Two Viewpoints on OMSI Exhibition

From SOB Sonia Fetherston of Salem, OR

**Exciting New Holmes Exhibition Debut in Portland, Oregon**

Footprints, blood splatters and those twin powers of “observation” and “deduction”: You’ll swear you’re in London, c. 1895. But the game is actually afoot right here in the Pacific Northwest. The “International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes” opened a multi-state, multi-nation tour at Portland’s Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), appearing there now through January 5, 2014. The exhibition is the result of a four-year collaboration between the Arthur Conan Doyle Estate, the Exhibits Development Group, and Geoffrey M. Curley + Associates Exhibition/Theatrical Construction.

I attended the opening night gala, and got to meet Sir Arthur’s great-nephew, Richard Doyle, who travelled to America just to see the exhibition. I welcomed exhibitions putting Holmes and Co-nan Doyle in their proper context. Modern technology c. 1890-1910 is presented (the telegraph, optics, photography, and so on), along with everyday institutions such as the London bobby. Walk through a darkened hallway and suddenly visitors emerge in the familiar surroundings of the 221B Baker Street sitting room. A “V.R.” is shot into a wall, the bearskin rug lies before the fireplace, a knife holds correspondence on the mantle, and a deal table is covered with chemical stains that accompany an experiment in progress. The wax bust of Holmes sits in the… Continued on Page 2

From SOB Sheldon Gloger of Portland, OR

**Escott Reporting on OMSI**

I had no advance notice of the Sherlock Holmes exhibit that opened a few days ago at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). I rushed to see it before you will be influenced by the positive mentions in the Portland newspapers.

In my opinion, you will be disappointed, as I was. Therefore, I suggest that you save money, time and gasoline by skipping this thing. Or, at least, do not expect too much.

If you come to satisfy your curiosity (?) come early and stay late in order to experience the other worthwhile exhibits at OMSI, which include a submarine in the water and the planetarium showings. There may be value in bringing your 10-year-old child or grandchild, who may find the exhibit a positive introduction to Holmes & Watson.

The feature article in (the October 10) Oregonian (declared) the local society one of the world’s best, most active Sherlockian clubs, although—in my opinion—the very opposite is true. Well, every cloud has a silver lining, which in this case was my happy discovery of The Sound of Baskervilles in not-too-far-away Seattle.

If you do come, bring a big flashlight so as not to trip in the darkness. About half the space of the exhibit is devoted to enlarged illustrations of Holmes memorabilia that we are all familiar with. These are posted, as would be at home, by tacking the sheets on a wall. What raises these things above a showing in a club house is that each sheet is lit by a small lamp, while the rest of the hall is dark as dark can be.

The several 3-D displays are attempts to recreate 221B’s living space—to visualize dining, reading and entertaining visitors. I welcomed seeing the Persian slipper but missed Watson’s service revolver and the handgun Holmes used seeing the Persian slipper but missed Watson’s...

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Builder Dead; Lawyer Suspected! Yikes!!
The November 17, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at 4:00 p.m. at T.S. McHugh’s Public House. The social hour starts at 3:00!

Says PFL David: In our 39th tale—first published in the Strand Magazine in 1903 with original illustrations by Sidney Paget—Holmes and Watson are visited by the very distressed John Hector McFarlane, a young lawyer who’s been accused of murdering a client—the builder Jonas Oldacre, who wanted his will drawn up. But Oldacre makes McFarlane the sole beneficiary of his considerable bequest. Oldacre claimed it was due to a lack of any biological relatives and a prior relationship with McFarlane’s mother. Talk about a motive for murder!!
The evidence against young McFarlane is quite damning, but Holmes also uncovers a broken engagement, physical cruelty, and a mysterious Mr. Cornelius. Brief yourself on “The Adventure of the Norwood Builder” to find out if the lawyer is cleared!!

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Sonia: ...window, as if Mrs. Hudson had just crawled away for a moment from her vigil underneath it. The Strad perches in a corner nook, beneath a shelf containing wigs, false mustaches and makeup. It's a thrilling moment that overwhelms the senses!

Down a flight of stairs, visitors are invited to use the Master’s “methods” to solve a crime involving blood, broken busts and empty rooms. This one is tailor-made for children (and the young-at-heart) with lots of hands-on excitement. Working through each step of the crime, participants can log their deductions in take-home booklets and compare their solutions with the way Holmes would have solved this “pretty problem.” The final gallery is a show-stopper. There repose hundreds of original items from Sherlockian popular culture: board games, posters, stuffed animals, movie costumes, television props (many from the current hit TV series “Elementary,”) and even copies of The Baker Street Journal.

