elm." Or so, at any rate, such was the best our group could figure.

Our group discussion touched on the fate of Rachel Howells. She was acting very guilty at the least. Could it be proven that she slammed

(Continued on the lower half of page 11)



"Our study group was in agreement that this story is one of the best of the Canon."



Sidney Paget illustration  
*The Strand Magazine*  
May 1893

## VOWEL RHYME: ASSONANCE

In the last issue of *Explorations*, I wrote about the device called **alliteration**, which is the repetition of nearby sounds, especially consonant sounds at the beginning of words. If the repetition of sounds is of vowel sounds (in adjacent or almost adjacent words) rather than consonants, the figure gets a new name:

### assonance.

Like alliteration, assonance (sometimes called “vowel rhyme” or “vocalic rhyme”) is a device more frequently noticed and remarked upon in poetry than in prose. Assonance gives a sense of continuity and fluidity to poetic lines.

I heard a fly buzz when I died  
—Emily Dickinson

Let me choose, and I will dwell  
Where the sea, with sounding tread  
Climbeth, till his feathery crest  
Brush the mountain’s feet.  
—George Perkins Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*, 1860

Whales in the wake like capes and Alps  
Quaked the sick sea and snouted deep  
—Dylan Thomas, “Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait”

that dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea  
—William Butler Yeats, “Byzantium”

Assonance is not the same thing as rhyme. Rhyme implies that terminal consonant sounds are involved in the word play. (In poetry, rhyme usually means “end-rhyme” —the rhyming words are found at the end of poetic lines). Assonance merely means that vowel sounds are the same. “Moon” and “June” are rhyme. “Moon” and “moor” are assonance. In these lines from Tennyson’s “Lady of Shalott,”

Long fields of barley and of rye  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky

the words “rye” and “sky” are rhyme; the words “clothe” and “wold” are assonance.

As an aside, rhyme is actually rather hard to avoid entirely since there are so many examples of it in English. Although the

Sherlock Holmes stories are written in prose, there are many examples of incidental rhyme within the lines:

sad faces and glad, haggard and merry  
(SIGN, Doubleday 98)  
“a sneering, leering, insolent face”  
(GLOR, 378)  
“True for you” (VALL, 860)  
“I know you could if you only would.” (REDC, 901)  
“I have not got the stone” (MAZA, 1014)  
Holmes took the book (3GAR, 1045)  
“upon the ground round the body” (HOUN, 679)  
(Page numbers from Doubleday.)

Assonance was one of the toughest figures of speech for me to compile. Vowel sounds are much harder for me to notice than are initial consonants. Also, vowel sounds are often what distinguish one accent from another. I speak (and hear) with a standard Middle-Western American accent. Speakers of other forms of English speak, write and hear things differently. Vowel sounds shift over space (from one region to another) and also over time. Holmes and Watson would certainly have heard and pronounced vowel sounds differently than I do. For example, in HOUN (Doubleday 710), Stapleton says, “the fates were against us.” The long “a” vowel sound of “fates” is the same sound as the second “a” in “against” in “Received Pronunciation” British English. In standard American English, on the other hand, “against” is pronounced “uh GENST” (with a short vowel sound in the accented syllable). On the other hand, the line “we found ourselves in Pall Mall” (GREE, 444) contains assonance in both British and American English, even though the pronunciation of the vowels is not the same. Assonant in American but not British English is Watson’s observation in BERY “it seems rather sad” (BERY, 301) Assonant in British but not American English are these Canonical lines:

“a dead junior clerk in the heart of London” (BRUC, 917)  
“What a blind beetle I have been” (PRIO, 551)

(Continued with quiz on page 11)



“Although the Sherlock Holmes stories are written in prose, there are many examples of incidental rhyme...”

### Mystery Challenge

Solution:

“I observe that your circulation is more adapted for summer than for winter.” -  
*The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*

August in Minnesota is a great month to visit!

