



Ineffable Twaddle

"It is my business to know what other people don't know."

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

A monthly publication of
The Sound of the Baskervilles

A Scion Society of The Baker Street Irregulars • Since March 31, 1980

Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington



Volume 30, Issue 6
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OUR 30TH YEAR

Super Wet Weather for our Wreath Throw

Unlike years past when we've seen tons of sun and rhododendrons in bloom, it rained very hard on Saturday, May 7. But 19 SOBs and guests—Pat McIntosh's husband Jim and Kate Nelson's friend Andrew—attended this year's Annual Wreath Throw.

And, by the time we started our walk to the falls, the rain had stopped and we had occasional sights of a great bright object in the sky, which we think was the sun. The throw was, once again, a great success, with



both Bill Seil and Al Nelson getting pictures of PFL David and the wreath while it was in mid-air—a first! We then headed to Falls Terrace Restaurant for good food and conversation. We also counted our luck good, as there were several periods of heavy rain while we ate. All in all, it was a great day in the rainy Northwest!

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Photos at left by Allen Nelson & Terri Haugen

Membership Update

⇒ An SOB, who wishes to remain anonymous, has **paid two (2) dues for this year**. You are challenged to recruit a new member, who is also a Veteran, whose dues for the 2011/2012 year will be funded by this anonymous donation!

⇒ Following our Anniversary Tea on April 2, PFL David **donated** to the Pierce County Library—in the name of The SOBs—\$250 worth of Sherlockian audiotapes!

⇒ SOB Stephen Adkins recently selected the **Canonical name** (*alter ego*) of Thaddeus Sholto because *"Thaddeus's hairline reminds me of when I had hair and his giddy excitable nature, no doubt from the balsamic odour of*

eastern tobacco, is another appealing factor." If you haven't yet chosen a Canonical name, think about it and let Treasurer Al Nelson know, so he can add it to the Membership List.

⇒ **Peter & Kay Chelemedos** recently moved to The Landing in Edmonds! Watch for the updated Member List—which will be mailed with July's *Ineffable Twaddle*—for their new address!

⇒ Treasurer Al reported at the May Meeting that **75 SOBs have renewed** for the current year. If you still haven't paid yours, please do! We'd hate to have to drop you from our mailing list!

With Sincere Gratitude

To those who added a little something to their 2011/12 dues payments, we are most grateful! They include, as of this writing:

Carrol Clemmons
Ann Deussenberry

Thank you so much!!



T.S. McHugh's Public House is at 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910. Come at 5:30, order dinner and catch up with other SOB's!

Interesting Facts from GREE

- 📖 Mycroft and his snuff box, possibly the only reference of him partaking of tobacco in any form.
 - 📖 In this tale Watson administers both brandy and ammonia, but were they mixed together! Yikes!
 - 📖 Some say St. Vitus's Dance causes rapid, purposeless movement of all parts of the body, but that laughter is not a symptom.
- Source: *The Canonical Compendium*

From SOB Karen Murdock

I will e-mail to any SOB a free copy of my paper, "*Figures of Speech Found in the Sherlock Canon*".

It gives examples of 35 different figures of speech used by Doyle, including alliteration, simile, and many others.

E-mail your request to me at: murdock1212@gmail.com

Librarian's Corner

On further reading of stock currently in our Club's Lending Library, I've discovered several tomes that are too YA or too little Sherlockian and have decided to remove and donate to the Seattle Public Library the following :

- Hilary Bailey's book about "Charlotte Holmes"
- Jake and Luke Thoene's "The Case of the Yellow Hands", and
- Laurie King's "Locked Rooms"

Sheila Holtgrieve, SOB Librarian

Watson Meets Mycroft in GREE

The June 13, 2011 Business Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at **6:30 p.m. The social hour starts at 5:30 p.m.!**

Jack Tracy places our 24th case—by publication date—as having occurred anywhere between 1882 and 1890. **Says PFL David:**