Sheldon: ...two floors. At the entrance is a horse buggy that is supposed to resemble the doctor's mode of reaching his patients. But all it conjured up for me was a Vermont doctor's ride in the deep snow as he sadly thought about miles and miles to go before blissful sleep. This was not a John H. Watson MD vehicle. It never saw London.

For youngsters, a game has been devised to go along with the various parts of the exhibit and involves the ticket booklet everyone gets. At each display a puzzle is involved, which the proper ticket in the booklet addresses, with stamps yes/no; good/bad; innocent/guilty—as hints for solving the mystery mount. The booklet contains five logos and they may be the clues needed to answer the mystery. I admit that I did not have the patience to participate but I watched the kids go at it with enthusiasm. Each display, by the way, is subject-oriented, with titles such as Botany, Telegraph, Scotland Yard, and Bullet Trajectory.

I was disappointed the exhibit didn’t have replicas of Victorian currency. My interest the past few months has been the purchasing power of it all; it would give me added pleasure, as I read the Canon, to sense that power each time money is mentioned.

It’s a mystery who dreamed up this exhibit. I do not complain about the concept—all publicity is good publicity when it comes to a Sherlock Holmes revival—and we are in a major one now.

In September, I went to Minneapolis to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Jane Austen Society of North America (JASNA). One of the tours offered was that to the Sherlock Holmes collections at the University of Minnesota Library. It was a wonderful tour which was led by Tim Johnson, the Curator of the Special Collections, including the Sherlock Holmes collection. He explained the surprising history of how the University became the custodian of the largest collection of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia in the world—over 15,000 items including books, journals and a wide variety of other items. Continued on Page 3
Things to See, Buy, Do and Know

- From SOB Bill Mason of Greenbrier, TN: Internationally acclaimed professor Dr. Marino Alvarez and I had a joint book reading, signing and discussion at the 25th Annual Southern Festival of Books on Saturday October 12 in Nashville at the Nashville Public Library. I talked about my book, Pursuing Sherlock Holmes, and Dr. Alvarez talked of his, A Professor Reflects on Sherlock Holmes. The session was titled, appropriately enough, “Pursuing and Reflecting on Sherlock Holmes.” We were honored to be included. The Southern Festival of Books is a big event in the Southern literary world, sponsored by Humanities Tennessee. Details, including a long list of authors who attended, can be found at http://humanities.tennessee.org/.

- From SOB Cara Cross: I was jailed on October 24, believe it or not, raising money to help children and adults with muscle diseases who are supported by the vital work of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). It wasn’t a real jail and I couldn’t rely on my good behavior to get out, so instead I raised donations for my “bail”! Thanks to Sherlockian friends who donated!!

- From SOB Elliott Black of Lincolnwood, IL: Come, Watson, come. The game is afoot. Here in this article—“When English Hunting Season Opens, Game of All Kinds Appears on London Menus”—is a cookery lesson that includes Holmes’ beloved grouse. It’s a delight to read. Go to: www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/when-english-hunting-season-opens-game-of-all-kinds-appears-on-london-menus-

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Nagle Heads to Minneapolis’ Holmes

The University’s Holmes collection began in 1974 with the purchase of James C. Iraeli’s library of first editions. Four years later it received a godsend: Dr. Philip S. Hench, a Mayo Clinic Consulting Physician, who had received the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1950, and his wife, Mary Kahler Hench, donated their collection of approximately 1800 books and 1500 periodicals, once belonging to Sir Arthur, William Gillette and Frederic Dorr Steele. The Hench collection was a hallmark of rare, expensive items. For example, of the estimated 32 existing copies of first editions of A Study in Scarlet, the Hench collection has four of them. The next huge addition to the collection came in 1993 with the addition of John Bennett Shaw’s collection. While the Henches collected expensive first rate material, Johnson referred to Mr. Shaw as having the “sensibilities of a vacuum cleaner.” He sucked up everything that had anything to do with Holmes—movie posters, comic books, statues, dolls, even bars of soap carved in the image of Sherlock. It is the soap figurines he is most worried about deteriorating, even though much of the collection is kept in the University’s specially temperature-controlled and dust-resistant vaults. Much of the collection is in the University’s Elmer L. Anderson Library. We toured that and Mr. Johnson displayed some of the rare books and models while giving us a history of the collection. We then walked to the Wilson Library where we saw more of Shaw’s collection of movie posters, statues, etc., and a recreation of Holmes’ sitting room. Finally, we went to the vaults where Johnson explained their techniques for assuring that the Holmes collection and the University’s other valuable items would not deteriorate.

