Ineffable Twaddle
“It is my business to know what other people don’t know.”

The 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, USA

EQMM, February 2016
A Review by: SOB Charlie Cook

Every February Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine presents a Sherlockian pastiche, parody or tale relating to some modern Sherlock, to celebrate the tradition (started in 1942) of sending copies to the annual banquet of the Baker Street Irregulars. The issue this February had four such entries.

From the editor’s desk comes “It All Began on Baker Street” by Janet Hutchings. This one page interesting history of the beginnings of EQMM tells how a 12-year-old bed-ridden lad was given a copy of “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes”. After getting well, he hit the library and read the entire Canon. The boy was so enthralled that he knew what path his life would take: He grew up to become Frederic Dannay—with EQMM becoming his life’s great accomplishment. “The Blue Carbuncle” by Terence Faherty (the editor tells us) is a first draft of the famous Christmas story. It is an entertaining parody that shouldn’t offend Sherlockian purists and will delight most others. Holmes has apparently read it and provides Watson with editorial suggestions (usually sarcastic!). The hat and goose are there; the latter called the black bird by the detective. It seems that four nefarious characters—Bridget O’Malley, Joel Capri, and a fat man named Buttermann along with his errand boy Wilbur—have been chasing the blue artifact around the Mediterranean, finally catch up with it in London where Holmes has it. Much of the tale we’ve come to know has survived but the astute reader will certainly guess that the denouement will be somewhat altered. Beautifully corny and cleverly written!

Reichenbach Remembered!
The weather was perfect, James’ throw of our commemorative wreath was perfect, the violin music was perfect, and the attendees were perfect. Just how perfect? Go to our Tumblr site to see Airy Maher’s video of James’ excellent throw.

Yes, The SOBs’ 34th Annual Wreath Throw—commemorating Holmes’ loss at Reichenbach Falls—held on May 7, 2016 in Tumwater, WA was its usual perfect event!!

Many thanks to James Romnes and to Ginie Romnes, too, who made such a wonderful wreath.

For more details & photos, go to the Breaking News page on our website!

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Annual Dr. John H. Watson Picnic
All SOBs, their family and friends are invited to our 21st Annual Dr. John H. Watson Picnic, returning this year to the lovely Seahurst Park in Burien. We have a great picnic shelter with three long tables, BBQ’s, and a beach just steps away.

Saturday, July 16, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Seahurst Park, Burien.

All are welcome!!
Two Presenters, One Meeting! Wow!!!

The June 19, 2016 Regular Monthly Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at 1:30 p.m. at The Seattle Public Library (Queen Anne Branch) at 400 West Garfield, Seattle (driving directions at left).

If you have a favourite snack or non-alcoholic beverage you’d like to share, please feel free to bring it along!! Says PLF David:

You get two different presenters at this Meeting! SOB Margie Deck, our own Pawky Puzzler, tells us we’ll be playing “Team Trivial Pursuit” and says, “The questions will be in five categories, limited to only the stories in The Canon contained in ‘The Adventures’.” It’s always fun and there could be prizes!!!

Next up is newer SOB Dan Polvere, BSI—transplanted from Boston to Bellingham! He’ll regale us with background in his talk titled, “What William Gillette Brought to the Concept of Sherlock Holmes”! Should be informative!

So, join us if you can!

Mysterious Bookshop Celebrates 37 Years!

Thanks to our retiring Webmaster SOB Stu Nelan, we recently learned that editor, publisher and bookseller Otto Penzler has been in business with his Mysterious Bookshop for 37 years!!

A special sale was held that day—April 13—offering a 20% discount on most everything in the shop, which many of you heard about via PFL David’s email blast!!

For those not familiar with the world’s largest mystery bookshop, located in New York City, here’s how they announced their anniversary:

On this date in 1979 Otto Penzler opened the Mysterious Bookshop in the heart of New York City. Little did he know that 37 years later it would become the oldest extant mystery bookshop in the world and one of the most venerated specialty shops in the country. Over the years we have prided ourselves on carrying the very best mystery, crime, and espionage titles, as well as offering a large selection of signed first editions, Sherlockiana, and rare books. In order to say thank you to our many….

