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EXPLORATIONS

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"You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson,
but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend."

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Editors' Desk

This current issue is coming out on schedule, and we're thrilled by that. We hope that you find the articles of interest. The Norwegian Explorers continue with monthly study group sessions and two of those are highlighted here, one of the sessions with two authors and different perspectives. Karen Murdock once again delves into figures of speech in the Canon. Conan Doyle was a masterful storyteller and a good writer and we always find it interesting to read Karen's analysis of his writing. For the first time in our memory we have included a pastiche. Lindsay Hall wrote one for us and we are glad to present it to you for your enjoyment. There are also members recounting several events that were attended, a book review by the

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A Word from the President

BY TOM GOTTWALT



As you will note from the many articles throughout this issue, our group has been busy since the publication of the previous edition of *Explorations*. Some notable recent and upcoming events include:

- The "Sherlock Gnomes" movie hit theaters in March.
- The fickle Minnesota weather in the form of a blizzard forced the postponement of the April 15 scheduled Red Throated League performance to May 27.
- In May our newest member, mystery writer Jeff Falkingham, brought his "Elementary, My Dear Watson!" (Investigating Sherlock Holmes) multimedia program to the Robert Trail Library in Rosemount. His books and presentation are covered in this issue.
- Our monthly Study Group wrapped up in June with a discussion of the non-canonical stories of "The Man with the Watches" and "The Lost Special" before taking its Summer Hiatus. Meetings will resume in September.
- This summer has opportunities to experience Holmes-themed shows in the theater with "Post Mortem" at the Theater in the Round and "Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery" at the Park Square Theatre. The Norwegian Explorers have an opportunity to attend the July 8 matinee performance at a special discount. There's also a June 27 opportunity for a "behind the scenes" interview with the two **women** playing the roles of Holmes and Watson.

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Recent Sherlock Holmes Postage Stamps

There are a number of postage stamps issued around the world that have Sherlock Holmes or Arthur Conan Doyle as the subject matter. Steve Trussel has a wonderful website devoted to, among other things, detectives on stamps. His Sherlock Holmes page is www.trussel.com/detfic/sholmes.htm. In addition to true postal releases Steve shows Cinderellas (“privately printed stamps (labels), issued commemoratively or commercially, not postally usable”), postmarks and other ephemera.

There are two postage stamps, released fairly recently from France and the Solomon Islands, that are included in the list. The French 0.70€ stamp highlights Edmond Locard (1887-1966), a forensic scientist who was known as “The French Sherlock Holmes.” This one has a shadow profile of Holmes with his iconic deerstalker, lens and pipe.



An Arthur Conan Doyle stamp from the Solomon Islands is part of a set of four \$10 stamps celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Masonic Grand Lodge of England. The other three Masons illustrated are Winston Churchill, Rudyard Kipling and Ernest Shackleton. A number of smaller countries use philately (stamp collecting) as a revenue source, typically producing stamps that are rarely intended for their own citizens. By combining themes, such as famous individuals and Masonry, they can increase their appeal and the resulting income. The revenue scheme works

because *this* obsessive collector purchased the sheet of four stamps and the accompanying First Day Cover.

The French stamp was released on April 18, 2016, and the Solomon Islands stamp came out on September 4, 2017. 🐾



Study Group Session – “The Empty House”

BY KAREN MURDOCK

Fifteen members of the Norwegian Explorers discussion group met at the Saint Anthony Park Library on March 17th. Mary Loving led the discussion on “The Empty House.”

For “Show & Tell” Kristi Iverson showed a Girl Scout badge with a question mark and a deerstalker hat. This was the “Science & Sleuth” badge and, though now retired, it is available on eBay. Karen Ellery showed her “BBC Sherlock” teapot and cup pins. She passed around the sheet music of a piece she wrote entitled “The Second Most Dangerous Man” (in “honor” of Colonel Moran). Karen Murdock passed out copies of two articles she wrote. “A Smoky Fire” presents her hypothesis that Col. Moran must have “doctored” the logs at Ronald Adair’s house to ensure that the fire would smoke and the maid would have to open the window. “Sound and Sense” is about onomatopoeia in the Canon, of which a wonderful example occurs in the darkness of the Empty House when Col. Moran prepares and fires the air gun. [Editors’ note: This was printed in the 2005 *Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual*.] Phil Bergem showed Sherlockian stamps from the Solomon Islands (part of the British Commonwealth) from 2017. He passed around *Out of the Abyss*, the BSI publication on EMPT for which Phil did the annotations. Dick Sveum said that Jeffrey Hatcher has written a new play, “Holmes and Watson,” which Dick went to see in Milwaukee.

“The Adventure of the Empty House” was first published in 1903, though the story takes place in 1894. About the time gap between the “death” and resurrection of Sherlock Holmes, Mary observed “a lot of other fandoms have had to wait” for things to happen. That time is often filled in by fans writing fan fiction. She showed a pastiche she had found in a Welsh newspaper from November 7, 1894.

EMPT is the “name” story for our scion, The Norwegian Explorers. About his three-year Great Hiatus, Holmes says to Watson, “You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson, but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend.” Mary said, “We accept the Norwegian



Explorer as actual truth,” although some other details of the Hiatus might have been somewhat different than what Holmes related.

Dick S. said that Holmes must have arranged for an Alpine guide to get him out of Switzerland. Bob Brusic wondered how the old bookseller could have carried at least “a dozen” (Doubleday 485) books under one arm. Dick said Catullus was only the size of a paperback. Steve Miller said that thin yellow-backed books could be bought cheaply in train stations at the time.

Karen E. said that a “plot hole” in the story is that Doyle could have written the whole thing without having Moran at the Reichenbach Falls. The whole London criminal world apparently knew that Holmes was alive throughout the Great Hiatus, but Watson never learned this.

Steve M. wondered why Moran, the criminal mastermind, had to cheat at cards in order to make a living. Steve Schier suggested that the cheating was not an economic necessity but that Moran was a sociopath who felt compelled to cheat at anything he did.

Karen M. said the reaction of Watson to Holmes’s return is very different in the Canon (Watson faints) than in the BBC’s *Sherlock* (Watson is so angry that he slugs Holmes and gives him a bloody nose). She said the BBC version was the more likely.

