



A Publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida

# Communication

#209

New Series

Special January/February, 2000

Volume 5 Issue 1

The new year is upon us and we begin 2001, A Sherlockian Odyssey. Start marking your calendars for events happening, and don't forget the Wessex Cup coming up in a few weeks! If you haven't contacted David, pick up the phone NOW! Then you can sit back and relax with Issue 209.

*The Papers on the Sundial*

## Sherlockian Calendar

**February 10**

Florida Wessex Cup XI  
Tampa Bay Downs

**May 5**

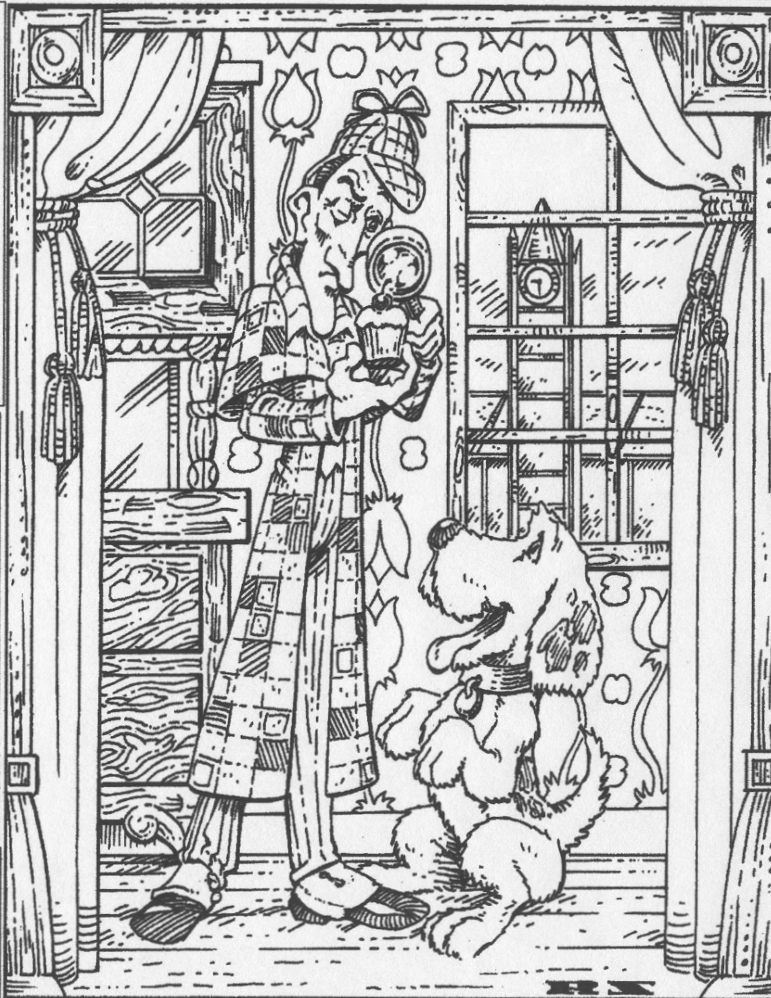
26th Annual Spring  
Gathering - **BLACK PETER**  
Sarasota

**November TBA**

26th Annual Fall Gathering  
TBA

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The master detective is looking for clues and doesn't realize there are fourteen objects hidden all around him. Can you find a banana, pair of dice, belt, rabbit, padlock, seal, baseball, pencil, heart, crayon, turtle, apple, and two doughnuts?

**The Mini-Tonga Scion Society** of the Baker Street Irregulars is scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, serving the interests of keepers and creators of Sherlockian miniatures. The game is always afoot, but in a smaller scale! These interests include room boxes, vignette scenes, dioramas, mini figures; you name it! Most projects are done in 1/12 scale (one inch = one foot, the "standard" doll-house scale), but smaller and larger scales (up to Barbie/GI Joe size) are welcome. They are primarily a correspondence club. ("We're doing this purely for the love of 'the game' and 'the craft'"), Their membership is international, and their newsletter, *The Tonga Times*, is usually published three times per year.

