



COMMUNICATION NO. 233

READ ALL ABOUT IT:

Spring Wedding in Dunedin canceled; celebration continues anyway! Page 1

Big film festival featured on August 23. Mark your calendars now for big event! Page 2

Published members proclaimed! Page 1

Great items available from Ben Wood!

THE TIMES, THEY ARE A CHANGIN'

After 8 years, Wanda and Jeffery Dow and I have agreed to switch some responsibilities in the *Pleasant Places of Florida* work assignments. From hence forth, the Dows will take over the financial aspects of our Club. Please make **ALL DUES CHECKS OUT TO WANDA DOW**, and not *Pleasant Places of Florida*, and mail them to Wanda and Jeff Dow at:

And, for better or for worse and *quid pro quo*, I will be responsible for three issues of the *Communications* every year. I hope that you will enjoy them as much as you have enjoyed the issues published by the Dow Family. As was the case with Wanda and Jeff, I really value the input of the members. Please send me articles, poems, pastiches, sightings, etc. Send items to me at:

or e-mail

Please

keep me informed of your personal exploits: papers published, presentation, etc.

PUBLISHED MEMBERS

Philip K. Jones article "Everybody Wants to Get into the Act", about pastiches by well-known persons has been published in *The Hounds Collection* Vol 8. He has another in the forthcoming (August 2003) *Shoso-In Bulletin*, Vol 13 titled "Sherlock Holmes Explains...", which covers pastiches written to illustrate or explain particular interests or views.

28th ANNUAL SPRING GATHERING OF THE PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA

Or, the Wedding That Never Was

Beckoned by an elegant invitation to the wedding of Miss Violet Smith and Mr Jack Woodley, members of the *Pleasant Places of Florida* gathered for the outdoor nuptials at beautiful Hammock Park, in Dunedin, Florida. The time was 11:30 AM. The date was the 24th of May, 2003. The weather was perfect. Unfortunately, for reasons that became obvious later, bride and groom failed to appear. Despite this minor inconvenience, we celebrated appropriate toasts and other ceremonies consistent with both the blessed event and the *Pleasant Places of Florida* 28th Spring Gathering to discuss the epic Sherlockian tale: "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist," accompanied by a hearty wedding breakfast with sumptuous food, champagne, and a wedding cake.

The proceedings began with our traditional responsive reading of "The Musgrave Ritual," led by David McCallister.

The toasts, some pithy and to the point, some long winded, but all delivered with the combination of seriousness and joy attendant to the study of our Master, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, were as follows:



The Master, Sherlock Holmes by Charles Amick; The Doctor, Dr. Watson by Mike Carroll, The Woman, Irene Adler, Donna Vaurio; The Cook, Mrs. Hudson by Mike Bryan; The Founder, Leslie Marshall by Wanda Dow; Violet Smith by Carl Heifetz; Jack Woodley by Julie McConnell; Bob Caruthers by George Edwards; Cyril Morton by David McCallister; Peter, the Groom

by Barry Edwards; and Uncle Ralph Smith by Art Walker. (The full text of the toasts appears on page 3.)

The festivities were also graced by the following: Jeff, Culver, and Elizabeth Dow; Jeff Sweeney; Caroline Everett; Susan Edwards; Gerry Hynes; Marilyn Amick; and Maura McCallister.

Following the repast, we were challenged and entertained by David McCallister's Mycroft and Watson level quizzes and enjoyed a presentation by Art Walker entitled "Images of Sherlock Holmes."

(Concluded on page 2)

FIRST ANNUAL PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL

Hound of the Baskervilles Featured



"Mr. Holmes, they were the footsteps of a gigantic hound!" With these words, uttered by Dr. Mortimer at the conclusion of Chapter 2, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were drawn into an adventure that many have considered the greatest mystery story ever written: *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Since its serialized 1901-2 publication in *The Strand* magazine, this epic adventure has never been out of print. Is it any wonder, then, that the *Hound of the Baskervilles* has been the subject of numerous film and TV depictions in which Sherlock Holmes has been portrayed by such diverse actors as Scooby-Doo, Basil Rathbone, Peter Cushing, and Jeremy Brett, just to name a few?

What then would be a more logical topic for the First Annual *Pleasant Places of Florida* Film Festival? At this event, we will explore the origin and history of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, as well as view and discuss two of the better film versions of this adventure.

Date and Time: August 23, 2003 from 10 AM to 3 PM

Location: Seminole Community Library at
St. Petersburg College, Seminole Campus
(Program Room B)
9200 113th Street N
Seminole, FL 33772

Cost: \$10.00 per person including lunch and Program.

All registrants will be sent directions to the library.

All reservations and checks should be made out to Michael Bryan and sent to:

Michael Bryan

For information, please contact Mike by e-mail at . Please see registration form on back page for more details.

