



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 28,
Issue 1

January 2009

2009 Master's Dinner

Join Us for Holmes' 155th Birthday Celebration!!

Date: Saturday, January 3

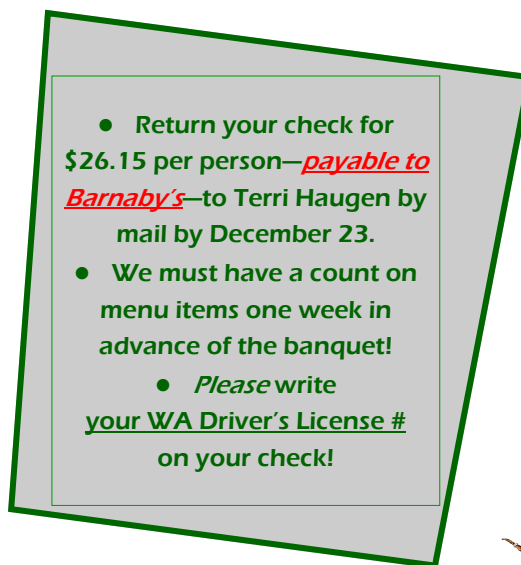
Time: 2:00 p.m.

Cost: \$26.15 per person*

Place: Barnaby's, 16401 West Valley Hwy,
Tukwila

*There'll be toasts, and handouts including
our 2008 Beaten's Christmas Annual, and
good food and lots of fun!!*

* Cost includes tax & tip and your choice of 5 entrées
(prime rib, Hawaiian chicken, Kensington Club
steak, King salmon and vegetable Alfredo), soup
or fresh salad bar, and coffee, tea or soda
(alcoholic beverages are additional).



- Return your check for
\$26.15 per person—payable to
Barnaby's—to Terri Haugen by
mail by December 23.
- We must have a count on
menu items one week in
advance of the banquet!
 - Please write
your WA Driver's License #
on your check!

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Remember:

Our **Annual Dessert Buffet**
immediately follows The Master's
Dinner on **January 3**.

Driving directions to Jean Macdonald's
home will be provided that night.

And, please bring a treat to share!!



Winner Named for 2009 "Footprints" Award

With the precedent set last December, Treasurer Al Nelson was recognized at the December 8 Meeting and, with deserved compliments and a list of good deeds, nominated **SOB Margie Deck** for our 2009 "The Footprints of a Gigantic Hound" award.

Someone quickly called for closing the nominations, the vote was taken, and so Margie was unanimously named the new Hound award-winner!! Congratulations, **Margie!!!**

Meet Margie and hear more kudos of her contributions at The Master's Dinner, of course!!



Hank & Margie Deck

Save These Dates

The SOBs will attend two performances of Sherlockian plays in early 2009!! *As is our custom, please contact the theatre yourself to reserve and pay for your own tickets!!*

☞ "The Final Toast", Saturday, February 28, 3:00 p.m., The Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Tacoma, \$34 (\$22, seniors), (800) 291-7593. *Supper follows at Hank & Margie Deck's home.*

☞ "The Crucifer of Blood", Saturday, March 7, 2:00 p.m., Centerstage Theatre, Federal Way, \$25 (\$20, seniors), (253) 661-1444. *Refreshments follow at Al & Margaret Nelson's home.*



Examine First Half of SIGN for January Meeting

The January 12th Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at 6:00 p.m. at T.S. McHugh's Public House, 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910.

Come early, order dinner and catch up with other SOBs! Many arrive as early as 5:00.

Says PFL David: As this novel is lengthy but has no "long boring part", attendees at the December Meeting decided we'll cover it over two Meetings. *At the January Meeting, we'll discuss and quiz on the first 6 chapters; at the February Meeting, we'll discuss and quiz on the last 6 chapters.*

This second published chronicle by Dr. Watson originally appeared in *Lippincott's Magazine* with the subtitle, "The Problem of the Sholtos", but was later organized into chapters for novelization.

