



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



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From Reichenbach to Tumwater

"It was on the third of May" that Holmes and Watson arrived in Meiringen and the catastrophe at Reichenbach was played out.

Our **Annual Wreath Throw**—to mourn the "death" of Holmes and celebrate the fact that he never really died—is **Saturday, May 2**.

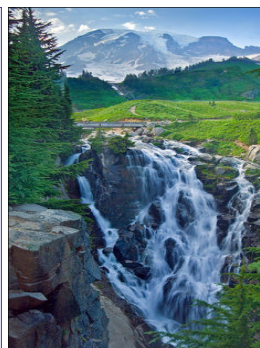
We'll meet in the park next to Falls Terrace Restaurant along the Deschutes River in Tumwater at **11:30 a.m.** and walk from there to the Falls for the wreath throw, photos and champagne toast. As is usual, lunch will follow immediately (*approximately 1:00 p.m.*) at Falls Terrace Restaurant.

We anticipate excellent spring weather, and the annual rhododendron show may also be on display! So, come join us!!



Driving directions to the Annual Wreath Throw:

- If northbound on I-5, take Exit 103; follow Deschutes Way SW north (straight) for about one block to The Falls Terrace Restaurant on your right.
- If southbound on I-5, take Exit 103; stay straight to go onto 2nd Avenue SW, turn left onto Custer Way SE (which takes you back over I-5). Turn right onto Boston St SE, then left onto Deschutes Way SW. The Restaurant is on your left.
- The entrance to the park is on the south side of the Restaurant.



Prior to 2001, our re-enactment of the events at Reichenbach Falls occurred at various waterfalls on Mt. Rainier including Myrtle Falls (above).

Librarian's Corner:

By: Verne Johnson

Here's the promised review of *Sherlock Holmes, The Montana Chronicles* by SOB Terri Haugen.

Sherlock Holmes, The Montana Chronicles by John H. Watson, M.D., edited by John S. Fitzpatrick (Riverbend Publishing, 2008, ISBN 978-1-931832-96-0, \$12.95) is a 239-page trade paperback with a not too far-fetched premise for the tardy publication of its century-old manuscripts. Editor Fitzpatrick is contacted by the elderly librarian of his childhood who's found an old safe in the Hearst Free Library in his hometown of Anaconda, MT, filled with manuscripts sent by Dr. John H. Watson in 1899 to the then-librarian.

Current librarian Marian Geil has chosen to contact our Mr. Fitzpatrick not only because of their long acquaintance but also because of his love of mysteries and the legend that his granddad had worked, as the local sheriff, with none other than Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson!

I decided to read the last of the book's four tales first, because the title, "The Mysterious Woman", caught my attention. It reminded me of a 1940s Bette Davis film involving mistaken identity between sisters. The mystery turned out to be easily solved, but there was a twist at the end and the tale is well-told.

The third tale, "The Ghosts of Red Lion", taught me more about mining than I'll ever need to know at

a cocktail party. Two disturbers were Watson's claim that Holmes would probably ingest cocaine in order to stay awake during a nighttime stake-out (*this is repeated in "The Tammany Affair"*) and...a first for me...much ado about Watson's use of the privy! But it's a good yarn, with a motive of revenge behind the mystery.

"The Opera House Murder", the lead story, was very good indeed! It had enough foreshadowing to have the solution make sense and enough red herrings to keep me from deducing too early "whodunit"!!

My last read, though the 2nd in the book, "The Tammany Affair", involves the racehorse of Marcus Daly, a real-life fixture in Montana mining in the late 19th century who was known as the "copper king". Holmes gives Watson a really good compliment when—trying to convince Watson to leave London on behalf of a racehorse in Montana—he says, "You've forgotten more about horseflesh than I'll ever know. I expect you'll be critical to the investigation." This is also a set-up for another of those cases where Holmes is working outside our view, providing for a surprise ending that has a particularly harsh impact on Watson.

Overall, I give this effort an A-, with demerits for misuse of cocaine and potty-talk!!

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Library Works Like a Charm!

If you'd like to borrow something from the SOB's Lending Library, talk to Verne Johnson at a Meeting or e-mail your request to him at verne_a_johnson@yahoo.com. He will bring the item to the next Meeting; you keep it for one month, and return it at the next Meeting.



See Who Gets Unmasked in A Case of Identity!

The May 11, 2009 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.