Steve M. suggested, tongue-in-cheek, that a possible explanation for the Great Hiatus (1891-1894) was that one of Moran’s rocks hit Holmes in the head causing Holmes to forget who he was for three years.


Mary asked, “If Doyle had not brought Holmes back, would we still be here?” Would the pre-Reichenbach Holmes have generated a worldwide fan base? Phil B. thought not – there would not, he thought, have been a sufficient “critical mass” of stories about Holmes if he had not returned from Reichenbach.

Mary asked why, if Holmes had returned in 1894, Watson did not publish the story until 1903. Dick said this was out of respect for Adair’s family. Karen E. thought the explanation was financial; Doyle got offered a lot of money to resurrect Holmes. Using the “Inflation Calculator” at the website of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Karen E. calculated

that the \$8000 to \$9000 per story that Doyle was offered to bring back Holmes would be worth \$203,000 to \$228,000 in today’s dollars. Mary thought ACD might also have been moved by the inundation of letters he was getting from fans begging for more Sherlock Holmes stories.

Mary said that Holmes always had a flair for the dramatic, but that his return, which caused Watson to faint, was “unnecessarily dramatic.” Steve S. was more succinct; “It was cruel,” he said. Steve M. said that Holmes and Watson constituted “an abusive relationship.” Karen E. said that drama and hunting are two metaphors that pervade this story.

Kristi wondered what Mrs. Hudson thought about the three years that Holmes was gone but Mycroft was paying her to maintain the apartment at 221B Baker Street. “She must have suspected something,” Kristi said.

Dick wondered what percentage of pastiches take place during the Great Hiatus. Mary said this gap formed a good excuse to get Sherlock out of the country without Watson. 

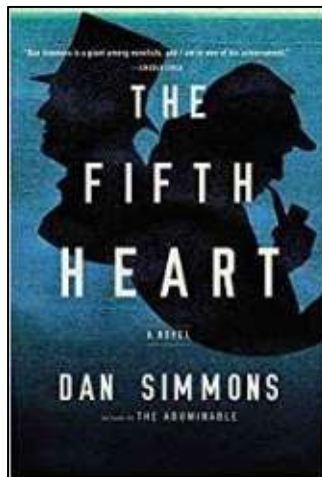
The Fifth Heart by Dan Simmons, a *Sherlockian* review

BY BOB BRUSIC



he *New York Times* on June 10, 2018, ran a review article on Mr. Rogers: “Not Just the Trolley and the Sneakers.” Something that stood out in my mind was a query from a 5-year old who asked Fred Rogers: Are you for real? The writer of the article observed: “There’s something about him (Rogers) that doesn’t seem like any other person you know . . . he feels like someone who doesn’t exist in real life.”

That comment about Fred Rogers is exactly the driving theme in a recent book by Dan Simmons, *The Fifth Heart*. It is a complicated Sherlock Holmes pastiche that has the detective engaged with real characters such as Henry James, all the time wondering whether he (Holmes) is a real person. He reflects on his life and career as recorded by Dr. Watson; yet he definitely remembers their adventures differently. Throughout the




book Holmes ponders the question: what if I am only a literary confection and not a real person interacting with Henry James and other historical persons? To this end, Henry James is the narrator of the story, and he reluctantly replaces Watson as Holmes's amanuensis.

The author and the detective meet under suicidal circumstances alongside the Seine in Paris after which the pair are swiftly off to the United States: Boston, Washington, Chicago. Holmes justifies the trip because, he says, he has been retained to investigate the death of Clove Adams. Her death by swallowing photographic fluid was declared to be suicide, though Holmes is convinced it was murder. During the ocean voyage, Henry James reads *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and in a masterful piece of deconstruction he demonstrates how bad and improbable the writing is and the cases are.

Henry James's negative attitude persuades Holmes to question his own reality throughout the narrative. The plot thickens considerably when Irene Adler and her assassin son Lucien appear. More is afoot than a perceived suicide however. Nothing less than a presidential assassination and subsequent international chaos are at stake. A breathtaking climax at the 1893 Chicago Exposition rivets the reader, followed in turn by a satisfying resolution.

The book is a bit burdened with historical characters and period details (such as what made the White City white). Some faithful followers of the canon might blanch at the higher critical method employed that deconstructs and then reconstructs the Sherlockian universe (like two evil Adlers). It could be said that there was too much attention paid to Holmes's cultivation and execution of his drug addiction – though that is handily resolved at the end of the book.

In spite of these concerns *The Fifth Heart* is a rip-roaring read. The characters, both real and not so, are well drawn. The action and detective work convincingly capture events and personalities in America at the end of the nineteenth century. In all likelihood this is not a book that Fred Rogers might recommend to those in his neighborhood, even though the issue of reality is examined. On the other hand, it might just be the kind of book that might be captured by Robert Downey, Jr., for he too feels like somebody who doesn't exist in real life. 

The Mysterious Obscurity of "The Golden Pince-Nez"

BY STEVEN SCHIER



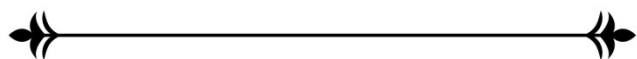
It is a safe bet that when Sherlockians compile personal lists of best stories from the canon, "The Golden Pince-Nez" is not on many of them. Randall Stock's article "Rating Sherlock Holmes," published in the *Baker Street Journal* in 1999, featured a poll of worldwide Sherlock Holmes experts that resulted in quality ratings for each of the 56 short stories. "The Golden Pince-Nez" received the lowest rating – one star on a five-star scale.

Ouch. Is it among the worst? I broached this subject at the April Norwegian Explorers discussion of the story. (Held on April 21st at the Highland Park Library.) Few agreed that it is one of the worst stories. Here are some reasons why.

First, the story features one of the most surprising and unforeseeable "reveals" of a murderer in the canon. When Anna emerges from the secret room behind the bookcase, confesses her guilt as a murderer and discloses that she has poisoned herself, it's a big surprise to the reader. Holmes's use of cigarette ashes to discover her hiding place is a shrewd method of investigation, easily overlooked by the reader earlier in the story.

There are other attractive aspects of the story. It begins with an intriguing list of unrecorded cases, including Huret, the "boulevard assassin," "the repulsive story of the red leech," "the terrible death of Crosby the banker" and "the singular contents of an ancient British barrow" that have stimulated many writers of Sherlockian pastiches. The problem is ably laid before Holmes by the promising young Scotland Yard detective, Inspector Hopkins. Professor Coram with his bed-ridden, epic consumption of Egyptian cigarettes proves a striking character. And few place names are as resonant as "Yoxley Old Place."