The Sign of Four is actually comprised of two tales: The death of Bartholomew Sholto, along with the subsequent theft of the Agra Treasure; and the romance between Watson and their client, Mary Morstan.

Don't miss the fun, as we get several opportunities to view Holmes' attitude toward woman, and Watson woos Mary with the same ardor that Holmes uses to track down the killers!!

Drawing of the Andaman Penal Colony Headquarters, made in 1872 —a time when Jonathan



Small was incarcerated there. Sholto might have entered this building on occasion as part of his prison job.

The Sign of Four

Interesting Facts From SIGN:

- ☞ This story contains the only mention of Watson's elder brother, who is the source of John's middle name: Hamish.
- ☞ Did you catch the fact that two wooden-legged people are mentioned in this tale?
- ☞ Senegambia is a region of western Africa around the Senegal and Gambia rivers.

A Few Thoughts by a Guy Who Made a Living Out of Observing Absurdity in Action

For those of us who enjoy silliness, wordplay, absurdity and punditry, we couldn't let the passing of stand-up comedian George Carlin go without notice. Carlin, whose long career was distinguished by pointed social commentary that placed him on the cultural cutting edge, died on June 22 of heart failure in Santa Monica. Enjoy these!!!

- Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
- By and large, language is a tool for concealing the truth.
- Don't sweat the petty things, and don't pet the sweaty things.
- Dusting is a good example of the futility of trying to put things right. As soon as you dust, the fact of your next dusting has already been established.
- In comic strips, the person on the right always speaks first.
- Most people work just hard enough not to get fired and get paid just enough money not to quit.
- "Frisbeetarianism" is the belief that when you die, your soul goes up on the roof and gets stuck.
- One tequila, two tequila, three tequila,

floor.

- What does it mean to pre-board? Do you get on before you get on?
- When you step on the brakes, your life is in your foot's hands.
- Have you ever noticed that anybody driving slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac?
- I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "Where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.
- Some people see things that are and ask, "Why?" Some people dream of things that never were and ask, "Why not?" Some people have to go to work and don't have time for all that.
- I'm completely in favor of the separation of Church and State. My idea is that these two institutions screw us up enough on their own, so both of them together is certain death.
- May the forces of evil become confused on the way to your house.

Christopher Morley —who wrote the Introduction to the Doubleday version of *The Canon*— lives on:

Source: Tacoma News Tribune



Robert Downey Jr. gets clocked in the noggin by his 7-foot *Sherlock Holmes* co-star. This is why skeptics said the classic story *Sherlock Holmes and the Fist-fight With Yoo Ming* was unfilmable.

Entertainment Weekly, 12/12/08

Remarkable Collection at U of M

Though now retired, SOB Ed Funk still gets mailings from the U of Minnesota Foundation, whose last mailing included an item on the bequest to the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the U from Allen Mackler, "a noted Sherlockian and avid collector". The Collections now include Mackler's full-scale model of Holmes' sitting room, which now resides in Wilson Library. The gift also included a library of 5,000 to 6,000 books, original Sherlockian art, and an endowment to fund a curator for the Collections.

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• **From SOB Margaret Nelson:** Through (a woman at work), I found out about **Northwest Costume Shop**, 2315—6th Avenue S.W., Tacoma, (253) 383-4700. Mary Johnson and her husband own the whole building; they have the shop on the 1st floor, but on the 2nd floor, they are recreating a ballroom, Sherlock Holmes' flat and a pub. Allen stopped in and learned they supply local theatre productions with costumes and offer a variety of rental options.

• **From SOB Geoff Jeffery:** 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Arthur Conan Doyle, and to celebrate his life and works, **Harvard's Houghton Library will host a symposium May 7 to 9, 2009 and mount a major exhibition May 4 to August 15, 2009** "to honor the man whose enduring contributions to the post-Victorian world include the creation of modern detective fiction and the genre's most famous literary character."