They began in 1979, originally formed by Dee Snyder, Dorothy Rowe Shaw and John Bennett Shaw, all of whom, sadly, have passed beyond the Reichenbach. They received invaluable assistance from Gertrude Mahoney, Peter E. Blau and Caye MacLaren. Until 1992, the Society was run by Dee. After her death, the club took a "great hiatus" for two years. From 1994 to the summer of 2000, they were in the more-than-capable hands of Carol Wenk. However, due to increasing demands on her time, Carol has handed over the Ceremonial Mini-Deerstalker to

Trish & Jay Pearlman. They have a brand spanking new website that includes photos of members' creations, which they hope to update often. Check them out at <http://hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/minil.htm>. They are also planning to put together a newsletter.

Editor's note: Trish and Jay advise that, sadly, much of the society's data base has mysteriously disappeared. They also want to update the archives of the society. So would those of you with Sherlockian miniatures in your collections please send details (and pictures, if possible) of same to them at [minitongasociety@aol.com](mailto:minitongasociety@aol.com). Any and all assistance would be greatly appreciated.

### LIBRARY DOINGS

The main branch of the Clearwater Library had a program titled "Holmes for the Holidays" near the end of last year. It was a basic introduction to Sherlock Holmes, with a nice handout, a brief talk on *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, and a fun quiz. Old time radio Holmesian Christmas shows and copies of BLUE were handed out as prizes. The main attraction was the Rathbone & Bruce 1943 film *Sherlock Holmes Faces Death*. Who ran the show? Why, PPOFer David

Stoner, that's who! David reports that the turnout was "pretty good for a Tuesday afternoon" and that he might be allowed to make this a bimonthly or quarterly event. So let's get those cards and letters and phonecalls going to the Clearwater Library! And thanks to David for keeping the memory alive!

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bill Serow sends us a letter from the September, 2000 issue of *Conde Nast Traveler*: In the "Stop Press" story on desert islands (July 2000), author Jon Marcus describes the Andaman Islands by observing, "Some of the islands are home to occasionally hostile native tribes and remain closed to tourism." The article goes on to quote, "As Sherlock Holmes knew in 1890 (*The Sign of Four*, Chapter 8) when he quoted from a recent "gazetteer," the natives of the Andamans "have always been a terror to shipwrecked crews, braining the survivors with their stone-headed clubs or shooting them with their poisoned arrows. These massacres are invariably concluded by a cannibal feast." Unless this is an invention of Conan Doyle's - and the rest of the quotation from the gazetteer is, unfortunately, an example of nineteenth-century racism - it would seem that little has changed in centuries on some of these islands.

Joel Berson  
Arlington, Massachusetts

## CYRIL OVERTON - A "TRULY ENORMOUS YOUNG MAN"!

by David R. McCallister

In *MISS*, the comfortably familiar and predictable opening scene at 221, or proomion, is enlivened by the presence of Cyril Overton, following on his telegram of terrible misfortune. He combines the incoherence of Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable with the imposing figure of King Gottfried von Ormstein. We can also make some anthropometric analyses from Watson's opening remarks. It is an easy computation to figure out how much he weighs from Watson's swift appraisal. Sixteen stone and what do you get? Times 14 lbs = 224 pounds avoidupois.

But is there another computation we can make to learn how tall Cyril was? Possibly. In Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, the inhabitants of the Flying Island are able to make a completely bespoke suit of clothes for Gulliver by making only a couple of measurements, including his thumb length. This is because they had determined that certain ratios apply consistently to human measurements.

In a somewhat similar vein, Alphonse Bertillon advanced the science of anthropometries in his famous system of criminal identification. It was based on the idea that the *relative* measurements of human physiognomy do not change over time. Those characters in the canon who are fans of phrenology (Dr. Mortimer and possibly Prof. Moriarty) study the bumps on the skull for significance, but that has no bearing on other measurements.

But to solve the Overton enigma, I would like to apply a principle drawn from the Renaissance. I am sure that all educated men and women are familiar with the famous rendition by Leonardo DaVinci of the classical ratios of human extremities forming a multi-armed figure somewhat reminiscent of Kali and prescient of Dali. This figure, found in folio 10 recto of *Quaderno VI, the Canon of Proportions*, Venice, Academy of Fine Arts, is known as "The Man of Trezzo".