## ASSONANCE QUIZ (continued from page 10)

Identify the stories in which these examples occur:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. "There is a chalk-pit by the camp, with a deep green pool at the base of it."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "It seems to me, mister," said he, "that you are gettin' set on my Ettie."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. be circumspect in the future, that those foul passions whereby our family has suffered so grievously may not again be loosed to our undoing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. "Was there a fellow about thirty, black-bearded, dark, of middle size?"  
"Yes; he was he was the last to pass me."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. "What could I do? Absolute ruin faced me."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. "Why shouldn't we use a little art jargon."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. "What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. "He may pick up some garbage in the darker recesses of the underworld"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. "Besides, with this crowd about, it was well that she should have someone near to look after her."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Deep down in the recesses of the coffin lay an emaciated figure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. "The Foreign Minister alone I could have withstood"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. "There are only those three capable of playing so bold a game—there are Oberstein, la Rothiere, and Eduardo Lucas."

Choose your answers from these stories: (No story is used more than once.)

HOUN	REDC	STUD	LAST
ILLU	SECO	SUSS	SOLI
LADY	SHOS	VALL	VEIL

Please see page 13 for the correct answers.

~Karen Murdock



## STUDY GROUP REVIEW (continued from page 9)

down the stone cover and later threw the bag into the pond? If so, she was at least guilty of stealing Musgrave private property; but if she didn't incriminate herself, it would have been difficult to convict her of that. As it is, Holmes reports that "nothing was ever heard, and the probability is that she got away out of England, and carried herself, and the memory of her crime, to some land beyond the seas." Did Holmes purposely spare her from "English" justice in favor of justice from a higher power? Possibly.

We were intrigued by the damaged crown. Holmes implied that it was an ancient crown, last possessed by Charles I of England. We can only guess as to why it was

not returned to Charles II, when he was restored. An explanation can only be the result of conjecture. Historians do not even mention a "lost crown of Charles I." Each of us can probably imagine an equally plausible explanation for the crown's loss. One such theory might involve a sudden stroke followed by near total paralysis and a note scratched out onto a parchment. Those Musgraves didn't display much curiosity. Someone suggested that Brunton might have been an illegitimate Musgrave. That idea sounded good to us, but he apparently got all the curiosity and not the common sense.

~Charles Clifford



"...vowel sounds  
are often what  
distinguish one  
accent from  
another."

## EXPLORERS REPORT FROM NEW YORK CITY

Each January, hundreds of Sherlockians meet in New York City to celebrate the birthday of Sherlock Holmes. It's known as the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) Weekend. Some gatherings are official BSI events; however other Sherlockian societies also host events.

The 2010 schedule spanned Wednesday, Jan. 13 through Sunday, Jan. 17. A contingent of Norwegian Explorers attended these events and many of them contributed reviews to share with the readers of *Explorations*. Pages 12 – 16 feature their detailed reports. – Ed.

### THE ADVENTURESSES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (ASH) DINNER

On Wednesday, the BSI Weekend began in New York City with the ASH (sometimes referred to as "ASH Wednesday") Dinner. Although described in the BSI schedule as the formal beginning of the weekend, it is actually anything but formal. Held at O'Casey's Irish Pub, a few blocks from the Algonquin Hotel, it consists of a cocktail hour, a brief welcome and a casual, sit-where-you-please dinner. Often the welcome is given by Evelyn Herzog (one of the founders of ASH in the 1960s, its first leader, and a member of the editorial board of "The Serpentine Muse"), but on this occasion, Susan Rice, who labors mightily every year in organizing weekend events, did the honors. Dinner, with many Irish menu options, followed. Conversation was spirited throughout the room, to judge by the sound level and enthusiasm.

This gathering provides the opportunity to see old friends, meet new ones and hear what has been going on in the Sherlockian world in the past year. It is also a look forward at the weekend, particularly the Distinguished Speaker Lecture, which is held the following night. As at any Sherlockian event, a few of the faithful wear deerstalker caps, although no one wore an Inverness cape on this occasion. Notable in this respect was Joe Moran, a genial, retired New Yorker, who looks the picture of anachronistic Victorian-era outdoorsmanship in his deerstalker, Harris Tweed sport coat and L. L. Bean parka. Dinner ended amid pleasant anticipation of the weekend ahead.

~Michael Miller

### CHRISTOPHER MORLEY WALK

A now traditional part of each birthday weekend is Thursday morning's Christopher Morley Walk. Originated by the late Allen Mackler, the outing is hosted by Jim Cox (The Curious Collectors of Baker Street) and Doré Nash, ASH -*The Woman at Margate* (The Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn.)