• **From SOB Treasurer Allen Nelson:** ⇨ **"The Victorian Society"**, based in England, has a monthly magazine I'm subscribing to. The group is pricey to join, but their cause is a good one: Promoting the preservation of Victorian and Edwardian architecture throughout England and Wales. To learn more, go to: www.victorian-society.org.uk.

⇨ In researching British money for my *Beaten's* article, I found a really neat website: www.victorianweb.org. It has all kinds of neat historical stuff and links to an even vaster source.

• Seattle Mystery Bookshop has **John Hall's latest, Sherlock Holmes at the Raffles Hotel** (Breese trade PB original, \$18.50) in stock. Now retired, Watson fears Holmes will stagnate without cases to keep his mind sharp. A vacation is what these two need, to Singapore! Once there, settled in their hotel, the game, once more, is afoot. For more: Seattle Mystery Bookshop, 117 Cherry Street, Seattle, WA

98104, (206) 587-5737, www.seattlemystery.com

• **From Cenarth Fox in Australia:** I have **2 Sherlockian CDs and 5 Sherlockian books** available. The books are about the Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes and have won rave reviews; details at www.twit.biz. The CDs are explained in **the following advert**. Overseas delivery is no problem, and PayPal is available.

The Real Sherlock Holmes

A three-hander, a comedy/drama about the amazing life and work of Arthur Conan Doyle and his 'friend' Mr. Holmes. Rave reviews.

I've greatly enjoyed reading The Real Sherlock Holmes - now I want to see it performed! May you go from strength to strength!

Roger Johnson, The Sherlock Holmes Society of London
An utter delight!, a very poignant script and performance.
Classic Specialties, USA

It stars Sir Arthur, his mother Mary, to whom he wrote some 1500 letters and his greatest creation, Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Discover the man behind the world's greatest consulting detective. Each CD only A\$19.50 post free—www.foxplays.com

Sherlock Stock and Barrel

A five-hander, a musical comedy where 5 actors play 73 roles in a hilarious staging of 25 tales from the Canon. Great reviews. Enjoy *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four*, *The Speckled Band*, *The Blue Carbuncle* and many more.

Cenarth Fox would have to be one of our most knowledgeable writers on the life and works of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock Stock and Barrel is a roller coaster ride of the stories peppered with songs and comedy. A very enjoyable piece.

John Gunn—Curtain Up

If the Reduced Shakespeare Company were to tackle Sherlock Holmes the result might be something like this but it would probably lack Cen Fox's profound knowledge of the Holmesian Canon. Hugely enjoyable. The show is played at a frantic pace, is dramatic, tuneful, ingenious, and above all, very funny.

Roger Johnson, The Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Both CDs only A\$29.50 post free—www.foxplays.com

And, The Winner Is...

The 1st place prize in our **Second Short Story-Writing Contest** went to current

SOB Treasurer **Allen Nelson**. Writers this year were challenged to complete an essay begun by Nacho Ospina prior to his untimely death in May 2008.

Entries were required to complete—but not alter—the first 645 words of Nacho's tale, titled "A Night of Horror".

At the December 8 Meeting, Editor Terri presented Al with a big hug and a certificate honoring his 1st place achievement, and the now-finished pastiche will appear in our 2008 *Beaten's Christmas Annual*.



PFL David (left) presents to Allen Nelson in November 2007 the 1st Place Prize in our *First Short Story-Writing Contest*

Test Your Knowledge of Great Britain, Part IV

Climate Source: *The Daily Telegraph (London)*

1) The best thing about the British climate is: a) at least it isn't worse; b) it gives the British something to talk about; c) there isn't one, it's ghastly; d) it's getting warmer.

2) The worst thing about the British climate is: a) there isn't one; it's marvelous; b) it gives the British something to talk about; c) for some inexplicable reason, it isn't suited to our railway infrastructure; d) it's getting warmer.