Using DaVinci's proportion system, the height of a man is directly related to the breadth of his reach. In turn, there should be a relatively constant ratio between the width of the shoulders and the length of each arm measured by DaVinci at 1.5 to 1. This doesn't happen in nature. My own measured ratio is 5 to 4. Rugby players, traditionally broad shouldered, may be an even closer ratio, possibly down to a Quasimodoish 1 to 1. Only when bodybuilders are considered, do we get a reversal with the shoulders being broader than the reach of one arm. Presumably in (cont. page 4)

## NEWSLETTERS RECEIVED

**The District Messenger** - nos. 206 & 207 contain news of worldwide Sherlockian newsletters, happenings and publications. To subscribe, send 12 International Reply Coupons or US\$13 for 12 issues to Roger Johnson,

**The Camden House Journal** - Vol.22 No.12 contains *Slings and Arrows From an Irritated Detective* by William R. Cochran, OEH, BSI.

**The Baker Street Dispatch** - Vol. 10 No. 6 contains reviews of *MAZA*, the video of the same (George Schenk), *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy: A Case to Remember* (Laura Kuhn), and a Dickens website. Also a profile of The Sydney Passengers.

Midland Center for the Arts, Hall of Ideas, 1801 W. St. Andrews Rd., Midland Michigan, 48640 has the mystery/display *Sherlock Holmes & The Clocktower Mystery* as a free outing for you to solve. January 20 - April 12, 2001

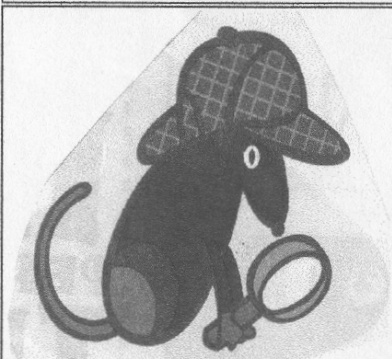


IMAGE FROM A CHILI'S RESTAURANT CHILDREN'S MENU



## NEW RECRUITS

Member Wanda Dow went to The Great American Teach-In in November, 2000 and spoke to classes about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Her decision to concentrate on Doyle rather than Sherlock this year was based on the fact that she spoke on the great detective last year to fourth graders and this year she was speaking to the same audience, only now in fifth grade. She planned to only speak to one class, but when a teacher who happened to hail from England found out about the subject, she was requested to speak to that class about Doyle also. Of course, the excerpts read were from Holmes - *Hound* and *Speckled Band*, to be specific.

Wanda reports that her speech went over so well that one of the instructors told her she was welcome to come back any time to read. Not one to lose a chance to increase the number of Sherlockians in the world, she agreed to come read twice a week from *Hound*. This has resulted in a nice discussion group after each reading.

We urge members who might be interested to check at their local schools. Many of them are always looking for someone to read to classes and it doesn't have to take a lot of your time. Just think: for 1/2 hour once or twice a week, you might get us some new members!



Hindu gods now compete with cuddly babies (note the detective) in the poster stalls in Nepal. From *National Geographic* November, 2000.

## HE'S EVERYWHERE...

Colin Dexter, creator of the detective Inspector Morse, decided at the end of last year to kill off Morse while the show was still a success. John Thaw, who portrayed Morse, praised the Inspector's fallibility: "It's one of the things I loved about him. The way he got things wrong but was so convinced he was right. Sometimes he would be chasing the wrong man for three quarters of an episode. He was never Sherlock Holmes." ... In the *Washington Post* of 12/2/00, Lloyd Rose wrote about the character, *Dr. Who* "As a hero, he belongs to the class of Eccentric English Bachelor Geniuses, of whom the supreme example is Sherlock Holmes. Like Holmes, he is cerebral, solitary, and curious, in both senses of the word. He doesn't find wickedness fearsome as much as supremely irritating." ... You can access the script to the play, *Sherlock Holmes and the First English Gentleman* by (cont. page 6)

(cont. from page 3) the traditional division of Ecto-, Meso- and Endo- morph body types, rugby players are in the more Meso/Endo area whereas Holmes is usually thought of as Ecto-style. In good human anti-mathematical fashion, this does not work for the disproportionate among us, including perhaps the hunchback Richard III, or Arnold Schwarzenegger. Assuming Cyril Overton to be not over-trained by a zealous PT man at Cambridge, but is just large overall, then we can still look at his shoulder width to find this arm length and then his height. But, what about accounting for a clothing allowance? Surely Watson did not see Cyril in just a singlet or jersey, but fully clothed. Two inches of vest (undershirt to Americans), shirt, jacket and overcoat fabric bunched on each side of his shoulders reduces each reckoning by several inches.