Beginning at the Algonquin, twenty enthusiastic Sherlockians tramped around Manhattan to many of the sites frequented by Morley. We wandered over to his *Saturday Review* office building, up to Argosy Press, past the former site of the Gotham Book Market and on through midtown.

The highlight of this year's tour was a stop at the Woolworth Building, near City Hall and in the heart of the newspaper world of the 1920s and 30s. Doré had obtained special permission for access to the historic building (off limits to the public since 9-11.) The group was most fortunate to encounter Roy A Suskin, Vice President of Development for the Witkoff Group, current owners of the building. Not only did Roy regale us with details of the history of the building and its miserly yet colorful founder, but also he gave permission for photos. He then very generously volunteered to snap pix of the group on the vast marble staircase of the building and snapped through a dozen plus cameras to accommodate all requests.

It was certainly hard to top that site, but the walk continued with a brief donut and coffee break (thanks to Doré!) and on to the final stop, McSorley's Old Ale House. Established in 1854, it is a gathering place, watering hole and subject of art and literature. It is the oldest continuously operated saloon in New York. And, just since 1970 (thanks to a Supreme Court ruling!) have women been able to enjoy the sawdust strewn floors. A hearty finale to the morning, but only the beginning of a lively weekend in honor of the Master.

~Pj Doyle, ASH, BSI



"Conversation was spirited throughout the room, to judge by the sound level and enthusiasm."

## BSI DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER LECTURE

The first official event of the BSI Weekend is the Distinguished Speaker Lecture on Thursday evening at the Williams Club, a short walk or cab ride from the Algonquin hotel. For many attendees the main attraction of this event is the first opportunity during the Weekend to greet old friends whom they have not seen since last year. As in past years, as Sherlockians assembled in the crowded fifth-story room for the lecture – most of whom had navigated a claustrophobia-inducing six-person elevator to get there – the buzz was palpable. Eventually, Mike Whelan, “Wiggins” of the Baker Street Irregulars, took to the microphone and cut through the buzz to introduce Les Klinger, who introduced this year’s speaker, Joan Winterkorn.

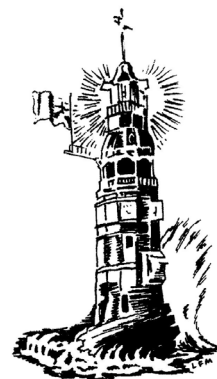
Joan, who works as an archivist and appraiser for the British bookseller Bernard Quaritch, spoke about evaluating the papers of seven generations of the John Murray publishing family on behalf of the National Library of Scotland, to whom the Murray family is donating its archives. Although the main interest of our assembled group was to hear about the Conan Doyle material in the Murray archives, we also were intrigued to hear of other gems in the collection, such as original papers of Jane Austen, Charles Darwin and Lord Byron. The seven-generation Murray family business has enjoyed preeminent success over the years, but their judgment hasn’t always been infallible. For example, although Murray had published early stories of Herman Melville, they declined to take on “the one about the whale.” Joan’s enthusiasm for her work shone through as she recounted tales of the sometimes tedious, sometimes thrilling tasks she has undertaken.

After the lecture, many people drifted away in small groups – some of them impromptu new scions – to dine in local restaurants, reminisce about old times and look forward to the rest of the Weekend events.

~John Bergquist, BSI, 2s

## BEACON SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

The Beacon Society began in January 2003 as the brainchild of New York Sherlockian Maribeu Briggs, ASH – *Matilda Briggs*, who introduced the idea of organizing a group of Sherlockians willing to make a concerted effort to teach young people about the Master Detective. The Society supports educational experiences that introduce young people to the Canon and recognizes exemplary efforts to do so.



The Beacon Society  
Logo

The annual meeting convenes on Friday morning of the birthday weekend under the direction of its Headlight, Joe Coppola, BSI – *The Stranger’s Room*. Members come from all over the world and represent myriad scion societies.