IDEN is a case dated variously as having taken place in '87, '88, '89 or '90, but Watson later (REDH) dates it by implication in 1890. It brings to light Holmes' investigations into the characteristics of individual typewriters. Small wonder that the Yard, the French police and ultimately the FBI picked up on the machine and its demonstrable relationship to crime!

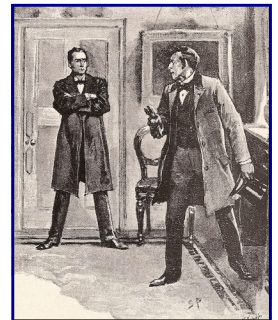
Says PFL David: The anxiety of a plumber's daughter over the disappearance of her fiancé would seem to offer Holmes little interest. The circumstances of her plight are not even new, as two parallels lie in his indexes. Yet, the rambling and seemingly inconsequential narrative of Miss Mary Sutherland, a large woman in a large hat with a large feather, provokes no sign of impatience in Holmes.

Find out what really grabs Holmes in A Case of Identity!



"Glancing about him like a rat in a trap."

A Case of Identity



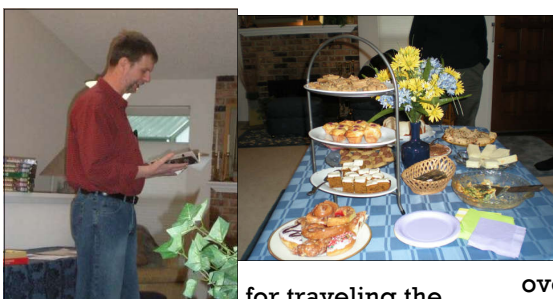
Anniversary Tea a Rollicking Good Time!



Twenty-nine might not be such an important birthday to some, but the SOBs celebrated theirs royally at the Annual Tea & Auction on March 28! Well-wishes came to us from Virginia and long-time Member Kathleen Dunlap, and from the Bay Area and newly rejoined SOBs Greta & Ray DeGroat.

Jody Holm won one of the door prizes

tibles (i.e., good eats!) along with punch, coffee, and, of course, tea.



for traveling the greatest distance...from Bellingham. Marge Nelson got the other door prize...a very small fortune in British coins donated by the PF-more.



There was much spirited bidding and the Club

netted over \$200 for the treasury. Barbara Nelson won the right to be PFL for the June Meeting with a bid of \$1.00 (\$1.00??!!). Her intent was to gift this *marvelous opportunity* to someone who'd like to chair a meeting...and spell PFL David for a month! Are there any takers? If so, please, please contact David!!



When not bidding on items, attendees were treated to many comes-

Photos courtesy of Jody Holm



To all my dear SOBs, I wish I could join you for the festivities. I send my warmest wishes and happy smile to all who gather. Big hugs to you and Seattle! Much love,

Kathleen Dunlap

Bravi, SOBs!!! Keep keeping the faith as that fixed point on the north western horizon!! Yours in Conan's Canon,

Ray DeGroat, BSI



"Eureka! Auction" Benefits Old Town Tacoma Museum

SOB Margie Deck, director of

the Job Carr Cabin Museum in Old Town Tacoma, tells us their 5th annual "Eureka! Auction & Dinner" is Friday, May 1 at the Fircrest Golf Course.

Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and the cost of \$75 includes dinner, drinks and the auction of 150-items having emphasis on "experience events".

For more, contact Margie at (253) 627-5405 or

mdeck@jobcarmuseum.org.

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• From SOB Bill Seil:

⇒ The upcoming movie 'Sherlock Holmes' won't go up against the end of the world. The re-imagining of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective has moved its release date from November 19, 2009, where it would have faced off against the film '2012', to December 25," *Variety* says.

⇒ Philip Jose Farmer passed away on February 25th. Though primarily a science fiction writer, he also wrote stories in which both Holmes and Tarzan appeared, such as "The Adventure of the Peerless Peer." He also wrote stories featuring Ralph Wau Wau, a Sherlockian act-alike super-intelligent Alsatian.

⇒ Did you know the late **Natasha Richardson**, daughter of actress Vanessa Redgrave and director Tony Richardson, starred as Violet Hunter in the 1985 version of "The Copper Beeches" with Jeremy Brett?

• From Peter Blau:

⇒ **Dust and Shadow** by Lyndsay Faye (*Simon & Schuster*, \$25) is a 225-page mystery about the pursuit of Jack the Ripper by Holmes & Watson. It is well written with an excellent sense of time and atmosphere.