ARE MY DUES DUE? WHEN ARE THEY DUE? HOW MUCH ARE THEY?: You will note a date on the address label for this publication. That is the date when we need your money to keep publishing this *Communication* (the labor is free but stamps and printing costs keep going up). If you see that you need to pay up, please make out a check (cash is OK) to Wanda Dow, and send it to her address on page 1. For US and Canadian residents, dues are US \$12; for all others, dues are US \$13.

28TH ANNUAL SPRING GATHERING OF THE PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA

(Continued from page 1)

The Dow family singers led us in a musical salute to "Purple Bicycle, Cyclist Come and She's Solitary, and Mr. Caruthers and Woodley Started Out partners in Crime."

The festivities concluded with a more or less unison reading of Vincent Starrett's epic poem 221-B.

Many thanks are due to the diligent members who planned and contributed greatly to the success of this, our 28th Annual Spring gathering of the renowned *Pleasant Places of Florida*. We all owe them our gratitude.

To David McCallister goes the credit for the inspiring wedding invitation (depicted below), the wedding cake, and champagne.

Wanda and Jeff Dow planned the event, arranged for the beautiful facilities, printed the "Official Program," and organized the toasts and other events.

*The honor of your presence
Is requested at the marriage of*

*Miss Violet Smith
And
Mr. Jack Woodley*

*at Eleven-thirty O' Clock
Saturday
The Twenty-fourth
of May
Eighteen Ninety-Five*

Hammock Park, Dunedin, Florida

*Reception immediately following:
Dow House*

RSVP by May 19, 2003

TOASTS AT WEDDING BREAKFAST

The Master, Sherlock Holmes by Charles Amick

I find myself upon my feet today to toast the Master. In solving mysteries I'm sure there's no one did it faster. His cases stand the test of time, a hundred years and more. In reading Watson's tales today, you'll find they never bore. So, here's to Sherlock Holmes today - with stories still alive - For the best in mysteries, you know - it's always 1895!

The Doctor, Dr. Watson by Mike Carroll

Doctors are important in the Canon. For instance, here are a few of the medical men mentioned by name: Dr. Leslie Armstrong of "The Missing Three-Quarter;" Dr. Trevor Bennet of "The Creeping Man;" Dr. Becher of "The Engineer's Thumb;" Dr. James Mortimer of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (although he disparaged the use of the title doctor, claiming to be "a humble M.R.C.S."); Dr. Leon Sterndale of *The Devil's Root*;" Dr. Grimesby Roylott of "The Speckled Band."

There are anonymous doctors aboard the "Gloria Scott," at "Shoscombe Old Place," in the "Three Garridebs, The Blanched Soldier, A Study in Scarlet, the Illustrious Client, the Musgrave Ritual, the Priory School, the Crooked Man, the Boscombe Valley Mystery, the Lion's Mane, the Problem of Thor Bridge, Wisteria Lodge and two doctors in the Dancing Men. On two occasions, Holmes, himself, was mistaken for a doctor, by the Walsham station-master in the Dancing Men and by Godfrey Staunton in the Missing Three-Quarter."

It is essential to mention two doctors of distinction: Dr. Joseph Bell of the University of Edinburgh, who shared many personality traits with Sherlock Holmes, and Dr. Arthur Conan Doyle, an ophthalmologist who in 1891 set up a consulting office at no. 2 Devonshire Place, near Harley Street. Christopher Morley has written of him, "It was there, waiting for the patients who never came, that he began to see the possibilities in Sherlock Holmes. No wonder that Dr. Watson, too, sometimes neglected his practice."

But, what of Dr. James Watson, you say. He was born in the 1850's, spent some time in Australia, and took his medical degree at the University of London in 1878, while serving as a staff surgeon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Shortly after the outbreak of the Second Afghan War in 1878 he joined the Army Medical Department and while serving in Afghanistan he was wounded in the battle of Maiwand and was repatriated and demobbed with a wound pension.

I beg your pardon, his name was not James Watson, but John. However, a strong memory was not characteristic of that household. His wife called him James and Watson himself - despite his medical training - sometimes could not distinguish between a pain in his leg and a pain in his shoulder. However, he did have some praiseworthy gifts in addition to his medical skill.

He was devoted to literature and informs us that he read Henri Murger's *Scenes de la Vie de Boheme* and Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man*, among other selections. And Holmes himself says of Watson, "I am lost without my Boswell."

I give you John H. Watson, medical doctor, literary connoisseur, and the second most-famous biographer in English literature.

The Woman, Irene Adler by Donna Vaurio

What would you say about the woman who had a face man might die for?

What would you say about the woman who was said by many to be the daintiest thing under a bonnet on this planet?

What would you say about the woman who with guile and wit, bested the greatest detective of all time and left him thinking that she eclipsed and predominated the whole of her sex?