Adapting Sherlock Holmes

Thanks to former SOB and Stanford U Librarian Greta DeGroat (formerly of Olympia, WA, now residing with the hubby Ray, BSI in the Bay Area) for the link to the Oxford University Press “free virtual issue of Adaptation”*—subtitled, “A collection of articles from Adaptation looking at different adaptations of Holmes and Watson, as well as wider issues and new directions within the field of adaptation studies.” It reads:

Few characters have been adapted more often than Arthur Conan Doyle’s great detective Sherlock Holmes and his trusty sidekick John Watson. From the earliest days of film and television to new mediums including video games, adaptations have long informed our picture of Holmes as a character.

This free virtual issue of Adaptation draws together recent…

* Adaptation, an Oxford University Press Journal, is...

“an international, peer-reviewed journal, offering academic articles, film and book reviews, including both book to screen adaptation, screen to book adaptation, popular and ‘classic’ adaptations, theatre and novel screen adaptations, television, animation, soundtracks, production issues and genres in literature on screen. Adaptation provides an international forum to theorise and interrogate the phenomenon of literature on screen from both a literary and film studies perspective.”

Continued on Page 5
Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

SOB DC Smith gives praise: I saw “Sherlock Holmes and the American Problem” (on May 8) and thought it was in every way better than Seattle Rep’s “Hound”, done a couple of years ago. Alarming from my point of view at least, as I read the program, I found that this play was put aside to do the “Hound.” Pity they didn’t skip the hackneyed dog story and go right for this one. Anyway for what it’s worth, I enthusiastically recommend seeing “The American Problem.”

Asks SOB Ann Milam: Laurie R. King has a new novel out, “The Murder of Mary Russell”—have you heard anything about it? According to the reviews, it’s mainly about Mrs. Hudson...Thanx!


SOB Margaret Nelson recommends:

• I’d like to recommended this book and DVDs. Ruth Goodman is a contemporary British historian who has researched the everyday things of life for the Tudor, Victorian, Edwardian and World War II periods. She has written several books including How to be a Victorian which is subtitled, “A dawn to dusk guide to Victorian life”. Al and I both found it a book we couldn’t put down. Ruth also has participated in several BBC re-enactment series on daily life during historic English periods including “Victorian Farm” and “Edwardian Farm”. We have seen “Victorian Farm”, which can be ordered on Amazon but only available for Region 2 DVD. The King County Library System, however, has “Edwardian Farm” (which we will assume is a Region 1 DVD) and “How to be a Victorian” in its collection. So if you would like insight into the daily life of the times of Doyle and Holmes, do consider these items.

• Al and I recently were at MOHAI in Seattle but walked around some of the wooden boats moored on Lake Union and next to the building. These boats are with the Center for Wooden Boats which is to the east of MOHAI. One of the boats was open for visits. It is the 1909 Lotus, a 90 foot long, two story boat and it is lovely. You can Google "Marine vessel Lotus" for a quick bit of its history which is Seattle-centric. We were able to walk through the sitting room, bedroom and bathrooms view the kitchen which is not open for visitors and then go upstairs to the top deck which has a roof and many comfy old time benches and chairs. My impression is that it looked like it belonged in a Renoir picture of people on such a boat. It would be a great place to take photos of people in historic dress. For more, go to: http://www.mlilotus.org/info.html. Volunteers man the boat, which can be rented for events and is also a part-time B&B; be sure to call the number found in the link to confirm you can get onboard—it was worth it for us.