⇒ The **2nd Edition of Chris Redmond's Quotations From Baker Street**, first published in 1994, is now available from Chris (523 Westfield Drive, Waterloo, ON N2T 2E1, Canada; 52 pp., \$10 postpaid [US or CA] and \$12 [elsewhere]). It's an uncommon place book, offering a wide range of interesting, amusing, and occasionally outrageous quotations from Sherlockians, Doyleans, and others. You get to choose your own favorites...one of them might be: "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client" is an unusual Sherlock Holmes story in two ways: it contains no mystery, and it is drenched in sex."

⇒ **Where To Spend Your Bailout Money:** Catalog 39 from Biblioctopus offers two ACD manuscripts, "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" for \$300,000 and "His Last Bow" for \$125,000; a Sidney Paget original portrait of Holmes (for \$45,000); and a signed limited edition of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (1953) for \$4,500. Biblioctopus is at 120 South Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90212, (310) 271-2173.

⇒ Dynamite Entertainment has announced a new comic-book series, "The Trial of Sherlock Holmes", due in May, written by Leah Moore and John Reppion, with cover artist John Cassaday and interior artist Aaron Campbell. More: www.dynamiteentertainment.com.

⇒ Donald Thomas' **Sherlock Holmes and the King's Evil** (*New York: Pegasus Books*, 2009; 324 pp., \$25.00) is the latest in his series of pastiches, with five stories that have Holmes involved with Arthur Saville (otherwise found in a story by Oscar

Wilde), blackmail and forgery perpetrated by Charles Augustus Howell (who was an inspiration for Charles Augustus Milverton in Doyle's story about the worst man in London), the siege of Sidney Street, and two other adventures.

• From Roger Johnson:

⇒ In **The New Finding Sherlock's London** by Thomas Bruce Wheeler (*iUniverse*, 1663 Liberty Drive, Bloomington, IN 47403, USA: \$22.95), the author has revised and expanded his original guide to more than 300 sites, each of whose significance is clearly and pithily stated. The book can be used in various ways: Visit the locations of a specific adventure, explore the sites near each of ninety-nine railway or Underground stations, or take any of six walking tours in the footsteps of Holmes and Watson

⇒ **Close to Holmes: A Look at the Connections Between Historical London, Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** by Alistair Duncan (*MX Publishing*, 335 Princess Park Manor, Royal Drive, London N11 3GX; £9.99 or \$19.95) is, I think, the first to give equal consideration to the places associated with Doyle. Reading it, we feel that we're in the company of a knowledgeable, enthusiastic and witty friend. I contributed the foreword because the book is both valuable and a pleasure to read. As much a historical and literary exploration as a travel guide, *Close to Holmes* doesn't compete with *The New Finding Sherlock's London* (above); instead, the two complement each other.

⇒ An urgent appeal has been launched to find out if Sherlock Holmes fans across the world will pledge support for a project to secure the future of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's home, **Undershaw at Hindhead**—built by Doyle in 1897 so that his invalid wife Louise could benefit from Hindhead's healthy climate during her convalescence. But despite its history and inspirational location, in recent years it has fallen on hard times and is now in danger of being divided up and extended for private residential use. • Until 2004 Undershaw was a hotel and restaurant but recent plans for a hotel, wedding venue and museum fell through. The Victorian Society tried unsuccessfully in 2007 to have the house awarded Grade 1 status but this was rejected by the Secretary of State. • The torch has now passed to the "Hindhead Together" partnership to safeguard the property. Members (of the partnership) believe Undershaw could represent a focal point for a Hindhead renaissance following the opening of an A3 tunnel and removal of the existing A3. • No planning decisions have yet been made, so the "Hindhead Together" partnership is anxious to explore whether there is interest in preserving Undershaw as a "Conan Doyle" centre, welcoming visitors to the world of Sherlock Holmes, the extensive Heathlands of the Surrey Hills area of outstanding natural beauty, and the Devils Punchbowl.