The 1980s Jeremy Brett episode of the story, however, does little to improve its reputation. I counted thirteen deviations from the original tale, most undertaken in order to stretch a story that could be told in its original form in thirty minutes to a full length fifty-minute episode. Watson is replaced by Mycroft (Edward Hardwicke was unavailable), who solves the case with his snuff box while Sherlock dithers about unsure of the solution. The murder victim Willoughby is transformed from an upstanding young man to a



lecherous rogue engaged in a *ménage à trois* with the maid Susan and an invented character, feminist Abigail Grosby who, like Anna, wears pince-nez glasses and has red hair. That provides a red herring for the Holmes brothers to pursue. Worst of all, the reveal is diluted by an opening sequence featuring a young Anna in Russia with her golden pince-nez glasses. Brett himself appears sluggish and in ill health.

Discussants did suggest two additional reasons, beyond the dubious Brett episode, for the story's relatively low and obscure reputation. First, Watson in the story has no strong presence. He acts as a passive recorder of events and has no memorable conversations or activities with Sherlock. A second reason is that Sherlock is very much a reasoning machine in the tale with no dramatic or dangerous activities involving the master detective.

For those three reasons, perhaps, the tale is less memorable. Yet the story has much to recommend it. One will not find a finer example of Sherlock's deductive abilities in the canon. Surely that rates more than one star for "The Golden Pince-Nez?" 🐾

Study Group Session – "The Golden Pince-Nez"

BY KAREN MURDOCK



week after a 16-inch blizzard, with spring finally on the way and the heaps of snow all melting, 14 Explorers met at the Highland Park Library in Saint Paul on April 21st. Steve Schier led the discussion on "The Golden Pince-Nez."

For Show & Tell, Kristi Iverson passed around photos of a 180-pound dog that has recently been bred and for sheer size is bigger than the Hound of the Baskervilles. Steve Miller showed a collection of historical fiction by ACD that he had bought recently. Cheri Miller said that during a recent illness she had binge-watched "NCIS" reruns and found that 16 stories had a reference to Sherlock Holmes (Robert Wagner played a Sherlockian). Karen Murdock passed out copies of an article she co-authored with David Wiljamaa in which they assert that the "scattered ashes" plot device in GOLD was suggested to Doyle by the book *Two Little Savages* by the Canadian writer

Ernest Thompson Seton. The book was published in 1903 (the year before "GOLD" was published). Karen M. said that this article was inspired by a Norwegian Explorers discussion, one of a half dozen or more published articles she has written that were inspired by this group. Karen M. also passed around a bottle of "Nevermore" beer (chocolate oatmeal stout, brewed in River Falls, Wisconsin). The raven on the label and the name of the brew give a nod to the inventor of the detective story, Edgar Allan Poe. (Karen M. thought it somewhat ironic that a beer should honor Poe since he was an abuser of alcohol and drugs.)

Steve S. asked which other stories featured Inspector Stanley Hopkins. These include ABBE, BLAC, and MISS. The group thought that, though Hopkins undoubtedly had some good qualities as a detective, his most outstanding quality was knowing when to call in Sherlock Holmes for help.

Steve S. said he had done some research on the pince-nez. These were fairly expensive in Holmes's day because they had to be hand-assembled and custom fit. They were a sign of wealth and a scholarly disposition and were worn by such disparate characters as Theodore Roosevelt, Hercule Poirot, and Scrooge McDuck. Curt Proud suggested that Anna had had the pince-nez custom-made in Russia.

Steve S. said he did not like the Jeremy Brett version of GOLD, which had, according to Schier's count, "13 deviations from the original story" including the insertion of Mycroft Holmes, a love triangle involving Willoughby Smith and several women with red hair wearing pince-nez.

Steve Miller said that if Anna had come to trial (instead of killing herself) she might have faced a charge of 2nd degree murder or involuntary manslaughter. The murder was an accident, but Anna was committing a burglary when she killed Smith. Whatever her penalty in Britain, she would have faced much worse if she had been deported back to Czarist Russia, where she would have been seen as a threat to the state and probably killed.

The theme of hidden rooms is a recurring one in the Canon (VALL, NORW, SIGN, 3GAR, MUSG). Mary Loving suggested that Prof. Coram might have built the hidden room off his bedroom as a bolt hole for himself in case the Brotherhood caught up with him.

The golden pince-nez was pulled off Anna's face by Willoughby Smith. It is described as having "two broken ends of black silk cord dangling

from the end of it.” Mary said that silk is one of the strongest fibers there is; she thought a silk cord would not have broken. Karen M. said the fault was with Watson, who knew nothing about fabrics and just guessed that it was silk; it was probably actually something much flimsier like taffeta or cotton.

Steve S. asked, “Would everyone in the story have been better off if Holmes had not gotten involved in the case?” It was agreed that Hopkins was on the right track with the pince-nez and that he probably would have been able to trace Anna through the London opticians. Mary said that after Watson published the story, the Brotherhood would have been able to find Coram and kill him. Steve M. said that Anna would have been arrested in any case since, without her glasses, she could not move anywhere without bumping into things and calling attention to herself. Karen M. said that a 1947 radio play of *GOLD* had Anna surviving – and Holmes giving her a little lecture about how great the English justice system was, compared to that of Russia.

Mary said that the scholarly Professor Coram is one of several eccentric geeks in the Canon who have a passion for collecting things (Baron Gruner, Nathan Garrideb, Jack Stapleton).

Lindsay Hall asked, “Is this a ‘fair’ detective story?” (one which the reader could solve himself or herself, with the necessary clues given by the author). *GOLD* is more “fair” in this regard than some other Canonical stories, but the back story of the Russian revolutionaries is still needed in order to understand the motives here. 🐾



Malice Domestic 2018

BY JULIE MCKURAS



Malice Domestic is an annual convention held in Bethesda, Maryland, and it is described on their website as an event which “celebrates the traditional mystery, books best typified by the works of Agatha

Christie. The genre is loosely identified as mysteries which contain no explicit sex, or excessive gore, or violence.”