The 2009 Beacon Award winner was recognized at this year’s meeting. Dr. Tracy J Revels, received the award “in recognition of a project that successfully introduced young people to Sherlock Holmes Stories.” -- *Humanities 101: Sherlock Holmes and Victorian England — College History*

The Beacon Society can give two awards each year. In addition to the Beacon Award, The Jan Stauber Grant can fund “a project that proposes introducing a number of young people to the stories.” Guidelines and submission information can be found at [www.beaconsociety.com](http://www.beaconsociety.com).

A quotation from Sherlock Holmes was the inspiration for the name of the Society. Holmes finds the sight of London’s public elementary schools “a very cheering thing” as he and Watson leave the city by train in “The Naval Treaty.”

*“Look at those big, isolated clumps of buildings rising above the slates, like brick islands in a lead-colored sea. . . 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.”*

~Pj Doyle, ASH, BSI



“we also were  
intrigued to hear  
of other gems in  
the collection,  
such as original  
papers of Jane  
Austen, Charles  
Darwin and Lord  
Byron.”

ANSWERS  
TO QUIZ

(from page 11)

1. VEIL, 1101
2. VALL, 822
3. HOUN, 674
4. REDC, 909
5. SHOS, 1111
6. STUD, 36
7. SUSS, 1034
8. ILLU, 988
9. SOLI, 536
10. LADY, 951
11. LAST, 978
12. SECO, 654

(Page numbers  
from Doubleday.)

## 57TH ANNUAL WILLIAM GILLETTE MEMORIAL LUNCHEON

We gathered at noon on Friday, January 15th, at Moran's Chelsea Seafood Restaurant. It starts with pushing through the crowd, past a warm fire and long bar to a table in the back to pick up a name tag with table assignment, buy a drink and raffle tickets and start talking.

At 12:30 Susan Rice, ASH, BSI, 2s acted as host and directed the traditional toasts. The first toast is to William Gillette, with everyone raising their glass to his portrait above the fireplace, then to Clifton Andrew, BSI (who started the luncheon), Lisa McGaw, BSI (who was host for 25 years) and Edith Meiser (favorite guest). Al Gregory, BSI awarded the Jan Stauber Whimsy Award to Phil Shreffler for the most humorous article in the *Serpentine Muse*.

The luncheon comes in three courses and is followed by a program put on by the "Friends of Bogie's," also known as Andrew Joffe, BSI, Paul Singleton, BSI and Sarah Montague, BSI (awarded later that day). The performance started with the soundtrack from the new *Sherlock Holmes* movie with Paul wearing dark glasses and looking like Robert Downey, Jr. Sarah explained the set up with William S. Baring-Gould meets Mother Goose, with a series of skits that cross-over. "The Case of the Retired Pumpkin Eater" has Peter-Peter meeting Mr. Amberley. "The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding" had a rolling pin that allowed deductions. "The Adventure of the Three Rub-a-dubs" had a Bath Tub fortune that needed three people with that name to inherit. "The Twenty-Four Black Pips" had PETA and a bigamist. The final story, "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box," had a farmer's wife who had three severed tails in the box.

When the entertainment was done, the conversations and mingling resumed. It was a successful gathering in a weekend of festivities, with this gathering dedicated to keeping green the memory of the first great Sherlockian actor.

~Richard Sveum, M.D., BSI

## THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS 2010 DINNER

The Baker Street Irregulars annual dinner was held on January 15 this year. The Irregulars and invited guests met at our new venue, the Yale Club, which is conveniently located within walking distance – even if wearing heels - of the Algonquin Hotel.

We met in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor library of the club where we were greeted with hors d'oeuvres, drinks and old friends. The official festivities began with Jerry Margolin's toast to Karen Gurian, "The Woman" of 2010. After graciously accepting this honor, Karen left to join The Women from past years as they held their own dinner. Then it was time to ascend to the 20<sup>th</sup> floor dining room where we all found our assigned tables and seats.

The dinner began with the annual photo of those in attendance. After the group was arranged so all could be in the photo, we rearranged ourselves as dinner was served. Our new venue offered diners a choice of entrees which were served quickly by a large group of waiters.

