



A Publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida

# Communication

#199

New Series

January/February, 2000

Volume 4 Issue 1

In this issue we bring you all sorts of Birthday news. From the celebration in New York to the one in Florida, this is birthday central. On January 6, while listening to Radio Disney with the kids, the d.j. announced that it was Sherlock Holmes' birthday! He then went on to comment that he was never any fun at his birthday parties because he would always deduce what was in everyone's present before he opened it. A real party pooper.

Well he may never show up at the celebrations, but present or not, we all have a great time wishing him a Happy Birthday.

Hope you enjoy this issue.

*The Papers on the Sundial*

**PLEASE NOTE! THE BANQUET ON  
JUNE 10 AT THE SUNSHINE STATE  
SHERLOCKIAN SCION SYMPOSIUM II  
IS OUR SPRING GATHERING!!**

**IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THE  
ENTIRE SYMPOSIUM, YOU MAY SIGN  
UP FOR THE BANQUET ONLY !  
CASH BAR 6 - 7PM WITH SILENT  
AUCTION & WANDERING  
PHOTOGRAPHER, FOLLOWED BY  
BANQUET WITH QUIZZES,  
ENTERTAINMENT, SING-ALONG,  
FAVORS AND REMINISCENCES OF THE  
CLUB TO CELEBRATE THE 25TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF OUR FIRST SPRING  
GATHERING.**

## INCREASE IN DUES!

In order to better serve you by sending out reminders of club activities and renewals, there will be an increase of club dues from \$10 to \$12.

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## PROPOSED SCHEDULE 2000

*February 12*

*Florida Wessex Cup X*

*Tampa Bay Downs*

*Oldsmar*

*June 9, 10, 11*

*Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion*

*Symposium II*

*Dolphin Beach Resort*

*St. Pete Beach*

*25th Annual Spring Gathering (inclusive)*

*November 4*

*25th Annual Fall Gathering*

*Palm Harbor*

*Hosts: Carl & Sandie Heifetz*

*Case: Missing Three-Quarter*



A fellow Sherlockian sends us this drawing made in an art class she attended wherein one of the models dressed as you-know-who!

## SHERLOCK'S SUNSHINE CELEBRATION BIRTHDAY BASH III

Many thanks to Carl Heifetz for making the arrangements for this year's birthday celebration. We had a very nice turn-out of 20 Sherlockians.

Toasts began with Joan Wood making the proper gesture to the Queen, followed by Willard Gibson's toast to Mrs. Hudson, Wanda & Jeff Dow's toast to Mycroft, David Scott to Scotland Yard, Art Walker to Professor Moriarty and his minions, Mike Bryan to the teeming cesspool of London, Carl Heifetz to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Dr. Benton Wood, BSI to the Baker Street Irregulars and Scions everywhere.

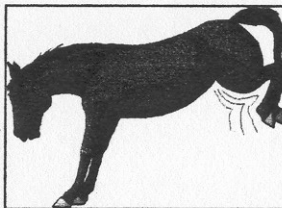
The Pleasant Places of Florida Ritual was led by author, Wanda Dow, followed by Another Ritual led by its' author, Carl Heifetz. Meals were consumed and then the festivities began.

(cont. page7)

## Florida Wessex Cup X

We hope you will be joining us for the Florida Wessex Cup X on February 12. The grounds open about 11:00am, lunch will be at noon and racing begins at 1:00pm. We will be dining in the Skye Terrace with a choice of Grilled Salmon or New York Strip Steak.

You will receive a program, a gram and the honor of represent a At \$15.00



track PPoF pro-goodies and knowing you named race.

per person, it's such a deal! Parking is \$1 and as for drinks, tips and gambling, you're on your own.

David needs a count by the 7th of February. You should have received a mailer from him and we hope you've mailed it back by now.

See you there in red and black!

## They're Here!

The Pleasant Places of Florida finally has it's very own pin design! These 1/2 inch enamel pins feature our club logo in black and gold silhouette, with the Sunshine State reflecting the orange glow of the sunset. The outer circle is done in blue, matching the waves behind Sherlock, with the club name printed in gold. Order now from Wanda Dow,

US\$12.00 postage paid (US & Can);  
US\$13.00 overseas.