Now down to figures. Watson says that Overton "spanned the doorway with his broad shoulders." So, all we need to know is the door width. Presumably 221B was built to the usual British standards pre-disabilities act. As an inside door leading to the sitting room, the common standard would have been some thirty to thirty six inches wide. Even presuming it was an inside door to an enclosed room, twenty five inches would have been a (cont. page 6)



#### FOURTH ANNUAL SHERLOCK'S SUNSHINE BIRTHDAY BASH

Eighteen hearty Sherlockians gathered in an upstairs room at Jesse's Seafood House in Dunedin, overlooking a beautiful sunset (if you got there early enough) on the water. With the many boats in dock, it was agreed that the view was part of what Florida was all about. Arrangements were made by Carl Heifetz and Wanda Dow acted as Hostess. The subject of this birthday dinner was the case that started it all, *Study in Scarlet*. To that end, toasts were served to those within the pages of that case. Dr. John H Watson was toasted by Wanda Dow, Murray by Carl Heifetz, Young Stamford by Mike Bryan, Sherlock Holmes by Caroline Everett, Mssrs. Lestrade and Gregson by Jeff Dow, Enoch J. Drebbler by David Scott, Jefferson Hope by Charles Amick and The Mormons by Art Walker. Members assigned to toast Lucy and John Ferrier were unable to make the meeting at the last minute, so these two had glasses raised simply in their names.

The PPoF Ritual, written many years ago by Wanda Dow (nee Butts) was led by Dorothy Stix.

Carl Heifetz presented attendees with copies of his *A Study in Scarlet Yields to the Methods of Sherlock Holmes, Scientist*. Those of you wishing a copy can

send \$1 with a self-addressed 9x11 envelope to Carl at

The Dow Family Players reprised a tune from the first birthday dinner, *221B*, a little number to the tune of *I've Got You Babe*. Member Willard Gibson presented a couple of choice limericks, and Charles Amick recited from memory his piece, *Serendipity*. Art Walker showed off the new pipe dampers he'd bought off the internet - a complete set of Sherlockian characters.

Reminders were made as to The Wessex Cup coming up February 10. Don't forget to send your reservations in to David McCallister. The club still has glasses from the Symposium for sale, as well as club window decals, bookmarks and enamel pins. Glasses are normally sold in sets of 4 due to shipping costs, but at gatherings you can pick up a single glass or two. Be sure to attend a meeting or have someone pick one up for you if you don't want a set.

The unopened newspaper, Mike Bryan, reported that he had found a book worthy of our Marshall/Wood fund. It is a new publication by DK books, an educational publisher. (You may have seen their *Eyewitness* series.) DK has come out with an abridged version of *Hound*

of the *Baskervilles*. It's beautifully done and geared towards youth, although they are easily appreciated by adult Holmesians as well. It was agreed that funds should be used to purchase copies of this publication to be placed in local libraries. Members are encouraged to purchase copies of their own and while doing so, add a few extra dollars to be put towards the Marshall/Wood Fund for further purchases. Once Pinellas County libraries have obtained copies, other Counties will begin to receive them.

Dorothy Stix brought to the attention of those present of how the best way to recruit younger members was to go to their schools and lecture, as had been done by Tom Stix and John Bennett Shaw. Wanda Dow reported that she goes in every year during The Great American Teach-In and this year the result has been that she is now reading *Hound* to a fifth grade class. (see article on page 4)

Art Walker reported on the latest *Florida Bibliophile Society* Newsletter, which was dedicated to Holmes and contained articles by himself and Caroline Everett.

Another Ritual was led by Willard Gibson, and the meeting came to a close.