Despite the fact that the books celebrated don’t contain “explicit sex, or excessive gore, or violence” I’ve attended and enjoyed this event for a number of years. I always have a great deal of fun with a number of close friends and meet authors whose books I enjoy as well as new authors whose books are now on my “next to read”



At Malice Domestic when Mattias Boström won the Agatha
Front: Mattias Boström, Julie McKuras. Back: Steve Steinbock, Carla Coupe, Dana Cameron, Vicki Delaney, Bev Wolov, Douglas Greene, Peter Blau. Photo provided by Julie McKuras

list. This year the venue was the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center and there were things on the agenda which were of particular interest to me. First was the presence of the prolific and celebrated Ann Cleeves, author of several mystery series including those featuring “unorthodox but brilliant” DCI Vera Stanhope. The “Vera” series has been adapted for television, and the central character is played by Brenda Blethyn, who accompanied Ann Cleeves.

The second thing was the chance to visit with Mattias Boström who traveled from his home near Stockholm to attend Malice Domestic, where his book *From Holmes to Sherlock: The Story of the Men and Women Who Created an Icon* was nominated for the Agatha Award. (Before arriving in Bethesda, he visited New York City for the Edgar Awards where he was also nominated.) Many of you will remember Mattias from our 2013 conference “Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Place.”

After two full days of author sessions, book buying and signings, The Agatha Awards were

presented at the banquet held on Saturday evening, April 28. My banquet table was hosted by Mattias, and we had a very entertaining group of people present. When the winners were named for Best Contemporary Novel (Louise Penny), Best Historical Novel (Rhys Bowen), and Best First Novel (Kellye Garrett), it was time for Best Nonfiction. Mattias assured me that he knew he wouldn't win; after all, his fellow nominees included Martin Edwards and Tatiana de Rosnay. He assured me of this right before his name was announced as the winner. At the podium he gave a gracious acceptance speech thanking his family and relating a conversation with his oldest daughter. After the remaining awards were presented, actress Brenda Blethyn took the podium to accept the Poirot Award, given in recognition of a significant contribution to the traditional mystery genre.

The evening concluded with a large number of attendees congratulating Mattias for his book. If you haven't read it, don't hesitate to pick up a copy of *From Holmes to Sherlock: The Story of the Men and Women Who Created an Icon*. 🐾

[Editors' Note: Mattias Boström's book, *From Holmes to Sherlock*, was the subject of a book review by Gary Thaden in the Summer 2017 issue of Explorations. As of this writing the book (and author) has won four international literary awards, including the two mentioned in Julie's article, and has been nominated for five more. Congratulations to Mattias!]

Sherlock Holmes/Doctor Who Connections

BY PHILLIP BERGEM

There are a number of Sherlockians who are also interested in the British (BBC) science fiction series *Doctor Who*. The series started in 1963 and, apart from a hiatus from 1989 to 2005, continues to the present. Periodically the Doctor regenerates, which is useful for continuation of the series when an actor no longer wishes to continue, and they're presently on the thirteenth Doctor, a female for the first time in the series. A crossover between Sherlock Holmes and the Doctor is affectionately called "Wholock" by some of the fans.

A number of connections between Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Who exist beyond the fact that

Mark Gattis and Steven Moffat were heavily involved in writing and producing the *Doctor Who* series, particularly from 2010 to 2017, and wrote and produced the *Sherlock* series. (Mark is also an actor, which is highlighted below.) It was while travelling together by train to Wales for filming of *Doctor Who* that they discovered a common interest in the Sherlock Holmes stories and developed the idea for the show *Sherlock*. Some of these additional connections are:

- Jon Pertwee was the third Doctor from 1970 to 1974. He also played the part of Worzel Gummidge in the New Zealand children's series *Worzel Gummidge Down Under*. In one episode, "Elementary, My Dear Worthy" (March 12, 1989), he puts on a deerstalker and cape and takes on the mystery-solving attributes of the great detective. Other episodes also had the actors Una Stubbs and Thorley Walters. Una played the part of Mrs. Hudson in the *Sherlock* series. Thorley was in four episodes of *Worzel Gummidge* in 1980 and played Watson in *Sherlock Holmes and the Deadly Necklace* (1962), *The Best House in London* (1969) and *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother* (1975) and in a television production of *Silver Blaze* (1977).
- Tom Baker was the fourth Doctor from 1974 to 1981. In the *Doctor Who* series, he wore a Sherlockian outfit while in Victorian London in the set of episodes titled "The Talons of Weng Chiang" (1977). Baker played Holmes in a four-episode BBC production of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" in 1982. He was also the presenter on an episode of "Science Fiction" titled "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing Link" in 1992. It dealt with the incident of the Piltdown Forgery.
- Peter Davison was the fifth Doctor from 1982 to 1984. He performed the uncredited "planetary voiceover" in the episode "The Great Game" of *Sherlock* in 2010.
- Matt Smith was the eleventh Doctor from 2010 to 2013. In the 2012 *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, "The Snowmen," the Doctor impersonated Holmes. "The Snowmen" was written by Steven Moffat.




- Peter Capaldi was the twelfth Doctor from 2014 to 2017. He also portrayed Sherlock Holmes in a skit on “The All New Alexei Sayle Show” in 1994.
- Mark Gatiss, in addition to writing, is an actor. He performed the following in the two shows:
 - Mycroft Holmes in *Sherlock*.
 - Professor Lazarus in the 2007 *Doctor Who* episode “The Lazarus Experiment.”
 - Gantok in 2011 *Doctor Who* episode “The Wedding of River Song.”
 - A character known as “The Captain” in the 2017 *Doctor Who* Christmas Special titled “Twice Upon a Time.”
- Sean Pertwee, son of Jon Pertwee, appeared in three episodes of *Elementary* in Season 3 (2013 and 2014) as the character Lestrade. (The episodes were “Step Nine,” “The One Percent Solution” and “Ears to You.”) Sean also appeared in the 2013 BBC television short “The Five(ish) Doctors Reboot.”

I reached out to fellow Explorer, Monica Schmidt, who introduced me to the concept of Wholock several years ago. She provided the following additional connections, some getting a bit tenuous, but still interesting.