SPOTTED by Geoff Jeffery

The "Walkabouts with Karla Stover" column

in the March 2009 issue of "Senior Scene" reports that in **June 1923 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was in Tacoma**, speaking at the Scottish Rite Cathedral at 5 South "G" Street (now the Tacoma Bible Presbyterian Church West Reformed Seminary). • Stover gives a brief bio of ACD, telling of his "alcoholic epileptic father", his service as a "field hospital senior physician", and his knighting in 1902. She goes on to outline the spiritualist movement of the mid-19th century. • Interspersing her historic summary with a description of Doyle's writing career, however, she blunders... making the rest of her reportage suspect...when claiming that STUD introduced not only Holmes and Watson, but also Moriarty and Adler!! • On stage, says Stover, Doyle "claimed to have encountered extoplasm, a viscous substance said to emerge from mediums, and used by spirits to assume visible form." He said that the spirits to whom he spoke "told him that after death, the human spirit falls into a three-day sleep in order to obliterate impressions from the material world. It re-awoke in an afterworld that was less material than the current one, and much more beautiful. There, each person followed his heart's desire in the arts and continued to develop...". • In Tacoma at the time, one of the most often-discussed crimes was of a couple who disappeared from their South 13th and L Street home 18 months earlier. Doyle told a reporter that many mysterious cases had been solved with the help of a medium, and gave the example of an Oregon man who'd helped London police find the location of a dead man's body. But Doyle said he could not help with the Tacoma case because he "lacked a medium's powers". • Says Stover, when asked about his frequent trips to the States, Doyle said he came "just for fun".



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By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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President: David Haugen, PFL, SOB, PSC
Treasurer: Allen Nelson
Secretary/Editor: Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Webmaster & Historian: Lloyd Hedberg, WFL
(lloyd@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Website: www.soundofthebaskervilles.com

Direct correspondence to:

3606 Harborcrest Court N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981 USA
Phone: 253-853-5187 • Fax: 253-853-5187
Email: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com

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

- May 2
Annual Wreath Throw; meet at 11:30 a.m.; lunch at 1:00 p.m. at Falls Terrace Restaurant, Tumwater
- May 11
Regular Monthly Meeting, T.S. McHugh's
- May 25
Memorial Day (USA)
- June 8
Regular Monthly Meeting, T.S. McHugh's
- July 13
Regular Monthly Meeting, T.S. McHugh's

Member News & Updates

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

Margie Deck	Hank Deck	Terri Haugen
Lauran Stevens	Paul Williams	Stephen Adkins
Verne Johnson	Al Nelson	Ed Funk
Joyce Funk	Don Mathews	

News & Notes:

- We were happy to see **Don** back among us again, and thrilled that he and **Paul** have found house-sharing working for them.
- **John & Barbara Nelson** had to miss the Meeting because of Barb's recent shoulder surgery! Get well soon!!
- Thanks to Marge Nelson we circulated cards to send to SOBs **Avis Jobrak** and husband **Lare Mischo** who've had just a darned awful spring! We wish them brighter days ahead!!
- Following PFL David's mention of Bill Seil's note about Natasha Richardson (see "Things to See, Buy, Do & Know", Page 3), **Margie** said that Richardson was excellent in her Sherlockian role and that the teleplay stayed true to the story.
- **Don** says he read Edward Hoch's story in the March issue of Ellery Queen Magazine, which put Holmes on the Titanic. He felt it was an inferior piece compared to Hoch's previous works.
- Our discussion of **REDH** had everyone agreeing that it's definitely among ACD's best!

- Regarding PFL David's mention of attempts to save ACD's home Undershaw (see "Things to See, Buy, Do & Know", Page 3), **Al** e-mailed these comments: "I didn't think about it at the time but our discussion of Undershaw and its failure to merit protected status rang a bell as I thought about the meeting last night. We once stayed in a hotel in Grasmere that had been converted from a house. It was a Faulty Towers-type of experience. The interior was so chopped up you had to go through seven doors and up and down several small flights of stairs to get to your room from the reception area; and it was not a large house either! All that may remain of ACD's residence may be the outer shell, and who knows what modifications have been made on that. As a member of the Victorian Society, I may search their archives and report further on what they do in regards to the house at the next meeting."

- **YOUR 2009 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOW PAST DUE:** The end of March was the due date for your 2009/2010 Club dues. If you have not already paid them, please send the money to Treasurer Al Nelson ASAP.

- The **Seattle Book & Paper Show** (formerly "The Seattle Antiquarian Book Fair") will be held May 30 and 31 at The Seattle Center Exhibition Hall (Mercer Street at 3rd Avenue North). It's moved from October and been renamed because it now includes prints, maps, posters, photos and other ephemera. The hours are: Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 at the door and covers both days.