Let everyone know you're a member of the Pleasant Places. Get a 2 1/2" square window decal. Black on clear. US\$2.00 postpaid to Wanda Dow,



(cont. from page 4) minimum standard.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The equation would be:} \\ H &= W + 2 \times 5W/4 \text{ --for McCallister} \\ H &= W + 2 \times 1.5W \text{ --for DaVinci} \end{aligned}$$

| Doorway Width                               | DaVinci's in. - ft./ins. | McCallister's in. - ft./ins. | Quasimodo's in. - ft./ins. |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (with 2" clothing allowance in parenthesis) |                          |                              |                            |
| 36"   | 144" - 12' (11'4")       | 135" - 11'3" (9'8")          | 108" - 9' (8')             |
| 30"   | 120" - 10' (9'4")        | 105" - 8'9" (8'2")           | 90" - 7'6" (6'6")          |
| 25"   | 100" - 8'4" (7'8")       | 87.5" - 7'2" (6'7")          | 75" - 6'3" (5'3")          |
| 20"   | 80" - 7'8" (7')          | 70" - 5'10" (5'3")           | 60" - 5' (4')              |

$$H = 3 \times W \text{ --for Quasimodo}$$

with 2" per side clothing allowance:  $W(\text{shoulder}) = W(\text{door}) - 4$

Most of these solutions would seem to be way out of all reason. Cyril Overton would have to have been either taller than the Cardiff Giant, or unusually squat. Surely he was somewhat around Holmes's six foot range.

For a skinny Sherlock Holmes to have squeezed past his own door at six foot (with 2 inches clothing), by these ratios, would require a door width of less than 20 inches. This is a little tight for most doors, even in England, unless we're looking at a priest's hole or something. Only with a McCallister physique could Cyril at 6'7" have made it at 25". If built like Quasimodo, 30" wide would do; for a slightly shorter 6'6".

(cont. from page 4) Doug Warwick at [www.dramex.org/flp/scripts/sherlock.txt](http://www.dramex.org/flp/scripts/sherlock.txt). It premiered at St. Vlad's



Picture in Time magazine, 12/11/00

Theatre in Toronto in March, 2000 ... Missed the festivities honoring the unveiling of the statue of Sherlock Holmes in London in 1999? You can get a 32-minute video from the Sherlock Holmes Society of London for \$19.85US. Make your check payable to the Society and mail to Mrs. E.M.Godden,

... Speaking of statues, a "living statue" has cropped up in Leicester Square on the northeast corner near the Old Swiss Center of London. This one's "a bloke dressed as Sherlock Holmes sprayed bronze, who stands motionless on a low plinth." (according to Catherine Cooke) ... *The*

*Independent* reports that Holmes I (Home Office (Large) Major Enquiry System) has been upgraded and Holmes 2 is expected to debut in 2002. Holmes 1 was created in 1985; Holmes 2 will store fingerprints, photographs, and even recorded voices of suspects. Guess even the brain attic can be improved.

#### MORE BOOKS

*The Somnambulist and The Detective: Vincent Starrett and Sherlock Holmes* by Susan Rice is a welcome introduction to Starrett and his work. Send US\$19.00 (or L7.00 U.K., L9.00 Europe, CA\$25.00) to Anne Jordan,

Cost

quoted is postpaid.

*Houdini and The Seance Murders* by Christopher Farran includes Houdini with his nephew, Ira, and Doyle with his granddaughter Lucinda (aka Solitaire) investigating a murder committed during a seance in Trieste: Ira and Solitaire go to Paris and do most of the adventuring. Distributor is Seven Hills, 1531 Tremont Street, Cincinnati, OH 45214 but check your local bookstore. Should be \$12.95.

Jon Lellenberg's latest is *Dissecta Membra: Stray Scraps of Irregular History, 1932-1950* which is an interim addition containing items that have come to light after earlier volumes were published. \$13 postpaid,

## Calendar Sherlockiana

### 2001 Events

**February 10** - Florida Wessex Cup XI. See flyer.

**March 9-11** - *The 19th Annual Arthur Conan Doyle/Sherlock Holmes Symposium* will be held in Dayton, OH. For info email

**March 23-25** - *Step Back in Time* conference (romance, history & crime) will include a workshop on criminology. Send a SASE to Virginia Romance Writers, 13 Woodlawn Terrace, Fredericksburg, VA 22405 <www.geocities.com/SoHo/Museum/2164>

**May 4-6** - *Malice Domestic XIII* at the Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA. Ghost of Honor: Rex Stout. Contact MD13 at

to be put on the mailing list.

