



The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, Inc.
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The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota March 2024 Notice

Times noted are U.S. Central Time

Membership Renewal

If you've not already done so, please renew your annual membership for 2024. You can renew online with PayPal or a credit card or use the attached form available on the website. Dues are **\$25 per household** but additional contributions are always welcome. The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, Inc. is a valid Section 501(c)(3) organization. Any contributions beyond your membership dues should be deductible as charitable contributions.

Study Group

Saturday March 16 at 2:00 p.m.

Mary Loving will lead the group in a discussion of **"The Hound of the Baskervilles."** See the end of this Notice for discussion questions to ponder. We continue to gather via Zoom, primarily to accommodate participants from around the country and around the world. See the link and other information below and please forward to any interested Sherlockian friends and colleagues who may not be Norwegian Explorers.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8282233034?pwd=RGNFYW9venRacUFYVkhzNnNJV2tPQT09>

Meeting ID: 828 223 3034

Passcode: 878937

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,8282233034#,,,,,0#,,878937# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,8282233034#,,,,,0#,,878937# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 828 223 3034

Passcode: 878937

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kEQn1t05j>

Upcoming Dates and Stories

The group normally meets on the third Saturday of the month at 2:00 p.m. We're following the Jay Finley Christ four-letter abbreviations of the tales in alphabetic order. Thus, we will take on IDEN April 20 and ILLU May 18.

You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson..."

"The Adventure of the Empty House"

“Conferment by Needle” Census Opportunity

Inspired by Randall Stock's census of *The Unique Hamlet*, Phil Cunningham is trying to compile a census of Michael Murphy's “Conferment by Needle.” It's a pamphlet Michael printed in 1980 reproducing Vincent Starrett's letter to T.S. Eliot offering him honorary membership in *The Hounds of the Baskerville* (sic) and Eliot's affirmative response.

There are 230 copies. Copies 1-221 are numbered and nine are unnumbered. Phil has tracked 23 copies to university and public libraries, and 11 to individuals. (The University of Minnesota Libraries Special Collections holds three.)

If you own a copy or know someone who does, please note some of the data Phil is trying to gather and let him know. What is the copy number and where is the copy located? Is it inscribed and, if so, what does the inscription read? Michael Murphy signed some copies in black or green ink. Is the copy signed and, if so, is it signed in black or green ink? Phil's contact information is below.

Philip Cunningham
9412 S. Springfield Ave.
Evergreen Park, IL 60805-2015
pjc121@comcast.net

Conferences:

“Sherlock Holmes @ 50: Celebrating the Golden Anniversary of the Sherlock Holmes Collections”
Friday July 26 to Sunday July 28

REGISTER NOW! SPOTS ARE GOING FAST AND WE'RE APPROACHING CAPACITY.

Proudly sponsored by the University of Minnesota Libraries, the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, our perennially popular triennial conference returns from hiatus just in time to celebrate some truly remarkable milestones. First, we're raising a glass to 50 years of our beloved Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Library – the world's largest gathering of material related to Sherlock Holmes and his creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. We'll also explore other famous 50s in Sherlockian lore, including the 50-year span in which the Canon was published, and highlights from the great detective's first 50 years of life.

Note that the conference location is changing from recent years with a return to the Givens Suites at the Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota, and a Saturday banquet at the nearby Courtyard by Marriott in Minneapolis. Plans are underway for an unforgettable lineup of guest speakers, special exhibits, social events, and even a few surprises! Registration and more details are available on the Norwegian Explorers website at www.NorwegianExplorers.org and on FaceBook #SHMN2024.

Beacon Society Student Essay Contest – Closes April 1

Do you know a student between 4th and 12th grades who has an interest or passion in Sherlock Holmes? It could be a family member, family friend, student in your class, or simply a student you know! Students could win \$300 or \$500 (and a lovely plaque).

Carolyn Senter and The Beacon Society are sponsoring the 2024 R. Joel Senter Sr. Essay Contest for students to submit an essay concerning one of the selected stories authored by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The primary rules for entering the contest are:

- Students in 4th to 12th grade in the United States and Canada are eligible to participate.
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- Full details and rules are on the Beacon Society website at:
<https://www.beaconsociety.com/joel-senter-essay-contest.html>

Minnesota Antiquarian Book Fair July 12-13

This year's Book Fair is moving from the University of St. Thomas to Hamline University's Ridgway Central Forum at its Anderson Center. The address is 774 Snelling Ave N, St Paul, MN 55104. Hours are Friday: 3 - 7 p.m. / Saturday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Visit www.minnesotabookfair.com for more information.