After dinner, Michael Whelan, "Wiggins" of the Baker Street Irregulars, welcomed everyone. Mike Berdan was recognized as the winner of the 2010 Morley-Montgomery Award for his article "Holmes Alone: Glimpses of Post-Watson Baker Street in 'The Mazarin Stone'" which appeared in the *Baker Street Journal*. Freda Howlett was presented with the special Quartering Award, an engraved crystal vase, in recognition for her role as co-founder, honorary member and past president of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

The Editor's Medals were then awarded to editors of the Baker Street Irregulars Christmas Annuals and individual titles in the International Series and Manuscript Series. The recipients were Steve Rothman, Les Klinger, John Bergquist (of The Norwegian Explorers), Susan Dahlinger, Gianluca Salvatori, and the late H. Paul Jeffers, whose posthumous award will be presented to the Baker Street Irregulars Archives in his memory. This presentation was followed by Don Izban's reading of the Irregulars' Constitution and Buy-Laws—in Polish. The traditional toasts were then given to Mrs. Hudson by Allan Devitt; to Mycroft by Walter Jaffee; and to Watson's Second Wife

(Continued on page 15)



**"The first toast is to William Gillette, with everyone raising their glass to his portrait above the fireplace"**

### New iPhone® App

Explorers with iPhones take note. There is now a Sherlock Holmes Guide to London iPhone app. It has more than 60 locations connected to Holmes and the Canon with facts on houses, hotels, railway stations, pubs, plaques and statues. It also includes maps and more than 100 photos. Forty locations from Baker Street to Leicester Square can be used as a four mile walking guide. Locations further afield are grouped near London's tube stations.

Written and created by David Roberts and designed by Clay Interactive, The Sherlock Holmes Guide to London can be downloaded for \$2.99 at the App store on your iPhone.

**BSI DINNER** (Continued from page 14)

by Greg Darak. Unfortunately, Don Novorsky, who was to present the toast to Sherlock Holmes, was called away on a family emergency. Curtis Armstrong read "The Musgrave Ritual" to the audience.

After a short break, our first speaker presented a talk that was of great interest especially to those who are members of The Norwegian Explorers. Nils Nordberg discussed the strange character Sigerson, noting that in Norwegian there is no such name, and wondered if Sherlock Holmes knew Fridtjof Nansen, the famous Norwegian Explorer. He presented as fact that Holmes took on the guise of a Norwegian Explorer, and inferred that he knew Norwegian; presented as fact that he assumed a Norwegian sounding name, inferring that his father had Norwegian roots; presented as fact that the name Sigerson was spelled phonetically by Watson and, noting Watson's many inconsistencies and probable errors in recording things, inferred the name should have been properly spelled Sigurdson, the son of Sigurd. Sigurd was a dragon slayer, and Nordberg referred to Holmes's slaying of Moriarty.

The next speaker was Susan Vizoskie who related that after reading Rex Stout's "Watson was a Woman," she was led to ask the fanciful question "What if Sherlock Holmes had been a woman?" She emphatically stated her belief that Holmes was indeed a man but cited the many differences that would have existed if he had been born with the XX chromosomal makeup instead of XY. Following Susan was Hartley Nathan who spoke about the Penang lawyer, and how he came to have one.

Peter Blau then took the podium to present his tribute to an Old Irregular, Bill Rabe. He noted that Rabe was a man who couldn't be forgotten by those who knew him and went on to relate his numerous escapades. Henry Boote, the all-around musician of the Baker Street Irregulars, performed "We Never Mention Aunt Clara" as it was originally written, followed by Scott Monty's traditional rendition of the song. Continuing the musical program, Ray Jessel, the co-composer and lyricist of "Baker Street," the 1965 Broadway musical about Sherlock Holmes, presented a medley of tunes from the show.

Francine Kitts then read the "Stand with me here upon the terrace," remembering the seven Irregulars who passed away this year. Following that, Mike Whelan presented the Birthday Honours List. He presented an investiture certificate and shilling to Tom Cynkin ("Lord Bellinger"), our own Pj Doyle ("Ettie Shafter"), Sir Christopher Frayling ("Vernet"), Patricia Guy ("Imperial Tokay"), Laurie King ("The Red Circle"), Sarah Montague ("Violet Smith"), Daniel Polvere ("Holloway and Steele"), Sally Sugarman ("The Three Gables"), and Maria Carmen Veiga-Hayzen ("Isadora Klein"). The Two-Shilling Award, given for extraordinary devotion to the cause beyond the call of duty was bestowed upon John Bergquist, Bob Coghill and Steve Doyle.