This is one of only four instances where we encounter Mycroft Holmes and it is here that we get our best description of him. In addition it's one of only two times he visited Baker Street, here when he brings to his brother the strange case of Mr. Melas, whose frightening abduction by a gang of criminals is necessitated by his language skills—and their lack thereof—in dealing with their kidnap and torture victim. Watch as Holmes and Watson find the again missing Melas and are able to prevent at least one murder in "*The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter*". 🐣

In Defense of The Greek Interpreter

By: Carl L. Heifetz

(Excerpted from "In Defense of The Greek Interpreter", published in Baker Street West 1, No. 1, Vol. 15, Winter 2010, pages 12-14)

I have been following, with a great deal of interest for several years, the continuing discussions regarding the inconsistencies in "The Greek Interpreter." First, we must understand that "The Greek Interpreter" is an entirely concocted tale designed to hide the true facts surrounding the secret espionage activities of Mr. Sherlock Holmes and his mysterious brother Mycroft.

Although I have many secret materials at my disposal, I am unable to reveal them since they were entrusted to me by a descendant of the good Dr. Watson. I must be content to limit my discussion to those materials that are generally known to the world due to the courtesy of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, MD, noted author and literary agent, and the biographer of this series of reports that we now revere as the Canon, John H. Watson, MD.

Let us (examine) the chain of events that led to the surfacing of this fictional story. Several months after the events in question, there appeared an item in a newspaper in Buda-Pesth concerning "how two Englishmen who had been traveling with a woman had met with a tragic end. They had been stabbed, it seems, and the Hungarian police were of opinion that they had quarreled and had inflicted mortal injuries upon each other." Although seemingly unrelated to any activities in Great Britain, those in the diplomatic and espionage inner circles began to compare notes and to put two and two together. The party out of power, seeing an opportunity to expose secret illegal government machinations on foreign soil, threatened an investigation into possible assassinations by government agencies. People were beginning to find secret memoranda.

Leaks to the press were revealed. Several Greek names appeared to be associated with the case, including a Mr. Melas and a Mr. Kratides. Mycroft Holmes, later known merely as "M," was perplexed. People must not find out the true identity of Mr. Melas and his association with the British secret service as a valuable counter spy. Thus, a story was cooked up between the brothers Holmes, and the Biographer was persuaded to issue—five years after the fact—the adventure that we discuss here. The story needed to be consistent with the few facts that were known to those outside of the inner circle, on one hand, and interesting enough to be published, widely read, and believed, on the other.

Now let us investigate several pieces of information to help support these contentions. There are several aspects of the story that do not make sense. If Mr. Melas was as much a coward as depicted in the carriage scene, when he was first taken away to perform as an interpreter for the villains, how did he have the courage to hoodwink the dangerous criminals with his secret conversation with Mr. Kratides (not his real name of course) that very same evening? Further, why did Mycroft Holmes, a highly intelligent man, later set it up so that these criminals (really traitors to the crown for a nation whose identity cannot be revealed) would feel obligated to kidnap and attempt to assassinate Mr. Melas, and why indeed did he allow himself to be a sitting duck?

Why, because he wanted to get back into the house, spy on these traitors, attempt to free his compatriot Mr. Kratides and get the goods on the scoundrels. Since Mr. Melas did not know where he had been taken previously, this was his only recourse to divine the location of the enemies' hideout.

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Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• From SOB Margie Deck:

⇒ Check out “Probing Mystery of the Sherlockians” at www.suntimes.com/news/steinberg/4390494-452/sherlockians-clueless-about-their-dwindling-numbers.html. I think the tone is less than flattering...but interesting reading anyway.

⇒ If you are interested in joining a Sherlockian discussion group, check out: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WelcomedHolmes/>

• **From SOB Bill Seil:** Here's a blast from the past—new on DVD is the little-known Basil Rathbone classic “Queen of Blood”.