During the tour, one of the attendees asked, what were some of the more unique names of Sherlock Holmes’ scion groups. I chimed in at that point about “The Sound of the Baskervilles”, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed and praised as a truly unique and geographically innovative name.

I commend the tour to any of you who are passing through Minneapolis.

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Important Weekend Events

Still to Come through Year-End 2013

- November 23: “The Hound of the Baskervilles” at the Bagley Wright Theater, 2:00 p.m. For tickets, call (206) 443-2210 or go to www.seattlerep.org.

- December 7: Will Crakes Memorial Jollification at Haugens’ home, 1:00 p.m. FREE!

From our friends

Joel & Caroline Senter of Classic Specialties

We are most proud to call your attention to our new “Bookstore” link, which will give our subscribers access to a large variety of books (both traditional and digital) directly from the pages of our Sherlockian E-Times and our traditional website. When you get your next Sherlockian E-Times, follow the link to our new Bookstore!

From SOB James Romnes

Emily and I happily report that our display “Sherlock Holmes, the Armed Citizen” went over very well at the Washington Arms Collectors’ show October 12 & 13 in Puyallup. We spoke to hundreds of people about Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. Our display was awarded the 2nd place ribbon in the revolver category!! We also put in our plug for The Sound of the Baskervilles, and participated in a re-enactment of the gunfight at the OK Corral!!

From SOB Elliott Black of Lincolnwood, IL:

Come, Watson, come. The game is afoot. Here in this article—“When English Hunting Season Opens, Game of All Kinds Appears on London Menus”—is a cookery lesson that includes Holmes’ beloved grouse. It’s a delight to read. Go to: www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/when-english-hunting-season-opens-game-of-all-kinds-appears-on-london-menus-

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The Sound of the Baskervilles

By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

Ineffable Twaddle

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A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars since March 31, 1980
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Member News & Updates

SOBs attending our October 20, 2013 SOB Meeting, presided over by PFL David Haugen were:

Stephen Adkins  Al Nelson  Terri Haugen
Sheila Holtgrieve  Dwight Holmes  Sue Reid
Pat McIntosh  John Longenbaugh  Ann Park
Kashena Konecki

* The Meeting started out quietly but went to full uproar by 5:30 when “Pink” fans showed up at McHugh’s!! ★ Very new Member Gordon Frye was our keynote speaker, discussing and demonstrating Victorian weaponry, such as revolvers and mausers!! (He was also a speaker at Sherlock Seattle 2013, along with our own James Romnes.) ★ Other new Members attending included: Nancy Frye, Annie Lin, Kate McConaughy, Airy Maher, Sam Ditusa and Dawn Kravagna. And, Dwight sat with Dawn at dinner and learned she’s a cartoonist! ★ For the write-up of the Sherlock Seattle 2013 weekend, checkout our website at: http://soundofthebaskervilles.com/recent.html ★ Nancy suggested that those who attended the Port Gamble play “google” the “Roving Players, Port Gamble” to e-mail your comments to the director, or post them to their Facebook page!!

* From Poulsbo SOB Stu Smith re the “Hound” play in Port Gamble in October: “As it turns out, I will not be able to make the show on the 13th due to preps for a family wedding. Hope you have a good time. I loaned the director two Sherlock pictures that used to hang in your house, so you may see them on the set.” Editor’s Note: We missed his pictures, but learned that Stu will be directing one of Port Gamble Theater’s productions in 2014!! Best of luck to you,

Stu!! And, what a creative way to spend retirement!!

* SOB Catherine Bancroft called to say she’s been severely ill, but that she misses everyone and hopes to see us all soon...maybe at The Jollification!!

* From our friend Joel Senter of Classic Specialties in Cincinnati, OH: “Hope all is well with y’all. I’m still recovering from knee surgery. It is getting better, but it seems that it will NEVER heal completely!!” Still sore!!”

* SOB Sue Reid reminds us:

> Seattle’s Town Hall (1119-8th Avenue), as part of its Short Stories Live series, will hold a tribute to the wide-ranging career of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle featuring readings of two of his pure horror stories (The Case of Lady Sannox and The Brazilian Cat), along with one of his mysteries—one that’s so mysterious they won’t even name it in advance! That’s November 3, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. For more information go to: http://townhall seattle.org/short-stories-livesir-arthur-conan-doyle.