What would you say about the woman whose photograph meant more to Sherlock Holmes than emeralds? Whose sovereign he placed on his key chain?

What would you say?

You might have said "What a queen she would have made!!"

To the Woman!!!

The Cook, Mrs. Hudson by Mike Bryan

She showed strange visitors aplenty up the seventeen steps. She served cold dinners more than once to her late-returning lodgers in 221-B. She suffered alphabetic bullet holes in her walls, spelled out by one eccentric but brilliant occupant. Yet, if she uttered any complaint, it is overshadowed by her excellence, for never was there any finer landlady than Mrs. Martha Hudson!

The Founder, Leslie Marshall by Wanda Dow

In this adventure, we meet a man, Williamson by name, who is a sinner. A person who is described as "that blackguard parson." He is an elderly, gray-bearded man, who wears a short surplice over a light tweed suit. He obtains a marriage license by a trick, and continues to perform weddings as an ordained clergyman, even though he has been defrocked. Although he may not have been in on the plan in Africa, he hopped on the wagon quickly enough in England.

In real life, we have a man, gentle by nature, Holmesian in heart, who began a small corresponding scion in the name of Sherlock Holmes. Although he would scoff at such a handle, he is the "saint" of the *Pleasant Places of Florida*.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

Friends, let us leave it to Holmes to cast out the sinner, Williamson, while we will toast the "saint", Leslie Marshall.

Violet Smith By Carl Heifetz

Violet Smith must have been one of the most beautiful women encountered in the Canon. Although we have very little description of her appearance, an unusual omission for our favorite biographer, the response by men to her presence, and some of the statements they have rendered make this obvious.

Dr. Watson was, without question, quite taken with the beauty, Miss Violet Smith. Although he omitted a detailed description of her from his text, he did state that she was "...a young and beautiful woman, tall graceful, and queenly" (page 527). Later in the story he remarked on her posture indicating that he saw "The graceful girl sitting very straight upon her machine" (page 531). It is possible, however, that Dr. Watson's loneliness may have caused him to exaggerate his opinion regarding the desirability of Miss Violet Smith. According to Jack Tracy's *Encyclopedia Sherlockiana*, Dr. Watson was between wives during "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist" in April 1895. Watson's first wife died between 1891 and 1894, and he apparently didn't marry again until 1903.

But, additional evidence demonstrates that Miss Smith was a very attractive member of the female sex.

For example, we know that her fiancée, Cyril Morton, was obviously attracted to her beauty. He wanted to marry her even though she had little money or resources to offer at the time.

And, according to Miss Smith's own testimony, the odious "Mr. Woodley...was for ever making eyes at me (page 528).

Further, according to Miss Smith, "It may be a mere fancy of mine; but it had seemed to me that my employer, Mr. Carruthers, takes a great interest in me...He has never said anything. He is a perfect gentleman. But a girl always knows" (page 530). Later, Mr. Carruthers, in his own words, declared "Even if she couldn't love me, it was a great deal to me just to see her dainty form about the house, and to hear the sound of her voice" (page 536).

But the final pieces of evidence are the statements and actions of Sherlock Holmes. After all, he didn't hold hands with every female that he encountered. Being quite taken with her appearance, Mr. Holmes said: "There is a spirituality about the face..." (Page 527). What is his evidence for that. As far as I know, this is a very subjective point of view taken by a man who really is impressed with a woman's face. Later, Mr. Holmes says "It is a part of the settled order of nature that such a girl should have followers" (page 530). Could he have secretly wanted to be one of them? He, or course, would deny it.

Thus, in spite of the fact that we have no detailed description of her appearance, we must be convinced of her beauty from the reactions

to her charms of five very different men.

Let us raise our glasses high to the very attractive Miss Violet Smith, now Mrs. Cyril Morton.

Jack Woodley By Julie McConnell

Here's to Mr. Woodley - smellsome, odored, and a person so vile --that his complete undoing brought forth a rare Sherlock smile.

Bob Carruthers By George Edwards

Bob Carruthers is not an easy person to Toast. Usually, you Toast one for an accomplishment or special day. With Bob you have a seeming blackguard. But, upon perusal I began to realize that he was merely an instrument of Woodley. A weakling.

Bob grew emotionally after he became responsible for Violet and his true nature finally came out.

So - Here's to Bob Carruthers, he grew mature and came through when needed. Let us hope his new life lasted for many years.

Cyril Morton By David McCallister

Cyril Morton was a suitor,
Of Violet Smith, the music tutor.
His line of work was electricity,
But his real reward was domesticity.

Violet was an ardent cyclist,
And one of nature's attractivist.
She didn't know her own wealth,
Which the blackguard's tried to get by stealth.

How did she get talking of Cyril?
Oh, Cyril is his name?
As if she should now know him?
And Holmes knew he was not to blame.