3) You should carry a brolly when you go out in Britain: a) just in case it rains; b) it's more likely to be sunny if you do; c) do you mean an umbrella? d) it makes you look suave and sophisti-

cated, especially if your brolly has the name of an expensive sporting event you haven't been to printed on it.

4) Tornadoes happen in Britain: a) more often than anywhere else in the world; b) on quiet news days when there isn't anything else to put in the papers; c) but not anywhere near us; d) and the odd thing is that they never hit caravan parks.

5) Global warming will mean: a) less Britain; b) more rain; c) less rain; d) more moaning.

Parts I, II and III of this Test appeared in the April and July, 2007 and the December, 2008 issues of *Ineffable Twaddle*.



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The Sound
of the
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By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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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

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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 at 6:00 p.m., 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

- **January 3**
Master's Dinner,
2:00 p.m.,
Barnaby's in
Tukwila;
dessert buffet
immediately
follows at Jean
Macdonald's
- **January 12**
Regular
Monthly
Meeting, T.S.
McHugh's
- **February 9**
Regular
Monthly
Meeting, T.S.
McHugh's
- **February 28**
"The Final
Toast" play in
Tacoma
- **March 7**
"The Crucifer of
Blood" play in
Federal Way

Member News & Updates

Those attending the November Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

Al Nelson	Marge Nelson	Barbara Nelson
John Nelson	Lauran Stevens	Terri Haugen
Margie Deck	Hank Deck	Herb Leake
Ed Funk	Joyce Funk	Paul Williams
James Romnes	Ginie Romnes	

News & Notes:

- What a gift to see **Paul** back among us!! And, happily, **Ginie & James** made the trek from the southeast end too!

- The **cookie exchange** was an astounding success and a bit of a frenzy, as all the cookie-makers doled out their wares. Not surprisingly, it was moved/seconded and unanimously passed that our December Meeting will henceforth include a cookie exchange!! Yippee!!

- A bit of good news is that **Joyce** is much better after a recent (and nearly fatal) bout with illness!! Welcome back, Joyce (and **Ed**)!

- Forgoing a quiz on **BLUE**, since we know it so very well, PFL David led us in a good discussion.

Interesting facts and remarks included:

- ↳ When David commented on Holmes' frequent use of the term "friend" in this story, **Barbara** noted it certainly wasn't a term Holmes would toss around lightly. Added **Lauran**, Holmes says at one point that Watson is his only friend.

- ↳ **Ginie** noted, as no one has previously mentioned,

Watson's use of the term "jollification", which led to the moniker given our annual December celebration!!

- ↳ **David** was thrilled to be able to quote a line or two from the story, and to add his sickeningly favorite, "And, don't call me 'Shirley'!"

- ↳ **Dr. Ed** told us that intellect is not based on the size of the brain but on the capacity to take in and store knowledge of every day life. Amen to that!

- ↳ And, **Paul** gave us a terrific imitation of Holmes laughing "...in the hearty, noiseless fashion which was peculiar to him."

- **Sad Times 1: Louise Fry** notified us on December 8 that **Sam's** cancer has progressed, and he is now under hospice care at home in Olympia. No calls or visits **please**, but cards and letters are most welcome! Their P.O. Box address is shown on the SOB Membership list. • **Sad Times 2: Kay Chelemedos'** Christmas card, received on December 9, told us **Peter** is making a good recovery from his heart attack...heart attack???!!!! Seems he was in hospital for 8 days in late October, followed by rest at their daughter's home.

⇒ *Our prayers and good wishes go out to both the Fry and the Chelemedos families!!*

- **Karen Murdock** sent holiday greetings and news that she was invested into The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes in November. Kudos!!

- If you would like to offer a formal toast at the Master's Dinner? Please e-mail PFL David at: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com. He just needs to know your subject, so there's no repetition. 🍷