- Richard E. Grant played the part of Sherlock Holmes in a 1992 BBC television production titled “Encounters: The Other Side.” In it he interacted with Arthur Conan Doyle. Grant also played the part of Mycroft in the 2002 USA Cable Network movie “Sherlock: Case of Evil.” In the Whovian world he played the part of Dr. Simeon in the 2012 Christmas special, “The Snowmen,” which was referenced earlier, and was in two other *Doctor Who* episodes in 2013.
- Jodie Whittaker is the thirteenth Doctor (starting in 2018). She played opposite Peter O’Toole in the movie *Venus* (2006). O’Toole voiced Holmes in a series of four animation adaptations produced in Australia in 1983. O’Toole also played the part of Conan Doyle in the 1997 movie *Fairy Tale: A True Story*.
- Monica mentioned a few Whovian connections with BSI member and friend of the Norwegian Explorers, Neil Gaiman. David Tennant, the tenth Doctor, will appear in a television mini-series adaptation of Gaiman’s *Good Omens* (2018-2019). Peter Capaldi appeared in “Neverwhere” (1996), another adaptation of a Gaiman book.

- William Russell portrayed Ian Chesterton, one of the companions of the First Doctor. His son, Alfred Enoch, while famous for being Dean Thomas in the Harry Potter movies, also appeared as one of the soldiers in the BBC *Sherlock* episode, “The Sign of Three” (2014).

Monica and her husband, Bill, had a Wholock wedding which included a TARDIS box that Bill had constructed. (Exterior only; the interior is, thus far, lacking the necessary Gallifreyan technology.) Monica’s bouquet had a sonic screwdriver handle and had hand-crafted rosettes made of pages from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. For their honeymoon they traveled to the United Kingdom where, among other activities, they participated in a Doctor Who event in Cardiff, Wales, and met Peter Capaldi and Stephen Moffat. A photo of Bill and Monica is on the BBC website www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-28678387. 

The Curious Case of the Cat Burglar

BY LINDSAY HALL



amela looked up at the window of 221B Baker Street and made a quick calculation to determine how high she would need to jump to reach the gooseberry tart cooling on the sill. In her seven years living a ragged life on London’s sooty streets, she had never let a bit of gymnastics get in the way of pinching a tasty, free meal.

Inside, the great detective, Sherlock Holmes, stood sawing away on his Stradivarius, but screeched to a halt as Mrs. Hudson bustled in to check on her tart. Sprawled on the sofa nearby, Dr. Watson glanced up knowingly, then quickly buried his nose back into his sea novel before he could be dragged into *this* impending storm.

“Mrs. Hudson, you’re trying my patience,” Holmes told her in a voice that was polite but bordering on testy. He hadn’t had a case in three weeks and the *ennui* was beginning to take its toll. “Why cool your confections in our sitting room when you have a perfectly good window in your flat downstairs?”

“Why, I should think it’s *elementary*, Mr. Holmes,” she teased, with a wink that only turned his expression more sour. “The breeze is better up here, away from all the critters.” She rotated the tart a quarter-turn on its tin and headed back

downstairs. "A few more minutes, and then we can all have a taste."

Outside on the street, Pamela saw her chance. Glancing around to make sure no constable was on the watch, she scaled the side of the building in three graceful jumps, landing noiselessly on a ledge just next to the windowsill. She was so close now, she could smell the warm, buttery tart. Holmes had his back to the window, playing a melancholy tune.

Pamela leaned in as far as she could and reached for the tart, just as Holmes turned around and their eyes locked.

In a panic, Pamela fell from the windowsill and tumbled into the room. Knowing the jig was up, she snatched up the tart and bolted past both men, who were frozen in surprise – knocking over the coal scuttle, and upsetting the Persian slipper, scattering shag tobacco across the floor.

Holmes was the first to recover and dashed after Pamela with Watson on his heels. "Thief!" he shouted, pointing rather awkwardly. "Unhand Mrs. Hudson's tart!" The two men careened after the fleeing Pamela, out the door, onto the landing and down the seventeen steps, overturning a table and shattering two decorative vases before crashing in a heap at the bottom of the staircase.

Holmes pried the tart from Pamela's grip and held it over his head triumphantly. They all looked up to see Mrs. Hudson standing over them, hands on her hips with a frown as she surveyed the damage.

"How many times have I told the pair of you – *there are no cats allowed in this flat!*"

Mrs. Hudson took the pathetic remains of the tart from Holmes's hands as he and Watson stood silently, shoulders slumped in defeat. Then she gave Pamela a warning glare and said, "Shoo, now, shoo!"

Pamela licked her paw and threw a last haughty glance over her shoulder at the three of them, then turned her fluffy tail up and sauntered off into the night.

"Next time," she thought, and headed in the direction of the canary trainer's house down the street. That place was always good for a midnight snack. 🐾

Happy Endings: Epistrophe in the Canon

BY KAREN MURDOCK



epetition of a word or words in successive sentences can often be a figure of speech. Repetition of words at the beginnings of successive sentences or clauses is called anaphora (uh NAFF or uh). This figure is common in the Canon.

By a man's fingernails, **by** his coat-sleeve, **by** his boots, **by** his trouser-knees, **by** the callosities of his forefinger and thumb, **by** his expression, **by** his shirt-cuffs – **by** each of these things a man's calling is plainly revealed. (STUD, Doubleday 23)

"Give me problems, **give me** work, **give me** the most abstruse cryptogram" (SIGN, 89-90)

"I've not used this plant. **I've not** hurt this old stiff." (3GAR, 1054)

The obverse of anaphora is **epistrophe** (uh PIS tro fee), in which the repetition of a word or words occurs not at the beginnings but at the ends of successive clauses, sentences, or poetic lines. Epistrophe is common in poetry and, like anaphora, it calls attention to the repeated words.

I'll have **my bond!**

Speak not against **my bond!**

I have sworn an oath that I will have **my bond!**
(William Shakespeare, "The Merchant of Venice," III, iii, 1597)

Up from the east, the silvery round **moon**,
Beautiful over the house-tops, ghastly, phantom **moon**,

Immense and silent **moon**.

(Walt Whitman, "Dirge for Two Veterans," 1865)

The Sherlockian Canon includes hundreds of examples of epistrophe.