From Peter Blau’s “Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press”:

• Umberto Eco died on Feb. 19. An esteemed semiotist, cultural critic and author, he became world-famous at the age of 48 when his first novel became a sensational best-seller: The Name of The Rose (1980) featured William of Baskerville, a Franciscan monk who arrived at an abbey in Italy in 1327 and found he needed to solve a series of murders, succeeding by using methods that were thoroughly Sherlockian. The novel was made into a movie (1986) starring Sean Connery and Christian Slater; the film has scenes not found in the novel, which makes it easy to detect whether Sherlockians who claim to have read the novel actually are remembering the movie. Patricia Guy's recent interesting interview with Umberto Eco for Publishers Weekly can be read online at: http://www.tinyurl.com/p87blj6.

• The Proceedings of the “Lippincott’s Legacy” conference are now available (the conference was held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha on May 29-30, 2015 to honor the 125th anniversary of the publication of "The Sign of the Four" and "The Picture of Dorian Gray"). The Proceedings are a 160-page booklet in the style and format of the original Lippincott's Monthly Magazine; cost is $10 postpaid (www.lippincottslegacy.org) and includes seven papers about Sherlock Holmes. It’s nicely done.

• “Baker Street Elementary: The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson” is a series of amusing comic strips created by Joe Fay, Steve Mason, and Rusty Mason; there were 46 installments in 2015, and you can see them at The Crew of the Barque Lone Star's web-site www.tinyurl.com/29mukf.

• Alexander Orlov and Phil Bergem have reported a new version of “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes”—a fake book... Continued on Page 4

From Kitsap Publishing publicist Anna Barton (Poulsbo, WA)

I have an author whose works I believe would interest your group.

Thomas Mengert is the author of The Confessions of Sherlock Holmes. Similar to the Harry Potter series, Mengert’s Sherlock Holmes series is one continuous story spread out over the course of 7 volumes. Since he recently finished Vol. 7, the series is now complete!

Below is a link from our website to the first volume—“The Wager at Reichenbach Falls”—in his Holmes series:


Thomas’ books are sold on Amazon:

http://www.amazon.com/Confessions-Sherlock-Holmes-Vol-Reichenbach-ebook/dp/B00RNAIYKS/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1462207926&sr=8-2&keywords=the+confessions+of+sherlock+holmes

Editor’s Note: PFL David & Terri met Thomas Mengert at the 2015 Sherlock Seattle Con, and hope to invite him to talk at one of our future Meetings!!
Ineffable Twaddle

A Sherlockian CryptoQuote

A Quiz by: SOB Charlie Cook

Can you solve it? Hint: “v” = “l” (elle)

“Wq wa mj qpk pwxpkaq wgomdqhbyk wb qpk hdq mj fkqkyqwmb qm ik hivk qm dkymxbwuk msq mj h bsgkd mj jhyqa cpwyp hdk wbywfbqhv hbf cpwyp twqhv. Mqpkdwcaw lmsd kbdxh lbf hqkqxwmb gsaq i fwaawohqkf wbqkhf mj ikwbx ymbykbqdhqkf.”

— Qpk Dkwxhqk Aeswdka (Osuuvk)

Answer is shown at the bottom of this Page!

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know  Continued from Page 3

...for people who want somewhere to hide their liquor. The “booze book” is from Bender Bound (www.tinyurl.com/q8swwap) and has attractive cover art as well; the company motto is “hiding booze in books since 2011”, and there’s a similar volume for admirers of Edgar Allan Poe.

• The Portsmouth City Council has unveiled a new proposal to create a “world-class Sherlock Holmes visitor attraction” in the city, with the cost estimated at £7 million, but noted that there’s no funding for the project. A similar plan was publicized last year (Feb 14 #8), with an estimated cost of £25 million, but the city was unable to find a financial backer.

• The Baker Street Irregulars Trust continues to expand its holdings and its website (www.bsitrust.org), where there’s much of interest, including current and past issues of its newsletter “For the Sake of the Trust”, reports on its annual dinners (click on [Images]), and links to some of its oral history (click on [Recordings]).