## Agony Column



Body parts in the Canon? Author Bud Livingston has published a far from trifling monograph on all the body parts mentioned in the Canon. With his **Anatomically, My dear Watson**, you can find out what characters had "feverish" cheeks, who had "sallow," and who had red cheeks to match his nose. Having been well-received at many Sherlockian meetings, Mr L. continued his search of the Canon, identified each character for whom any body part had been described, collected those descriptions, and coalesced all of them into "anatomical categories"



which have become the chapters of this book. For a copy, send check or money order for \$12 to Bud Livingston,

Anyone interested in the latest **TOM STIX CATALOG** can contact Carl Heifetz at

He has the entire thing on Microsoft Word, including ordering instructions and would be happy to forward it to anyone interested.

The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, The Bootmakers of Toronto, The Arthur Conan Doyle Society and The Toronto Public Library have all joined forces to celebrate the centenary of the publication of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and the 30th Anniversary of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library on October 26 - 28, 2001. To be notified as details are announced, send your postal or email address to: **HOUND2001**,

Speakers are Peter Calamai, Patrick Campbell, M.Bt., Cameron Hollyer, M.Bt., BSI, Dayna McCausland "Myers", Charles Purdon, Christopher Redmond, M.Bt., BSI and Donald Redmond, M.Bt., BSI. Contact *The Bimetallic Question*,

Canada H4Z 1K2

In the latest (Jan/Feb 2000) edition of **The Snooper**, our Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium II received space on the front page with a nice comment from Editor Susan Rose: "I attended the first of these Symposiums and laughed for 48 hours straight. The best people ... the worst jokes!" Well, mostly nice....

The **2nd BIMETALLIC COLLOQUIUM** will be in Montreal, June 2-4, 2000. For US\$160, you can get accommodation, 2 breakfasts, Saturday lunch and banquet, Colloquium and materials.

Galde Press, who brought us *The Moriarty Principle* by Rolf. J. Canon has now released *The Childhood of Sherlock Holmes* by Mona Morstein. \$24.95 + \$4 s/h to Galde Press, Inc., P.O.Box 460, Lakeville, MN 55044

### ROSTER UPDATE

**New:** Stix, Dorothy, retired,

**Changes:**

**Please check the address on your mailing label to make sure the correct information is being held by the club.**

We are still in the process of producing a new address book. "A little patience, Mr. Bennett, things will soon develop." (CREE)

## A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

The festivities in New York took place the week-end of January 15th this year. On the 19th, the *New York Times* ran a long article on the events.

### The Curious Incident of the Sleuth in the Meantime

By KARL E. MEYER

Of the singular mysteries addressed by Sherlock Holmes, perhaps none is more intriguing than "The Case of the Undying Detective." His creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, vowed to kill him in the 1890's and turned to the archcriminal Professor Moriarty to do the job.

"You won't! You can't! You musn't!" the author's mother protested. Holmes survived, only to face rival creations by others who shamelessly copied his methods, and a legion of parodists who trifled with his name. Nevertheless Holmes is entering a third century, standing taller than ever.

Several hundred Americans and a sprinkling of foreign guests gathered in Manhattan over the weekend to salute the master detective on his 146th birthday.

For more than half a century this has been an annual rite, organized by the Baker Street Irregulars, the organization of Holmes devotees. The observ-

ances have by degrees grown more elaborate: a full-dress banquet (no longer stag, but still strictly by invitation), an endowed lecture, a theatrical performance, cocktail parties, special breakfasts and a book bazaar with 20-odd booths at the Algonquin Hotel.

Nostalgia for childhood or for a past perceived as more agreeable help propel these festivities. But something else is involved, the allure of stories whose characters somehow become part of the reader's extended family.