• **From SOB Stu Shiffman:** Here's something from my friend Jack Bell. “120 years ago, at this time and date (April 26, adjusted to Pacific Standard) Sherlock Holmes walked into Watson's consulting-room. Thus began ‘The Final Problem’—ending with the death of Holmes at Reichenbach Falls. And that would have been the end of it all, except Holmes didn't actually die. Instead he disappeared for a period of nearly three years. During that period only Holmes' brother Mycroft knew where he was and what he was doing. Only a few clues have surfaced since that time. I have come into possession of at least some of the letters and cables sent by Holmes to Mycroft, reporting his activities. And what activities they are! Based on the initial inventory, the materials I intend to transcribe cover the first few months of Holmes' travels as he ranges across Europe and Northern Africa before sailing to South America. During this time he is investigating what seems to be a vast global criminal conspiracy, at odds with the British Empire and its secret services—of which Holmes has become the leading

agent. Want to learn more? Follow the blog and associated Twitter feed as I post transcriptions as close to the original dates and times as possible. In this way you can join Holmes in his quest in the nearest thing to real time as we can manage a dozen decades after the fact.” Blog: <http://letterstomycroft.jackwilliambell.com/>; Twitter feed: <http://twitter.com/#!/CablesToMycroft>

• **From District Messenger Editor Roger Johnson:**

⇒ “Murder in The Vatican: The Church Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes” by Ann Margaret Lewis (Gasogene Books, 160 pages, \$18.95) covers three stories referred to in The Canon, but never related by Watson. The stories are clever and entertainingly told, in an acceptable imitation of the Watson style. A bonus is the presence in the second and third stories of a yet more familiar figure, one Father Brown.

⇒ Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini were friends for several years. Two movies, “Voices From The Dead” and “Edge Of The Unknown”, plus a TV series, “Among The Spirits”, with the two as detectives are all in development—each created without knowledge of the other. (The two split after a séance in which Jean Doyle, Arthur's wife, claimed to have spoken with Houdini's mother. But Houdini felt the details she reported were wrong.)

• **From Peter Blau:** “The Baskerville Legacy: A Confession” by John O'Connell (due from Short Books in September) is “a thrilling exploration of friendship and rivalry, love and lust, ambition and the limits of talent” (the story of how Conan Doyle and Fletcher Robinson collaborated to write “The Hound of the Baskervilles”).



...The Greek Interpreter

Continued from Page 2

It was unfortunate for Mr. Melas—and more unfortunate for Mr. Kratides—that the brothers Holmes arrived too late to follow his carriage, as had been the original intention.

Since the traitors had made good their escape, the only way that they could be eliminated and the secrets that they carried with them retrieved was for the female agent, another Greek-born British patriot, to accompany them on their escape and assist in their demise.

Doesn't this true account make more sense than the fictional account that Dr. Watson was required, against his will but as a true patriot, to concoct to protect Her Majesty the Queen and Her loyal government?

So let us raise a glass of ouzo to the brave British agents Messrs. Kratides and Melas and Ms. Sophy Kratides for their brave, unselfish, and until now, unheralded actions on behalf of the British government in September 1888. I wish that I were able to circulate the secret records that support my true account of this incident, but I am sworn on my oath as a microbiologist not to reveal them. I know that my position will be challenged by Sherlockian scholars, but the truth will win regardless of the available evidence.

G. Norton, Esquire aka
Carl L. Heifetz, Private Consulting Microbiologist,
The Pleasant Places of Florida



From our friend MC Black of “London Walks”



“I guess this is the time when people may be planning a trip to the U. K. so would like to take the opportunity to remind your members about the Holmesian walks that I lead in London. I have several different walks (including the route that Holmes and Watson took in “The Empty House”) and all either start or finish (or both) in a traditional English pub. The walks take around 2 hours depending on numbers and places that are mentioned in The Canon or were important in ACD's life. I'll give a substantial discount on the usual price to SOBs (and their friends/family) who participate. The walks are arranged to suit the people attending.

Contact me at: mc_black@riscali.co.uk, and best to all!”

News at Classic Specialties

⇒ The SOB Annual Tea & Auction received mention in the April 2011 issue of Classic Specialties' E-times, published on April 29!