The evening ended with Ben Vizoskie's reading of "A Long Evening with Holmes." We were pleased to see two Minnesotans among the honorees, and the consensus seemed to be that the Yale Club was a fine venue for the dinner. We're looking forward to next year's dinner to be held January 7, 2011.

~Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

**THE GASLIGHT GALA**

"The Poisons in the Canon" was the theme of Friday night's Gaslight Gala held at The Manhattan Club. Co-chairpersons Carol Fish, ASH and Laurie Fraser Manifold, ASH once again gave attendees a lengthy line-up of skits, toasts, and musical performances to enjoy.

Creative toasts were given to six poisons mentioned in the Canon: Belladonna (DYIN/STUD), Curare (SUSS), Prussic Acid (VEIL), Strychnine (SIGN), Radix Pedis Diaboli (DEVI), and — via an outstanding operatic toast by Jim Hawkins — Cyanea capillata (LION). Dinner was excellent, and it is certain none of the poisons made it anywhere near the superb buffet tables.

Ron Fish conducted the Roll Call of Societies represented in the room and individually recognized first-timers. A highlight of the evening was Donny Zaldin's, M.Bt., game, "Name that Sherlockian Adventure." Dozens of photos of Donny with a deerstalker in locations world-wide each provided a clue to a Sherlockian case. The unintentional provocative nature of some photos

(Continued on page 16)



**"Nils Nordberg  
...wondered if  
Sherlock Holmes  
knew Fridtjof  
Nansen, the  
famous  
Norwegian  
Explorer."**

(Continued from page 15)

Ron Fish  
(standing left)  
assisted Donny  
Zaldin, M.Bt.  
(standing center)  
with the hilarious  
finale to the Gala.  
(Not pictured:  
Audrey Epstein,  
ASH, who  
provided musical  
accompaniment.)



had his audience suffering riotous and extended bouts of giggles. This satisfying Gala closed with a singing of "To Holmes' and Watson's Time" (Auld Lang Syne) with lyrics by Jane Hinckley, ASH.

~Tim Reich

### THE JUNIOR BLOODSTAIN MEETING OF THE CLIENTS OF ADRIAN MULLINER

On Saturday, January 16, at 10:30 AM the Clients met in the lobby of the Algonquin Hotel to celebrate the connection between Sherlock Holmes and P. G. Wodehouse. The Senior Bloodstain meets at the Biannual Wodehouse conference that was in St. Paul in 2009. The group is led by Anne Cotton and Marilyn MacGregor. The gathering traditionally conducts no business but reads a "playlet" written for the Clients by Anne.

This year featured the premiere of "Sherlock Holmes and the Sure Thing" with seven characters. Sherlock Holmes is always read by Marilyn and Anne is Dr. Watson. Sherlockian actor John Sherwood was the Narrator. The cast also included Albert Silverstein as Fitzroy Simpson, John Baesch as The Weasel, Burt Wolder as Roderick Spode and Elaine Coppola as Wilfred Mulliner. The reading was quickly over when Sara Mullin from station WFIC appeared and requested a repeat performance so she could film the production. So a command performance was read and recorded.

A script with the signatures of the cast was again donated to the University of Minnesota Sherlock Holmes Collections. In 2011 the next Senior Bloodstain will be in Detroit with the Junior Bloodstain always in New York City.

~Richard Sveum, M.D., BSI

### BSI COCKTAIL RECEPTION

The last official event of the Birthday Weekend is the Saturday-afternoon BSI Cocktail Reception, held for the last few years at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, almost directly across the street from the Algonquin. After an hour or so of milling around and chatting in the Great Hall while indulging in refreshments, passed hors d'oeuvres and heartier fare from a well-stocked buffet table, the attendees migrated to the imposing Meeting Room for the formal part of the program.

Mike Whelan introduced Mary Ann Bradley, who introduced all those who have been honored by the BSI as "The Woman" over the years, including this year's honoree, Karen Gurian, the wife of Andrew Jay Peck. Mike Berdan was announced as the latest winner of the Morley-Montgomery Award, given annually for what was judged the past year's best contribution to *The Baker Street Journal*.