**May 12** - Black-tie grand gourmet dinner honoring the centennial of *HOUN* at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY is \$120. Contact Albert & Julia Rosenblatt,

**June 10** - The Sherlock Holmes Society of London will be having a cricket match in Victorian costume, played to 1895 rules at the private cricket ground of Sir Paul Getty in Buckinghamshire.

**June 29 - July 1** - *2001: A new Sherlockian Odyssey: A Journey Through Shaw 100* in Minneapolis. Contact Julie McKuras,

**August 25** - Starts a 12-day cruise to the Baltic for *The Sherlock Holmes Society of London Golden Jubilee*. Details available from Arena Travel, Freeport 1H 1037, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7BR, England or <holmes@arena travel>

**October 19-21** - *Footprints of the Hound* conference sponsored by The Bootmakers of Toronto, The Toronto Public Library, The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection and The Arthur Conan Doyle Society. Brochure available from Doug Wrigglesworth,

**October 26-28** - Centenary Celebration of the publication of *HOUN* coincides with the 30th Anniversary of The ACD Collection at the Toronto Metropolitan Library.

**October 27 - 29** - *Magna Cum Murder VII Weekend* at Ball State University in Muncie, IN. Contact Kathryn Kennison, Ball State U., Muncie, IN 47306 for info on one of the midwest's finest mystery author conferences.

**November 1-4** - *Bouchercon World Mystery Convention*. Hyatt Regency Crystal City Washington, D.C. The granddaddy of all mystery conventions, Bouchercon offers four days of varied programming including a pre-convention Halloween party, Nick and Nora

Charles Martini Happy Hour, gala Anthony Awards Banquet and guided mystery tours of Washington, among other special events. Cost: \$135 (thru 9/1) <bouchercon 2001.com> or Bouchercon 2001, P.O. Box 11700, Washington, DC 20008.

**MEMBERS TAKE NOTE! ONE OF THE CHANGE OF ADDRESSES IS YOUR REPRESENTATIVE!**

### **ROSTER CHANGES**

**Heifetz, Carl**

**Kaminski, Michele Lynn**

**Stoner, David**

### **AUTHENTIC UK MILITARY BADGES**

The British call them "crests." You can own one from the Royal Fusiliers (87144). These are the same felt & wool badges, hand-embroidered and elaborately detailed with gold stitching used on uniforms throughout the UK. Available from *Britannia* for \$34 each. Call 1-800-778-7007.





# 25th Annual Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida

Come one! Come all! Please fill in the reservation form below if you are planning on attending the 25th Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida on November 18 at the home of Carl and Sandie Heifetz in Palm Harbor, Florida. Festivities begin at noon.

Our case this time is *The Missing Three-Quarter*. Please be sure to review it and prepare yourself for David McCallister's Watson and Mycroft quizzes! All attendees are requested to bring an item which contains aniseed (or a derivative thereof) to share.

Already confirmed are presentations by David McCallister, Carl Heifetz and the Dow Family Players. We will also be discussing rugby.

Cost is \$7.00 per person. You may also enclose a donation to the Marshall/Wood Fund in the same check if you so desire. We are requesting volunteers for additional presentations as well as toasts. Please mark the appropriate lines on your reservation form.

Count me in for the 25th Fall Gathering! I'll be there at noon with my aniseed item and ready to digest a delicious repast and facts on rugby!

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to volunteer for a toast.

\_\_\_\_\_ I desire to make a presentation on \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that you'll be sending me details on how to get to the meeting place and will let me know if I have an assigned toast.

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations.

I've also enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as a donation to the Marshall/Wood Fund.

Mail reservations to: 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,

**Mike Bryan**, The Unopened Newspaper,

**If you see a red check here , this is your LAST COMMUNICATION! To continue your membership, send US\$12.00 (US/CAN) or US\$13.00 (INTL) to Carl Heifetz,**

**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**