Podcasts, etc.

Our own **Monica Schmidt** is one of the rotating co-hosts of the Rosenbach Museum and Library's "Sherlock Mondays" video podcast. See the following link to the YouTube recordings:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_WfU3WRzr0&list=PLWR9Pkh4eGAnl1qEKhM_lwJ_IqXLbmk7Y

A new Sherlock Holmes podcast launched October 10, 2023. "Sherlock & Co." is hosted by **John Watson**, a British doctor who was in Afghanistan and the Ukraine. John is a true crime podcaster living in London. You can find the first few episodes at the following link:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/sherlock-co/id1710121792>

Red Throated League Recorded Performances Available on YouTube

The recordings of the February 4, 2023 performances of "The Case of the Missing Heiress" are now available on YouTube. The link to the 1 p.m. show is <https://youtu.be/PBbMPtAKXfk> and the link to the 2 p.m. show is <https://youtu.be/9YDfnRmINxU>.

Norwegian Explorers Book Efforts

Though not Sherlockian, **Ruth Berman** has a book out from Black Coat Press. "The Tales of King Cambrinus," is a translation of French author Charles Deulin's fairy tales from both of his two collections, "Tales of a Beer Drinker" as well as "Tales of King Cambrinus." Also a fairy tale, "Pipette's Paradise," from, "Small Town Stories," Deulin's collection of mostly non-fantasy stories. Deulin's work is little known in English (some of his stories were included – somewhat abridged – in Andrew Lang's Color Fairy Books), but he has a wry, dry humor that I find very attractive. See the following link for The Black Coat Press website <https://www.blackcoatpress.com/forthcoming- Tales-of-king-cambrinus.html>

Our own **Ray Riethmeier** has compiled a new anthology of original pastiches for Belanger Books. Instead of focusing on the usual mysteries in which Holmes is the primary investigator, "The Consultations of Sherlock Holmes" puts a spotlight on an oft-overlooked part of his career in detection, placing the emphasis on his role as a consultant. This volume collects sixteen delightfully varied mysteries from some of today's top Sherlockian authors in which Holmes serves as a last resort for other detectives – both private investigators and those from the official police force – who come to him for his unique perspective and aid as "the only unofficial consulting detective" in the world. The book is available from Amazon (and other booksellers) in paperback, hardcover, and eBook editions:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0C9SBXQNR>.

Norwegian Explorer **Brenda Rossini** has authored "Oscar Slater: a Killer Exposed," now available from Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

Julie McKuras, BSI, ASH, and **Bill Mason**, BSI, ASH, have accepted an invitation from **Michael Kean**, BSI to write the History of the Baker Street Irregulars for the 1950s.

Please send details about any books you're authoring, editing, publishing, etc. to me and I'll include the relevant information in the next Notice.

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Christmas Annuals

Attendees at the Annual Dinner received a limited-edition copy of the much anticipated and coveted Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual. Extra copies are still available for a small fee. Contact Phil Bergem at pgbergem@gmail.com if you want a copy.

Movies and Television:

See the following link for updates on no less than five upcoming movie and TV projects involving U.S. based Sherlock Holmes releases. <https://screenrant.com/sherlock-holmes-upcoming-movies-shows/>

And across the pond the BBC's "Sherlock" co-creator Mark Gatiss has adapted Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's short story **Lot No. 249** in a new ghost (or mummy) story Christmas special, which has a more supernatural element to it than the usual adaptations of the author's works. Lot No. 249 revolves around a pair of Oxford University students - Abercrombie Smith (Kit Harington) and Edward Bellingham (Freddie Fox). The former notices some strange goings-on around the latter's Ancient Egypt research, which seemingly includes re-animating a mummy. It's one of the first mummy horror stories, and a major influence on Universal's The Mummy movie with Boris Karloff, among many other movies, books, and more. It aired December 24, 2023, on the BBC Two network in the U.K. but may not make it to U.S audiences for several more months. See a review at the following link: <https://www.denofgeek.com/tv/mark-gatiss-lot-no-249-is-a-sneaky-sherlock-prequel/>

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections - Membership Opportunity

The University of Minnesota Libraries houses the world's largest collection of Sherlock Holmes related materials and is supported by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Many Explorers are already members of this organization which, along with the University Libraries and the Norwegian Explorers, hosts our triennial conferences and other events. If you're not already a member, please consider joining to support its ongoing work of collecting, cataloging, and exhibiting the collection's materials for the public and private researchers. A basic annual membership is only \$30. You can learn more and join at the following link: <https://www.lib.umn.edu/collections/special/holmes/become-friend-holmes>.