"Crime **is commonplace**, existence **is commonplace**" (SIGN, 93)

"As to **reward**, my profession is its own **reward**" (SPEC, 259)

"... tell me what has **happened**, when it **happened**, how it **happened**" (PRIO, 540)

"I never said a **word** – never one **word**" (3STU, 605)



"It's **wrong** – it's all **wrong** – I'll swear that it's **wrong**." (ABBE, 642)

"No, Mr. Holmes, she could not have **guessed** – nor could anyone have **guessed**." (SECO, 652)

Often the figure is shared between two speakers, the second speaker "echoing" the ending of the first speaker's phrase or sentence, thus calling attention to a word or words.

BRIGHAM YOUNG: "Will you come with us on these **terms**?"

JOHN FERRIER: "Guess I'll come with you on any **terms**." (STUD, 57)

WATSON: "They are **typewritten**."

HOLMES: "Not only that, but the signature is **typewritten**." (IDEN, 197)

HOLMES: "To the curious incident of the dog **in the night-time**."

INSPECTOR GREGORY: "The dog did nothing **in the night-time**." (SILV, 347)

BERYL STAPLETON: "Why should he wish to live at **the place of danger**?"

WATSON: "Because it is **the place of danger**." (HOUN, 712)

TEDDY BALDWIN: "you'll find it a very fine evening **for a walk**."

McMURDO: "Thank you, I am in no humour **for a walk**." (VALL, 824)

CONSTABLE ANDERSON: "It don't belong to **Sussex**."

HOLMES: "Just as well for **Sussex**." (LION, 1093)

QUIZ: EPISTROPHE IN THE CANON

See if you can identify the stories from which these Baker's dozen examples of epistrophe are drawn. No story is used more than once. Choose your answers from: FINA, LADY, MAZA, NAVA, RETI, SECO, SIGN, SIXN, THOR, TWIS, VALL, VEIL and WIST.

1. "He knows a damned sight too much **about it**. I'm not sure that he doesn't know all **about it**."
2. "You hope to place me **in the dock**. I tell you that I will never stand **in the dock**."
3. "I suppose you might say she was **handsome**. Perhaps some would say she was very **handsome**."
4. "... with some trivial directions as to **her rudder**. There ain't naught amiss with **her rudder**."
5. "You say he was **painting**. What was he **painting**?"

6. "Yes, there was a **ring**. His signet-**ring**."

7. "I can make or **break** – and it is usually **break**."

8. "We passed through the fringe of fashionable **London**, hotel **London**, theatrical **London**, literary **London**, commercial **London**, and, finally, maritime **London**."

9. "... and give him the name **Abbas Parva**. Here it is as she wrote it, **Abbas Parva**."

10. "... I know only as **an innocent one**. You'll find it through the length and breadth of the States; but always as **an innocent one**."

11. "I *mean* to **find her**. ... I'm going through this house till I do **find her**."

12. "... you must stay **where you are all day**. Let nothing prevent you from staying **where you are all day**."

13. "But my own views are **different**. Yes, sir, my own views are very **different**."

(Answers are on page 12.)



Sherlock Holmes in Brown's Valley

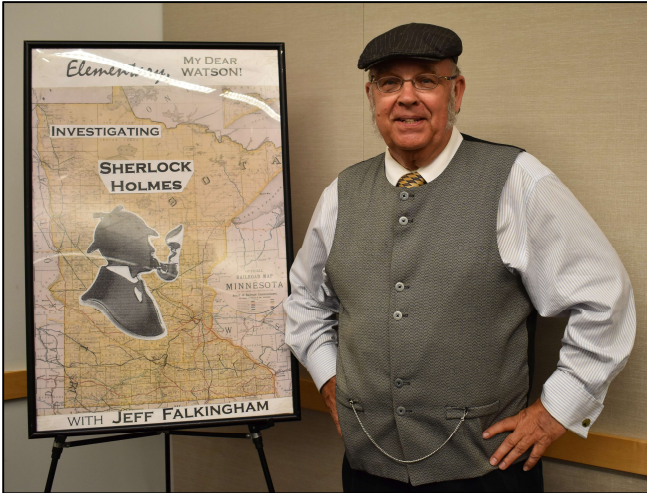
BY PHILLIP BERGEM



During the first part of this year the Rosemount Area Arts Council held a series of Meet the Author events. The final one of these was held on Thursday, May 17th at the Robert Trail Library in Rosemount. It featured Jeff Falkingham who spoke about his books that brought Sherlock Holmes to Minnesota. His two books (*Sherlock Holmes and the County Courthouse Caper* (Beavers Pond Press, 2001) and *Sherlock Holmes: In Search of the Source* (Xlibris Corporation, 2009)) have been collected in one volume, *Murder in Minnesota!* (AuthorCentrix, Inc., 2018).


There were 28 people in attendance although I was the only Explorer. Mr. Falkingham began his presentation with a discussion of the background of Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle, assisted by Keith Reed in the guise of Holmes. (Keith is a Board Member of the Rosemount Area Arts Council and Director of Mr. Mystery Productions, a local group that is available to present 2-3 hour mystery plays at meals or banquets). Then Jeff went on to talk about Holmes's appearances in films, on television and on the stage, with visual aids to enlighten the audience. Following that, he proceeded to talk about his inspiration and writing process. He had a desire to write about an interesting time in Brown's Valley on the Minnesota/South Dakota border, the area he is

originally from. Believing that the best way to present history is in story form, he chose Holmes (without Watson) as a means to present the tale. I found it interesting, and refreshing, that as he didn't feel that he could capture Watson's style, he chose to have the story narrated by a local boy. The second book took place ten years later in Saint Paul at the time of the narrator's wedding.




Jeff proceeded to do a reading of some passages from his books and answered some questions from the audience. Jeff also talked about a stroke he had not long after the second book was published. He had/has in mind four story lines but he has not fully recovered from his stroke and still has trouble with concentrating for extended periods. I sincerely hope that he continues to heal and fulfill his wishes for a fuller series.

Jeff's books have received high praise from Roger Johnson in England and Philip K. Jones in Michigan. I don't recall reading much about him previously in Explorer's publications. Jeff did recall to me that Pj Doyle attended a reading of his first book. She protested his assertion that Holmes was a fictional character, a statement he repeated as I bit my tongue.

I do recall having read *The County Courthouse Caper* shortly after it came out but cannot remember any details other than that I enjoyed it. I missed *In Search of the Source* when it was released, but it is now in my to-be-read pile and I hope to get to it soon. The new collection, *Murder in Minnesota!*, is available from **barnesandnoble.com** and **amazon.com**. 