Irregulars claim Holmes and his friend and narrator, Dr. John H. Watson, were actual people, that Conan Doyle was simply Watson's literary agent. Some claim that Holmes, in defiance of mortality tables, is still alive, his eyesight dimmer but his wit as nimbly astringent as ever. Having long since retired from active practice at 221B Baker Street in London (though letters to him still arrive at that address), he now lives in Sussex, England, where he keeps bees and is completing his life's work, *The Whole Art of Detection*.

Doubtless this is a game, but to devotees -- outwardly Middle American, male and female, mostly white and nearly all bookish -- it is a high and serious sport.

They engage in recondite arguments about insidencies in the Canon, also known as the Sacred Writings, the 4 novels and 56 short stories mundanely

ascribed to Conan Doyle.

Michael Whelan, president of the Irregulars, says there are now some 300 local Holmesian societies in the United States, so many that he has lost count and sends a boilerplate letter, merely wishing good luck to new groups seeking recognition. Writing about the writings inspired by the Canon has itself become a cottage industry. Jon L. Lellenberg, a Pentagon official, is completing a history of the Irregulars, packed with insider correspondence, that has implausibly grown into five thick paperback volumes bound in scarlet. So far the opus extends only to the late 1940's.

The organization evolved from an impromptu dinner summoned in 1934 by the literary essayists Christopher Morley and Vincent Starrett followed by the adoption of an eccentric constitution, proposed by the journalist Elmer Davis, with its celebrated final clauses -- "4. *All other business shall be left to the monthly meeting*; 5. *There shall be no monthly meeting*" -- lines declaimed at every Irregulars dinner.

What lent life to the sport was the happy discovery that Conan Doyle, who died in 1930, was so absent-minded that contradictions permeate his tales. Was Watson wounded in his arm or leg while serving in Afghanistan? And who, pray, was the second (cont. page 5)

(cont. from page 4) Mrs. Watson, the unnamed successor to his deceased first wife?

Similar riddles inspired hundreds of essays ranging from the solemn to the outrageous. Rex Stout famously claimed that Watson was a woman, and others held that Holmes invented Professor Moriarty to explain away his own failures. The flood has since widened and deepened.

In 1972 Ronald Burt de Waal listed 6,221 items in his World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. This total has at least doubled. New book-length pastiches appear monthly, and every imaginable variation has been explored. Holmes has by now encountered Freud and Marx, has solved the Jack the Ripper killings and has hurtled into outer space, the last being the theme of an anthology edited by Isaac Asimov, an Irregular.

Movies and television have kept apace. Holmes is the most portrayed character in movie history; he has been played by 75 actors in 211 films. He has danced in a Sadler's Wells ballet, sung in a Broadway musical (*Baker Street*, with Fritz Weaver) and is the main character in more than 50 plays, most recently David Stuart Davies's *Sherlock Holmes -- The Last Act!*, a one-man show given its American debut for the Irregulars on Saturday. It

features an aging and gloomy Holmes, portrayed by the British actor Roger Llewellyn.

What seems to be a new path was opened last fall by a West Hartford clergyman, Stephen Kendrick, who contends in *Holy Clues: The Gospel According to Sherlock Holmes* (Pantheon) that Holmes, the icy rationalist, is also a spiritual master with Zen-like insights, doubtless the result of his secret sojourn in Lhasa, itself the subject of at least three books, including the most recent, by a Tibetan.

Holmes and Watson attained immortality almost against the wishes of their creator. As a young doctor with a slow practice, Conan Doyle wrote in his spare time, introducing the pair in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) and *The Sign of the Four* (1890). He then reached a mass audience with short stories serialized in the newly established *Strand* magazine and gathered in *The Adventures* and *Memoirs*. Yet as early as 1891 Conan Doyle confided to his mother, "I think of slaying Holmes" in the last story and winding him up for good and all, because "he takes my mind from better things," provoking her incredulous protest.