Lapel Pins

Please let Tom Gottwalt know if you wish to purchase one. **Cost is \$15** in person, \$20 if mailed.

Baker Street Irregulars Updates Available Free

Get News from the Baker Street Irregulars via email! Free for all Sherlockians: Get notified by email when the Irregulars schedule an event, publish a new book, or issue of the *Baker Street Journal*, or have other news. To sign up, go to <https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsi-news-via-email/>.

Request for News & Event Information

If you know of upcoming events, publications, or news of interest to Explorers please send it my way and I'll publish it in the next monthly Notice.

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Study Group Discussion Questions:

Mary Loving will lead the group in a discussion of “**The Hound of the Baskervilles.**” via a Zoom gathering. See discussion questions below.

1. Why can this story be called “a ghost story which belongs more to the literature of skepticism than the literature of belief?”
2. Does the absence of Sherlock Holmes from so much of the story enhance or detract from our enjoyment?
3. With Holmes absent, we must depend on Dr. Watson’s account as it stands with no one to contradict it. Does this suggest what we are asked to accept, what we must believe?
4. Note the exchanges between Holmes and Watson. What can we assume about the nature of their relationship despite Holmes’ caustic remarks?
5. Suggest reasons for our being given such a lengthy account of the Baskerville legend. Why is it presented as an ancient document and not an account just narrated by Dr. Mortimer?
6. Why is there such a need to seek a rational solution to the mystery? Is it significant that Dr. Mortimer is so observant?
7. State the case for a supernatural explanation, i.e., that there really is a ghostly hound. Can you divide the cast of characters according to their degree of belief or unbelief?
8. Consider the warning note. Why is so much attention paid to it and the way it was prepared? How does this add to the controversy and which side does it support?
9. Explain how Holmes’ explanation for not being able to go to Baskerville Hall is made to seem plausible. What is gained by his remaining in London? What evidence is there that he respects Watson’s judgment?
10. What does the scene with the cab driver establish? How does this serve to remind the reader of events just past?
11. Consider the trip to Baskerville Hall. Does Watson pay attention to his surroundings? How does the time of year contribute to the mood of supernatural events to follow?
12. Describe the relationship that seems to be developing between the Stapletons and Henry Baskerville. Does this complicate the matter of finding a solution to the mystery or serve to delineate their characters more?
13. Explain how the discovery of Barrymore’s secret by Watson and Sir Henry helps advance the mystery plot. How does the situation contribute to the mood?
14. What helps keep alive the supernatural theme at this point? Consider the time of night. How are we reminded of the legend? Does the fact that Sir Henry and Watson are alone help to emphasize the appearance of the stranger at this point?

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15. Who is Laura Lyons? What part does she play in the mystery? How is the story of Laura woven into the fabric of the mystery of Sir Charles' death? Are we still left with unanswered questions about her past?
16. What purpose does the reappearance of Frankland at this point serve? Is he still comic relief or is there a practical reason for his presence? Does he establish anything that advances the plot?
17. What was the reason for Holmes' absence and all the secrecy? Does this reinforce our understanding of their relationship (Holmes and Watson)? Does Holmes approve of Watson's achievements in his absence?
18. How is the solution presented at this time and why not leave it until the very last chapter? If we know the identity of the human agent, do we need to be reminded of the presence of the Hound? Why isn't the murderer arrested?
19. What do we learn in the last part of chapter 14 that relieves the tension and establishes the final evidence? Do you think it is also significant that the fog has lifted?
20. Why is there a need for a "clearing up" chapter? What is there that we don't know already?
21. Is it significant that the final chapter takes place after a passage of time? How does this fit into the theme of the supernatural vs. science?

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