• If you go to Fyodor Pavlov’s website (fyodor pavlov.com) and click on “Shop” you can view three Sherlock Holmes cards.

The price is $5 each, with $3 for postage. But if you like the style, they are suitable for framing. Some of his other artwork may not be for the faint of heart.

• Conan Doyle & the Mysterious World of Light by Matt Wingett contains everything that ACD wrote that appeared in Light Magazine from 1887 to 1920. This is the first of a 3-book series.

• Michael Hardwick’s Prisoner of the Devil (1979) was...well received, and...after many years out-of-print...has a new edition, by Michael Hardwick, with Simon Haugh (New York: Meantime Books, 2016; 414 pp., $15.95)...(The) editor of the first edition explains in his intro that it was Haugh who provided the concept and plot of the pastiche, with Hardwick contributing both his Sherlockian sensibilities and knowledge of Doyle’s style. This new edition includes an alternative ending to the novel, discovered by Simon Haugh in his files on the project.

⇒ Received from both SOBs Dwight Holmes and Bill Seil: Go to these URLs to find out what the film “The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes” has to do with Scotland’s Loch Ness! https://www.facebook.com/skynews/videos/vb.164665060214766/1323061681041759/?type=2&theater & http://www.food.com/science/2016/04/14/drone-looking-for-loch-ness-monster-makes-weird-find.html?intcmp=hpff

⇒ A little bon mot from SOB Lauran Stevens: “Still, Americans do have problems with the English language, unless it is perfectly enunciated Downton Abbey. In the past, films such as Gregory’s Girl and Trainspotting needed voice surgery for stateside release. Yet we never change the often mumbling accents when their films or TV series play here.” The London Times Sunday Magazine 1/17/2016

⇒ Says SOB Charlie Cook: After reading Allen Nelson’s recent interesting article on trains in the Canon (see Page 2, Ineffable Twaddle, February 2016), I thought the SOBs—if they haven’t discovered them already—would find Edward Marston’s marvelous mystery series on the early British railroads (circa 1850) worth reading. It’s called “The Railway Detective” series, and there’s about a baker’s dozen of them so far. Check out the website “Stop You’re Killing Me” under “Marston” for the batting order.

Continued from Page 5
“The Last Man” is a pastiche written by Keith Hann, a Canadian Ph.D. candidate in military history. It is his first effort and it is worthy one. A major has discovered the diary written by his grandfather, a colonel under Wellington’s command at Waterloo. It tells of a cowardly act by an officer during battle, and someone has threatened the major demanding that he not publish the account but burn it. The major requests the help of the consulting detective who reads the diary, sends Watson to follow a suspect, assumes a couple of different disguises, and eventually discovers what really happened at the battle in question.

Finally, “The Adventure of the Single Footprint” by Robert Arthur is taken from the EQMM archives and involves the murder, made to look like a suicide, of Lawton Holmes, an arms dealer who sold defective ammunition to the military in WWII, thereby leading to several deaths. The Holmes estate has an electrified fence and the servants are beyond reproach. Lawton’s nephew, Jack Holmes, was severely wounded in the head in Italy and is now in an insane asylum a few miles away from the Holmes estate. He is delusional and believes himself to be a different Holmes—Sherlock, the hero of his boyhood fantasies. Lt. Baynes (see Wisteria Lodge) investigates and believes the death to be murder.

Since Jack believes him to be the policeman in the Canon, Baynes asks the narrator, a journalist, to pose as Watson and they go to “Sherlock” for his assistance in solving the crime. The only clues are a single half footprint and some damage to the library door of the estate. The “detective” does not fail them and explains how a man with two guns in his hand and no suspects could be murdered in such a secure setting.

These tales—like all of those that gain pages in EQMM—are well-written, clever plots with satisfactory outcomes. If you haven’t read any of them, you might start...perhaps with a February issue!