⇒ Their generic SH lapel pin was minted following a design they'd had in mind for some years. It is true



cloisonné 1” in diameter, with a polished silhouette and the eternal announcement “Sherlock Holmes Lives!” in gold on a glossy black background. The whole thing is encircled with a fine, gold ring. The finding on the back has an extra stud to keep the pin from turning once affixed to lapel, dress, or sweater. Even though this is a pretty good photo, the pin looks even better! And the touches of white for Mr. Holmes's collar and shirt front really set this pin apart. A real “where-did-you-ever-get-that” show stopper!

It's Item#: J/G&B; price: US\$11.00 at www.sherlock-holmes.com



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By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

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A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars since Mary 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington

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The Sound of the Baskervilles is a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, serving the greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington, U.S.A., and has met monthly since March 31, 1980.

\$20 per year brings Members the monthly newsletter "Ineffable Twaddle", a copy of Beaten's Christmas Annual, and the incalculable benefits of association with a group of certifiable Holmes aficionados.

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month. Location of the meetings may vary. Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: "The Master's Dinner" celebrating Holmes' birthday (January), "The Annual Wreath Throw" commemorating Holmes' loss at Reichenbach Falls (May), "The Dr. John H. Watson Picnic" (July), and "The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification" (December). Other activities—book crawls, teas, plays and gaming events—are as announced.

To join, send your check for dues—\$20 for individuals, \$30 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left.



Dates of Interest

• **June 13**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
Social = 5:30 p.m.;
Business = 6:30 at
T.S. McHugh's

• **July 11**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
Social = 5:30 p.m.;
Business = 6:30 at
T.S. McHugh's

• **July 23**
Annual Watson Picnic at Seahurst Park in Burien
NEW TIME
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

• **August 8**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
Social = 5:30 p.m.;
Business = 6:30 at
T.S. McHugh's

Member News & Updates

SOBs attending the May Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

Sheila Holtgrieve	Stephen Adkins	Terri Haugen
Al Nelson	Margaret Nelson	Ed Funk
Joyce Funk	Pat McIntosh	Hank Deck
Margie Deck	Jean Macdonald	Thom Walls
Manson Polley	Nancy Polley	

News & Notes:

• **Jean** came out of her hibernation ★ **Manson & Nancy** were back from wintering in AZ and plan to attend a couple of meetings this summer
★ **Pat** brought her hubby **Jim**, whom we'd met at the Wreath Throw two days before ★ **PFL David** told all that it's not too early to get started on Beaten's submissions—due at the November Meeting—because we already have submissions from **Stephen** and **Lauran Stevens** ★ **The PFL** also recognized **Paul Williams** for arranging our Picnic site and noted that the time for this July 23 event is now from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.! ★ **Dr. Ed** gave us a hugely informative talk on medicine during the Victorian age; a few of the startling changes that occurred: washing hands *before* treatment and the inventions of general anesthetic, x-rays and the stethoscope! Also—unlike ACD—not all Docs back then actually earned the M.D. degree!!

• **Good news & bad** from **Dwight & Gayle Holmes**: In March they got to Florida to meet newest grandson, Trent, and to Jamaica and the

Caymans on a cruise. In May, she lost her job of 20-years when the dentist sold the business, and he's recovering from shoulder surgery! Says Dwight, "It gives Gayle more time to paint!"

• **Problem Solved!!** After receiving **Lloyd Hedberg's**

resignation from our webmaster position, we sought a volunteer to replace him! Happily, we have found a new webmaster in **very new Member, Stuart Nelan!** Stu lives in Melissa, TX and is Manager of Software and User Support for a geosciences firm. He's also webmaster for the Dallas Geophysical Society, but is transitioning that position to another member and will have time on his hands!! Yippee for us! He and Lloyd are hard at work on accomplishing our transition!! So stay tuned!!!



• Here's **Lending Librarian Sheila** with pretty granddaughter Hazel!

• **There's still time: SITU** invites SOBs interested in pirates and the 18th century to join them for a tour of the tall ship Lady Washington, mock battle with The Chieftain, and picnic in Port Angeles Saturday, May 28th. Details are available at: www.costuminginseattle.com/11_Lady_Washington_Invite.htm