But why did she seek our Sherlock?
When Cyril would have helped her;
He could have done it all in fact.
But then there'd be no Holmes adventure.

Cyril was the background man.
And motivation in the story.
The romance, and the happy end,
That otherwise was gory.

(Concluded top of next page)

TOASTS AT WEDDING BREAKFAST

(concluded from previous page)

Uncle Ralph Smith By Art Walker

There once was a Smith called Violet,
Her beauty was just like her name.
She was pledged in love to her Cyril yet,
Mr. Woodley claimed her as fair game.

Holmes and Watson now entered the case
Of the mysterious bicycle rider.
Their intense investigation proved a race
Of safety and protection to provide her.

Woodley and Carruthers' attack on each other
Brought their plans to final defeat.
They had sought the inheritance of another,
And instead found justice complete.

My friends, I ask you now to think
Of the adventure you have read.
As we lift our glasses to drink,
Uncle Ralph Smith is now quite dead.
If he had not been unhealthy,
Lovely Violet would not now be wealthy.



An amiable
and simple-
minded
clergyman
(SCAN)

**SHERLOCKIAN ITEMS
FOR SALE**

All items sent postpaid

Item I..."All My Life"
An autobiography by Leslie
Marshall, BSI., Founder of the
PPoFF, and BSI's 1st Chaplain.
46 p. Spiral Bound.---\$5.00

Item II... "Philatelic & Numismatic
Holmes" - a handy reference guide
to Sherlockian Stamps & Coins.
Colour illustrated...\$15.00

Item III...2003 SHERLOCKIAN
CALENDAR. Noting Holmesian
Red-Letter Days---\$2.50

Send Orders to:
The Rev'd Dr. Benton Wood, BSI



Palm Harbor
Library

PHIL's Book Club (Palm Harbor Community Library) will feature a discussion of the *Hound of the Baskervilles* on Monday, Feb. 9 at 11 AM and 7 PM. Carl Heifetz will have the opportunity to introduce this topic. All are welcome; no pre-registration is required. The library is on Nebraska Avenue, just west of US 19 on the left side. Mark your calendars now!

THE PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA

Founded in 1972 by Leslie Marshall, BSI (dec.)
Nurtured from 1975 to 1995 by Dr. Benton Wood, BSI

**UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
THE FINAL COURT OF APPEALS:**

⇒Carl Heifetz: Representative both the servants and the tradespeople

⇒David McCallister: Master of the House

⇒Wanda & Jeff Dow: The Papers on the Sundial

Michael Bryan: The Unopened Newspaper

⇒Dr. Benton Wood, BSI: Recorder Emeritus

ALL THE NEWS IN THE SHERLOCKIAN COMMUNITY is available in the terrific monthly newsletter *Scuttlebutt The Spmacetti Press*, edited and published by Peter Blau. For subscription information, contact Peter by post at: The Spmacetti Press,

Peter would also be happy to receive any Sherlockian information that you can transmit to him.

THANKS TO CAROLINE EVERETT for two items of interest:

(1)**Britannia Video and Gifts**, a catalog from Marshall fields (1-800-530-2225, <fields.com/britannia>), contains some very interesting Sherlockian items such as videos, teapot, aluminum Baker Street paper weight, Paddington Station Clock, mimi bar set, and apothecary chest.

(2) **The Acorn Catalog** (<www.acornline.com> also offers several Sherlock Holmes videos as well as a framed stamp collection.

Sherlock Holmes videos are also available from VideoPreview (<www.VideoPreview.com>, 1-800-771-9232)

THE COMPLETE SET OF BBC radio broadcasts of the entire Canon is available from <amazon.co.uk> for 150 British pounds. This is my favorite radio version of the Sherlock Holmes stories.



COMMUNICATION NO. 233

The Pleasant Places of Florida



FIRST ANNUAL PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL REGISTRATION

10 AM to 3 PM, August 23, 2003

Seminole Community Library at St. Petersburg College, Seminole Campus (Program Room B)

9200 - 113th Street N, Seminole, FL 33772 (All registrants will be sent directions to the library)

Please reserve _____ places for this great event @ \$10.00 per person including lunch. Enclosed is a check for \$ _____

Name(s):

Contact Address:

City/ State/ Zip:

Contact Phone number and email address:

The Pickle Barrel Box Lunch consists of a sandwich, cole slaw/potato salad, cheesecake, and drink.

Sandwich choices are roast beef, smoked turkey breast, Virginia baked ham, tuna salad, egg salad.

Bread choices are rye, hoagie roll, pumpnickel, whole wheat

My luncheon selections are: (please print one sandwich and bread choice combination, for each registrant, from the list above):

All reservations and checks should be made out to Michael Bryan and sent to:

Michael Bryan,