“Adapting Sherlock Holmes” 
...scholarship and research into the adaptation of Holmes and Watson. Each of these contributions looks not only at the great detective, but also of issues of wider interest with adaptation studies.

Contents (titles, authors and web links):

- Queer (Mis)recognition in the BBC’s Sherlock by Stephen Greer
  http://adaptation.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/11/30/adaptation.apu039.full
- Sherlock Holmes and the Leap of Faith: The Forces of Fandom and Convergence in Adaptations of the Holmes and Watson Stories by Benjamin Poore
  http://adaptation.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/09/22/adaptation.aps024.abstract
- Surveying the Post-Millennial Sherlock Holmes: A Case for the Great Detective as a Man of Our Times by Ashley D. Polasek
  http://adaptation.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/04/22/adaptation.apt006

Things to See, Buy...
The Sound of the Baskervilles

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Member News & Notes

SOBs attending our May 15, 2016 Regular Meeting, presided over by PFL David Haugen were:
Sheila Holtgrieve  Airy Maher  Terri Haugen
Lloyd Hedberg  Al Nelson  John Bagby
Cameron Brandon  Ann Milam  Donna Bagby
Lauren Messenger  Margaret Nelson
Melinda Michaelson  John Longenaugh

- What could have been a disaster was saved by PFL David, Melinda and Airy!!  Told that our meeting had been usurped by a Medicare seminar being held from 2 to 4 p.m., David asked all to figure out an alternative.  Melinda grabbed her smart phone, found the Top Pot Donuts downtown and called to make a reservation.  With rock in the background and the noise of numerous other customers, we gathered around the table to hear David holler the announcements and Airy conduct a magnificent discussion of LION!  Scorekeeper Terri decided that the noise prohibited proper record-keeping, so everyone tied for 1st place in the quizzing!  We got to meet new Members John & Donna Bagby for the first time, and Ann and John were back after lengthy absences.  Airy’s pal Justine joined us, as did the lovely Fran Martin, Prez of The Stormy Petrels of BC, and newly-wed Bob Coghill, an old pal of ours from Toronto who’s relocated to Vancouver with his new spouse! Welcome, All!!

- A dozen SOBs (Geoff Jefferie & Cara Cross, Airy with pal Justine, Jean Macdonald, Lauren Messenger, Cameron, Melinda, Marcia Marcy, Haugens, and long-missed Michael Philips!!!) attended the May 21 matinee at Bagley Wright Theatre for the Seattle Reps’ showing of “Sherlock Holmes and The American Problem”.  While SOB DC Smith had a higher opinion of the play (see his comment on Page 3, the first entry), the eight of us who had supper afterward at The Rock (at 3rd & Roy) gave it mixed reviews.  Most liked the scenery and staging and the actress playing Annie Oakley, and most agreed that the lead roles should have been reversed (Watson should have played Holmes; Holmes, Watson), few gave the play an all-round good score above a 3 (out of 5).  But all agreed that anything that puts Holmes & Watson before the general public is a good thing, and others in the audience clearly enjoyed themselves!

- Are you one of the very few who noticed something wrong in the May 2016 issue of Ineffable Twaddle?  Was it a dastardly error, or was it a test of your observation skills??  Take another look at last month’s issue!!  Then, peak at the answer (below)!!

Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, June 19, 1:30 p.m. at Queen Anne Library, Seattle
See details on P. 2

Annual Dr. John H. Watson Picnic, Saturday, July 16, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at SeaHurst Park, Burien.
All are welcome!!

Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, July 17, 1:30 p.m. at Queen Anne Library, Seattle

Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, August 21, 1:30 p.m. at Queen Anne Library, Seattle

Regular Monthly Meeting, Sunday, September 18, 1:30 p.m. at Queen Anne Library, Seattle

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 3rd Sunday of each month.  Location of the meetings may vary.  Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: “The Masters’ Dinner” celebrating the meeting of Holmes and Watson (March), “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 or to renew your membership, send your check for dues—$20 for individuals, $30 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left.