A Long-Lost Norwegian Explorer

BY JULIE MCKURAS

ast year, our Swedish friend and speaker at our 2013 Conference, Mattias Boström, sent a few of us a newspaper clipping he'd found while researching one of his many projects. The article featured a woman identified in the style of the time as Mrs. Ralph D. Rosso. Mattias's accompanying note read:

To my Minnesota friends – did this Minneapolis woman (Mrs. Ralph D. Rosso) ever find any fellow local Sherlockians? I'm just curious. The article is from the Star Tribune, November 18, 1945.

In the ensuing notes back and forth to Mattias, Gary Thaden determined that her residence at the time was no longer standing, and East Coast Sherlockian Susan Dahlinger wondered if, since the article's accompanying photograph showed Mrs. Rosso had two small boys, would it be possible to find them? Before any of the locals contacted could answer, Mattias provided the information that the older brother, James, had passed away but the younger son Philip Rosso was still living in the area.

As often happens, my good intentions somehow fell victim to other obligations, but this Spring I determined to locate Mr. Rosso. What an adventure! I sent Mr. Rosso a letter explaining that I was a member of the Explorers, as his mother had been, and let him know that I'd seen the 1945 article and had a copy of the Explorers' 1952 book *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective* which contained her essay "The Adventure of the Tired Housewife." I sent him the link to the article in which Anne Marie Oakins Rosso convinced the journalist that Sherlock Holmes was still alive, despite the fact that she had previously been unable to "explain the reality of my two friends" to others. One interesting and so far unexplained nugget is contained in the article; "Christopher Morley discussed with Mrs. Rosso their mutual London friend when Morley recently visited in Minneapolis." More research ahead!

It wasn't long before I received an email response from him. It read in part:

I must admit complete surprise upon receiving your letter last week. My mother Anne Oakins Rosso passed away March of 1952 and ... I

must include shock as well! You mention she belonged to the Norwegian Explorers and contributed an essay included in a book, two things I was not aware of! Of course, I would be happy to meet or correspond further. I can certainly fill you in on her short life from my perspective.

We finally found a mutually convenient time to meet and spent an absolutely entertaining few hours together. As he had previously indicated, he had no idea that she was a member of The Explorers and certainly no inkling that she'd had an essay published in one of our books. I was happy that I had a copy of *The Norwegian Explorers Omnibus*, published in 2007, which contained the contents of all four Explorers' previous books. Since she had passed away when he was so young, it must have felt quite odd to see this aspect of her life and to know that she was considered an equal to the stellar five gentlemen who founded the Explorers. He was quite happy to receive the book and to sit down and read her clever essay.

I hope that Phil Rosso will join us at one of our future meetings and know how much his mother's work is remembered and appreciated by our group. 🐾

Radio Play: "Death on the Scottish Express"

BY JOHN BERGQUIST



On Sunday afternoon, May 27, the Red-Throated League of the Norwegian Explorers performed an Edith Meiser radio play titled "Death on the Scottish Express" before a capacity crowd at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting in Saint Louis Park, Minnesota. The performance had originally been planned for April 15, but an untimely spring blizzard forced a cancellation and rescheduling. The script for the play, originally broadcast on March 6, 1944, is part of the Meiser Collection in the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota.

The cast included Red-Throated League stalwarts Mark Thronveit as Sherlock Holmes, troupe founder and director Bob Brusica as Dr. Watson, Bill Teeple and Julie Schramke in various roles, Lucy Brusica as spokesperson for "sponsor" Kreml shampoo as well as performing a minor role, and

newcomers Scott Tunseth as radio announcer Cy Hartman and Graham Leathers on sound effects. Morva Klein provided theme music and musical cues from the keyboard, and Jamie Hubbs, resplendent in Scottish kilt and accessories of his ancestral Clan Fraser, introduced the program and provided additional sound effects. Missing (and much missed) from this performance were regulars Karen Ellery, who was abroad in England, and Nigel Spottiswoode, who was in attendance but unable to perform for health reasons.

The script, as with most of the hurriedly written Meiser Holmes scripts, was never a candidate for a Pulitzer, but the troupe performed it with spirit. The Brusics' informative brochure points out "alternative facts" in the script, namely that the supposed train in the title, royal persons mentioned, and places alluded to do not correspond with historical or geographic reality.

In keeping with the Scottish theme, before taking their final bows, Bob and cast, accompanied by Morva, led the audience in singing Robert Burns's "Auld Lang Syne."

I had not been at the Pavek since the recent renovation, which made it much more visitor friendly. New signage inside and out clearly identifies the building, its function and the treasures within. Fellow Explorer Dick Sveum commented, "before, the museum was just an assemblage of items; now it's a real *collection*." 🐾

Answers to the Epistrophe Quiz on page 10.
(Page numbers from Doubleday.):

1. MAZA, 1019; 2. FINA, 473; 3. SECO, 662; 4. SIGN, 136; 5. RETI, 1115; 6. TWIS, 238; 7. THOR, 1061; 8. SIXN, 588; 9. VEIL, 1096; 10. VALL, 823; 11. LADY, 951; 12. NAVA, 462; 13. WIST, 879. 🐾

(Editors' Desk – continued from page 1)

inestimable Bob Brusica, and Julie McKuras recounting a connection to the Explorer's earliest years. Our thanks go out to everyone who contributed to this issue.

We are looking toward the next issue in October. With that in mind, we need good content and would like to remind everyone that any contributions will be gratefully accepted. 🐾

Explorers' Member Highlight

BY PHILLIP BERGEM

I have an interest in highlighting various Explorers so that other members can learn about them. The first of these interviews is with Rhonda Gilliland.

Rhonda was raised in Albany, New York. She met the man who would become her husband, Basil, while he was studying in a seminary. They moved to Minnesota about 30 years ago, live in Saint Paul, and have two grown sons (32 and 29) who also have a love for the Sherlock Holmes stories. Basil is a Protodeacon with the St. Panteleimon Russian Orthodox Church in Minneapolis.

Rhonda's interest in Sherlock Holmes started with the Jeremy Brett series on television in the mid-1980s. She said that she "watched them and then just dove right in." She told me that her favorite story is "The Devil's Foot" because she figured out the solution right away, the only story where that's happened. She also has an interest in the paranormal and that tale does have paranormal overtones.