Conan Doyle persevered in his homicide, inventing the Napoleon of crime, Moriarity, who in *The Final Problem*

plunges with Holmes into the seething waters of Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland. But the outcry was so universal and so sustained that the author relented and raised his creation from the dead in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

Today's readers tend to forget the originality of Conan Doyle's achievement. He introduced the sidekick formula into crime fiction. Hence Hercule Poirot and Hastings, Chief Inspector Morse and Sergeant Lewis, among the many in a vast legion, and at a different level Sir William of Baskerville and the monk Adso in Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose*, clearly a homage to Sherlock Holmes.

Even so, despite these innumerable clones, the Canon is imbued with inimitable magic. The critic Edmund Wilson, who loathed detective stories, allowed a glowing exception for Sherlock Holmes. He confessed to reading himself to sleep with tales he had not read since childhood. And in an essay titled *Mr. Holmes, They Were the Footprints of a Gigantic Hound!*, he judged the stories genuine literature, "on a humble but not ignoble level."

That gigantic hound haunting the moors around Baskerville Hall has probably bitten deeper into the imagination of more young readers than any (cont. page 6)

(cont. from page 5) other creature in fiction. This year's Irregular lecturer, Michael Dirda, a critic for *The Washington Post*, recalled "the sheer animal joy" of reading, with blanket, flashlight and candy bars, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* while a youngster in an Ohio mill town.

There is a further subtext. The Canon takes American readers back to 1895, when, as Mr. Dirda noted, "all was right with the world, and the British Empire in particular." For some Americans, jostled by change, it is a comfort to look back upon Victorian Britain, seemingly stable and solid, mistress of the greatest overseas empire in history, a financial superpower, aloof from messy foreign quarrels, protected by a moat and a mighty navy.

To the British, and indeed to their rivals, this order seemed permanent and final. Yet it was an illusion. The historian Arnold Toynbee recalled that as a child he was a marveling spectator at Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897, when Britain appeared "to be standing still in the midst of Heaven, as it had once stood there at the bidding of Joshua." Young Toynbee could scarcely have foreseen that the entire imperial edifice would crumble in his lifetime.

In the words of the master detective: "We reach, we grasp and what is left in our hands in the end? A shadow."



#373 Sherlock Holmes Pub (London, England) Photo by James A. Rasmussen, Rasmussen Photography. 8x10 color photo double matted to 11x14 \$30, 11x14 photo (16x20) \$49, 16x20 photo (22x26) \$105 (847) 827-6644 FAX 827-1152  
<razfoto@megsinet.net> or [www.razfoto.com](http://www.razfoto.com)

#### New B.S.I.s

*Englischer Hof* - Michael Meer (Switzerland); *Jack Stapleton* - Fred Kittle; *The Lyceum Theatre* - Douglas Wilmer; *Alexander Hamilton Garrideb* - Ben Vizoskie; *Elsie Cubitt* - Jean Upton; *Canadian Pacific Railway* - Douglas Elliot; *Emilia Lucca* - Karen Anderson; *Jacob Shafter* - Anders Hammarqvist (Sweden); *Jabez Wilson* - Don Curtis. Scott Bond received the *Two Shilling Award*, and S.E. Dahlinger won the *Morley-Montgomery Award* (You can read her paper on William Gillette in the *BSJ*, 9/99 to see why).

The Friday night program

consisted of Bernard Davis, Jule Rosenblatt and Poul Anderson giving a presentation on Holmes in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, a panel (3 physicians/1 toxicologist) for medical questions, Evie & Ray Betzner's discussion on re-writing the BSI Constitutions and By-Laws and a rebuttal by Andy Fusco.

Rumors abound that the Gillette luncheon may be available on videotape. Saturday's party was reported to be over-crowded and the auction did well for Dr. Watson's Fund (close to \$2000).

These are all items picked up over the internet, so please forgive any errors. -Z.C.S.