Peter Blau conducted the auction to benefit the John H. Watson Fund. Contributed auction items included a pillow embroidered with motifs from "The Abbey Grange," a set of posters from the new film, a medical-school diploma signed by Joseph Bell's father, and a boxed set of five medals created by Maggie Schpak of the Curious Collectors of Baker Street, which was won at auction by Explorer – and new Irregular – Pj Doyle.

A special treat this year was hearing Ray Jessel sit down at the grand piano to play and sing his "Short-term Memory Loss Blues."

The highlight of the program each year – and this year was no exception – is a recap in verse of the year's big news stories and the previous evening's BSI Dinner by the father-and-daughter team of Al & Betsy Rosenblatt. Of course, Tiger Woods made the recap this year, with a warning that one should not snatch delusion from a girl who holds a Tiger club. The recap ended with Betsy singing a version of "Hey Jude" addressed to Jude Law, imploring him to see that Robert Downey, Jr.'s scruffy incarnation of Sherlock Holmes gets a shave.

After Mike officially closed the Weekend festivities, several people were seen to linger afterwards, saying bittersweet goodbyes to their friends and looking forward to doing it all again next year.

~John Bergquist, BSI, 2s

**"This year  
featured the  
premiere of  
"Sherlock Holmes  
and the Sure  
Thing" with seven  
characters."**



## BAKER STREET WEST DINNER

Twenty-four Norwegian Explorers celebrated the birthday of Sherlock Holmes during our annual Baker Street West dinner on January 24, 2010 at the Cooper Pub in St. Louis Park, MN. Tom Gottwalt coordinated this event that saw us fill a private room.

Gary Thaden led the evening's announcements while we dined on Irish fare. Members reported on Sherlockian events in London and New York. Pj Doyle donated the door prizes (2010 calendars "Great Works in Cow

Literature" ~ featuring Holmes in Feb.) won by Ruth Berman and John & Inez Bergquist. Karen Murdock also provided magnets for all.

Julie McKuras paid tribute to Explorer Pat Nelson with a "Stand with me here upon the terrace..." Pat passed away in Dec. 29, 2009, and it's fitting to recognize her during a Baker Street West; in recent years Pat distributed cards featuring George Newnes at these dinners. Gary also noted the loss of Charles Nolte who passed away on Jan.

14, 2010. Charles was the long-time partner of Terry Kilburn. Terry, a guest at our 2007 conference banquet, is known to us for starring as "Billy" in Alfred Werker's 1939 movie, "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes."

Our camaraderie continued as we finished eating, and some Explorers viewed the Vikings playoff game until we departed on a cool winter evening.

~Tim Reich



### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Spring Study Groups

Usually held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 2:00 p.m.

#### Red Throated League Radio Play

Saturday, April 10, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. Performed at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting, St. Louis Park, MN

#### Fringe's Five-Fifths of Sherlock Holmes

May 2010, Ritz Theatre, Mpls. Updated details: [www.fringefestival.org](http://www.fringefestival.org)

#### Special Study Group

*Arthur & George* book by Julian Barnes. June 2010.

Watch for discussion details & start reading.

#### Park Square Theatre

*Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily*  
June 4 - July 3, 2010  
St. Paul, MN

#### "The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes" Conference

August 6-8, 2010

See the flyer for a description. ➡

(Watch for updates from Gary Thaden about local Sherlockian events.)

**THE SPIRITS  
of SHERLOCK HOLMES**

August 6 - 8, 2010  
Elmer L. Andersen Library  
University of Minnesota

The Conference will explore the many meanings of the word "spirits" and how they relate to Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, and the Victorian Era.

The conference will be held at the Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota, the site of the 2004 and 2007 Conferences. It will begin early afternoon on Friday, August 6, 2010. A Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Meeting will be held late Friday afternoon and Friday evening will be open for your personal dining choice.

Presentations will resume on Saturday morning, August 7th and a luncheon and banquet will be held that day. The conference will conclude mid-day on Sunday, August 8th.

Space for dealers' tables will be available in the conference room.

More details and registration information will be available soon.

To be placed on the mailing list for the conference, send your name, postal address and e-mail address to:

[NorwegianExplorers@gmail.com](mailto:NorwegianExplorers@gmail.com)

"No ghosts need apply"

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
**LIBRARIES**  
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“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.”