I asked Rhonda about other interests that she has. She said that she's an avid Yelp reviewer (who knew that could be an interest?), she loves mysteries and biographies, enjoys gourmet cooking (and has a nice collection of cookbooks) and British television.

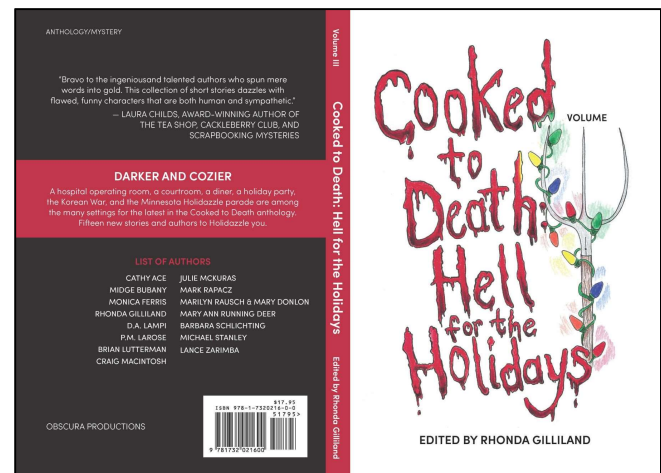
I was astounded to learn that Rhonda had written, produced and directed a film, "Come and Get Your Love," that won the audience-favorite award at the Washburn, Wisconsin, Big Water Film Festival in 2009. (She worked under the name of Rhonda Rana). It is a mystery involving disappearance of women on an Indian reservation.

Years ago, Rhonda read about a meeting of the local chapter of Sisters in Crime (www.twincitysinc.org) that was to be held at the bookstore, Once Upon a Crime, when Gary and Pat owned it. She met other members and, again, "dove right in," eventually serving as president from 2012 to 2015. She is also a member of the Mystery Writers of America. After a while she and another Sisters in Crime member, Michael Mallory, teamed up to collaborate on an anthology of short-story mysteries. They put out a request for submissions, received forty, selected seventeen,

and had it published. This was *Cooked to Death: Tales of Crime and Cookery* (Minneapolis: Nodin Press, 2016) which was covered in the Summer 2017 issue of *Explorations*. The anthology had a story by both Rhonda and Michael as well as several more established authors. With the theme that they selected, Rhonda felt that "if a story is about food and there's no recipe, then you feel you've been ripped off." As a result, each of the stories *does* have an accompanying recipe, a device that has proven popular.

In 2017 Rhonda edited a second anthology, *Cooked to Death: More Tales of Crime and Cookery, Volume II: Lying on a Plate*, this one published on her own with the help of Wise Ink Creative Publishing. (Michael became busy with several other projects.) It has received wonderful reviews from the Pioneer Press and the Star-Tribune among other sources. One of the cover blurbs is, appropriately enough, from a Food Network Star finalist who lives locally, Erin Campbell. Proceeds for both books go to the Minnesota Farmer's Market Association.

Rhonda has a third anthology set to come out in October. The timing was selected because of the theme: *Cooked to Death Vol. III: Hell for the Holidays*. Rhonda said that she is "excited about this one because Julie McKuras has a story in it called 'Cake for Christmas.'" Rhonda has another story



in this volume as well. She has been on two book tours promoting it, one to the northwest United States. In late summer she will travel to the southeast states on another tour, combining it with visits to the Killer Nashville International Writer's Conference (August 23-26) and Bouchercon in St. Petersburg, Florida, (September 6-9). At the Killer Nashville conference she will be on a panel, appropriately about writing stories set at holidays. She

said that the subject matter was a serendipitous perfect fit. While on tour she likes promoting independent bookstores.

Rhonda said that she “never thought of being an author, but I figured that I enjoy writing.” She loves anthologies, short stories and cooking, so the combination of them works very well for her for this series of books. She also believes that authors also like short stories because it gives them the opportunity to do something different.

Rhonda closed with letting me know that she is thinking of a fourth book in the *Cooked to Death* series. *Hell for the Holidays* is set to launch at Once Upon a Crime on October 20th. 🐾

(Word from the President – continued from page 1)

- A group of Explorers took in a movie screening of a restored version of *The Lost World* at the Heights Theater June 24.
- Steve and Mary Schier will host a second annual potluck dinner and game night in September with groups of Explorers working as teams to solve complex cases from the classic “Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective” game.
- We’ll also have our annual joint Norwegian Explorers and Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collection meeting this fall.
- Will Ferrell and John C. Reilly will play Holmes and Watson, respectively, in the movie *Holmes and Watson* in theaters in December.
- Planning continues for our next triennial conference at the Graduate Hotel (the same venue as last time but under a new name) for August 9-11, 2019. The Theme is “Dark Places, Wicked Companions, and Strange Experiences.” Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.
- Another Sherlock Holmes movie starring Robert Downey, Jr., will be coming out in December 2020.

You can keep up with these and other items of interest in the monthly Notices to members as well. With all these happenings, it’s a great time to be a Sherlockian and a Norwegian Explorer. Thank you for your membership and please spread the word to others. We’re always looking for new members. 🐾

Parting Words and Trifles



For members living in the Twin Cities area, this issue should arrive in time to remind you of the Twin Cities Antiquarian Bookfair held in the Progress Center at the State Fairgrounds on Friday, June 29th from 3:00 - 8:00 and Saturday, June 30th from 10:00 - 4:00. (Note that the event has been renamed “Print Matters” and is now organized by the group Rain Taxi.) There are typically about a dozen Explorers who attend to peruse the bookseller stalls.

While not Sherlockian, this next event should be of interest to most bibliophiles. The Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota has the new summer exhibit, “The Best from Pen and Press.” The exhibit focuses on “the ‘best’ rare and unique books and manuscripts drawn from Minnesota institutions and individuals” and lasts until September 14th. Curated by Tim Johnson and Marguerite Ragnow, the galleries are open 8:30-4:15 Monday, Tuesday and Friday and 8:30-6:45 Wednesday and Thursday. www.continuum.umn.edu/2018/04/best-pen-press

Contributions are being accepted for the 2018 *Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual*. This year’s theme is “War and Peace.” Entries must be received no later than October 5, 2018. Contact Ray Riethmeier (address below) for more information. Copies will be available for the annual Christmas Dinner in December. 🐾

The Norwegian Explorers

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