(cont. from page 2)

Caroline Everett had a book keyring (Novelkey) to show, of a miniature book with the profile of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on one side, and a quote on the other "*It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data.*" It was obtained from a Bas Bleu catalogue (1-800-433-1155). The Dow Family Players (with a quick adoption of David Scott) presented a preview of a portion of *A Prairie Holmes Companion* which they will be performing at the Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium II in June. This was a radio play, *Sherlock Holmes, Private Consulting Detective*, with Sherlock sounding a lot like Sam Spade. Next up, Lee Neuman, visiting from *The Tropical Deerstarkers*, gave a quick tale of family lineage linking Rachel Howells, "*a very good girl, but of an excitable Welsh temperament*" (MUSG) with Raquel Welch. New member Billie J. Cotterman then introduced her pastiche, *The Adventure of Ricola and His Abominable Snowman*, which was handed out at the dinner. George Edwards then entertained with a few limericks, followed by Mike Bryan with another limerick. Dr. Benton Wood then spoke on the history of the Baker Street Irregulars and how today's scions were established. The final presentation was by David & Thelma Scott, who performed the skit "*A Conversation Between Sherlock Holmes and Mrs. Hudson.*"

Cake was then served and Happy Birthday sung to the missing, but loved, great detective. Happy 146th, Sherlock, and hundreds more to come!

Don't Miss The Latest in the Round Robin Pastiches

***The Adventure of the Glorious Scot!!!***

Writers were Charles Michael Carroll, Wanda & Culver Dow, Neil C. Harvey, Caroline Everett and Jeffery Dow. Cost is \$6.00 postage paid. Mail to Carl Heifetz,

**Limited Number !!**

## COMING UP ON THE HOLMES FRONT

2000

**February 15** - The Florida Wessex Cup X at Tampa Bay Downs in Oldsmar. For luncheon reservations, contact David McCallister,

**May 5-7** - Simon Brett will be the guest of honor with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as the Ghost of Honor at the *Malice Domestic XII* at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C. Contact Malice Domestic,

or email

**June 9-11** - The Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium II will be taking place at the Dolphin Beach Resort in St. Pete Beach, Florida. Among other events taking place, the evening of June 10 will be the 25th Anniversary of the First Spring Gathering of The Pleasant Places of Florida, which hosts the SSSSSII. Contact Carl Heifetz,

or email

for more

information.

**August 19** - The BSI will sponsor a running of The Silver Blaze at the Saratoga Racetrack in Saratoga, NY. More to follow on the weekend program as things are locked in.

**November 4** - The 25th Annual Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida will take place in Palm Harbor, FL. Contact Carl Heifetz,

or email

for more information.

**August, 2001** - The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's Golden Jubilee Cruise of the Baltic. This 14-day cruise will begin at Harwich, England and have stops at Oslo, Norway; Copenhagen, Denmark; Stockholm, Sweden; Tallin, Estonia; St. Petersburg, Russia; and Kaliningrad, Russia before going through the Kiel Canal at Holtenau, exiting at Brunsbuttel and back to Harwich. All those who book before August 31, 2000 will receive an Early Booking Reduction.

You can Fax:

or

or email Jo Hall or Victoria White at



Don't Miss The Latest in the Round  
Robin Pastiches

## The Adventure of the Glorious Scot

This is the 15th Round Robin Pastiche completed by members of The Pleasant Places of Florida. Each year, a different member of the scion begins a Sherlockian adventure, leaving off at an appropriate cliff-hanger moment, which is then picked up by another member who continues on and so on, until the mystery is solved. This year, the writers were Dr. Charles M. Carroll, Wanda & Culver Dow, Neil C. harvey, Caroline Everett and Jeffery Dow. Cost is \$6.00 postage paid. Get your copy now while they last from Carl Heifetz,



**The Pleasant Places of Florida**

*Founded: 1972  
by Leslie Marshall (dec.)*

**Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood**

For the record:

**THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS**

**David McCallister**, Master of the House,

**Jeff & Wanda Dow**, The Papers on the Sundial,

**Carl L. Heifetz**, Representative both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople,

IF YOU SEE A RED CHECK HERE: . THIS IS YOUR LAST COMMUNICATION! USE  
THE RENEWAL FORM INSIDE TO CONTINUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

**PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF THE DATE AFTER YOUR NAME ON THE MAILING LABEL.  
THIS IS THE EXPIRATION DATE OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERSHIP.**

PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA  
THE PAPERS ON THE SUNDIAL

