



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



Holiday Fun Begins at The Jollification!

Our Annual Will Crakes Memorial Jollification is Saturday, **December 13**, again at the cozy 1890s home of John and Barbara Nelson in Shoreline. Festivities begin at **1:00 p.m.**

Whip up your favorite dessert or snack and bring it along to share! Your contribution of desserts, snacks, and beverages are anticipated and most welcome! *Try to make it "finger food" too, if you can, and bring along that special serving piece if needed!*

If you have not attended this event before, we encourage you to start! It is a great way to begin your holiday celebrations in a fun

Directions to Nelsons': The John Nelsons' are at 2531 N.W. 195th Place, Shoreline. To get there, drive west from Aurora (Hwy 99) on N.W. 185th Street and turn left on N.W. 195th Place. Theirs is the third house from the corner and is a large barn-style home on the left. If further is needed, please call John and Barbara at (206) 546-3339.



If you need a ride, please make yourself known, or call someone who lives nearby!!

Photo Exhibit Features Mount Rainier

THE TACOMA NEWS TRIBUNE Published: October 2, 2008

The National Parks Conservation Association is hosting an exhibit of work by Seattle photographer Doug Hebenthal featuring Mount Rainier National Park.

"More Than A Mountain" is a look at landscapes and wildlife of the park. Mount Rainier is home to acres of wildflower meadows, diverse wildlife, inland rainforests and historic structures, said an association news release. Visitors to the exhibition also will learn what they can do to help protect the future of the park.

The free exhibit runs through December 31 at the National Parks Conservation Association Parks Information Center and Gallery, 313-A First Avenue South, in Seattle's Pioneer Square district, across the street from Elliott Bay Book Company.

The gallery is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays; and 6 to 8 p.m. during First Thursday Art Walk on December 4.

And the Sherlockian reference? Myrtle Falls at Mount Rainier—pictured at right—has been the site of numerous SOB Annual Wreath Throws, Picnics and visits on periodic treks up our beautiful and magnificent Mountain!!



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Inside this issue:

*Holiday Fun Begins at
The Jollification!* 1

*Photo Exhibit Features
Mount Rainier* 1

*It's Not Christmas
Without The Blue
Carbuncle!* 2

*If Prince William
Lands on Your Lawn* 2
**Contributed by
Margaret Nelson**

*Things to See, Buy,
Do & Know* 3

*Test Your Knowledge
of Great Britain,
Part III* 3

*Member News &
Updates* 4



*Hooping your
holidays are wrapped
up in the prettiest of
packages!!*

It's Not Christmas Without The Blue Carbuncle!

The December 8th 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.

Tracy's *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana* tells us this case is variously dated as having taken place in 1887, 1889 and 1890. It was ranked 3rd on the list of favourite stories of the readers of the *Baker Street Journal* in 1959!

Says PFL David: We have the theft of a remarkably *unusual* gem stone, a remarkably *cheap* reward offered for its return, and a remarkably *strange* passage of that gem from its owner to Sherlock Holmes.

Watson would later recall this case (COPP) as having begun with a mere whim. Regardless, it's our Christmas gift to ourselves!! So enjoy our annual holiday visit to The Adventure of The Blue Carbuncle!



"Beside the couch was a wooden chair, and on the angle of the back hung a very seedy and disreputable hard-felt hat, much the worse for wear, and cracked in several places. A lens and a forceps lying upon the seat of the chair suggested that the hat had been suspended in this manner for the purpose of examination."



**The Adventure of
The Blue Carbuncle**

If Prince William Lands on Your Lawn

Prince William's April landing of his helicopter on his girlfriend's lawn raised the question of the proper protocol to be followed on such an occasion. That question is answered in the following excerpted article:

By Oliver Pritchett, www.telegraph.co.uk

People often ask me: "What is the protocol if Prince William unexpectedly lands his Chinook helicopter in my back garden?" There are certainly matters of protocol involved here, but also constitutional issues, points of etiquette and even questions of horticulture.

If the Prince is on official business—for example, the opening of a nightclub—the occasion is likely to be formal and he may be accompanied by a number of courtiers such as the Master of the Cocktails and the Hereditary Keeper of the Slammers.

You may be warned of his imminent landing by a herald delivering the traditional parchment scroll which is the Royal Flight Plan, but it is more likely that the first you know is when you spot the Chinook making its descent.

It's a sensible precaution for gentlemen to keep their morning suits in the garden shed so they can change into them at a moment's notice. Ladies should do the same with their garden party outfits and hats. Many people now do their gardening in formal dress so they are ready at all times. If you do this, be sure to remove your gardening gloves before shaking hands with the Royal party. A special form of bowing is observed when greeting the Royal Chinook; this is a variation of the running, stooping crouch. Ladies do the same, instead of curtsying. In the down-draught from the helicopter's rotors, ladies should hold their hats on with the left hand; those of the rank of marchioness or above may use the right hand.

It may be that the visit is less formal and the Prince is simply on his way to a stag party. In this case, the dress code is less strict and suits may be worn, but not medals. This is also where some

constitutional issues come into play, notably a statute of 1515 which dealt with the deer-hunting activities of Henry VIII and which has never been repealed. Constitutional lawyers are generally agreed that a stag party is the same as a deer hunt for the purposes of this statute. It calls on loyal subjects of the king who are forest dwellers to make clearings where he and his party can relax in the course of the hunt. The modern version of making a clearing would be demolishing a conservatory, grubbing up the rhododendrons or moving the summer house a few yards to the left.

The statute also requires forest dwellers to provide food for the king's horse. Strictly speaking, this means that if the Royal helicopter lands in your back garden, you are responsible for re-fuelling it. You are unlikely to be asked to do so, but you could be asked to replenish the supply of party poppers. It would be wise to keep a supply of these in your shed.

Elizabeth I had a habit of travelling round the country landing on some unsuspecting aristocrat in his country mansion and staying there for some weeks with members of her court. This became known as "Her Royal Majestie's Ryde of Joye." So, as the constitutional experts point out, the joyride is an accepted and long-established Royal practice.

His Royal Highness may graciously deign to buzz your house—considered a rare honour—rather than land there. Never wave at a Royal helicopter but if it comes lower than 100 ft., you should stand to attention. Don't throw yourself face down on the ground as this may give offence.

On the horticultural side, it is helpful to grow sunflowers as these are clearly visible from a distance and useful as navigation-

Interesting Facts From BLUE:

- ☞ "The Pink 'un'" is a reference to a contemporary tipsheet used to guide bettors at the horserace track.
- ☞ A carbuncle is a gem of a **ruby red** color and is found in the East Indies.
- ☞ A carbuncle of **blue** color is said to be non-existent and yet here we have it—found "on the banks of the Amoy River in southern China"!
- ☞ Incidentally, geese don't have crops!

Trivia Quiz

1. **Games & Gambling:** In Britain, they might call this a "fruit machine".
2. **Railroad terminology:** In the U.K., these supporting bars are called "sleepers."
3. **London:** Buckingham Palace is open to tourists.

Source: *The Tacoma News Tribune*
Answers appear on Page 3

al aids. Take care that your compost heap or pile of grass cuttings is not in a position to catch gusts of wind from the rotors and get spattered everywhere.

Finally, some house owners in Gloucestershire and Berkshire are known to take down their tennis net and croquet hoops to make it easier if the Prince lands on the off chance. This is considered pushy and frightfully bad form.



Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• **From SOB Geoff Jeffery:** *Canadian Holmes*, the Journal of the Bootmakers of Toronto, is printing a series of cleriheus by the late Frank Darlington, our old friend and SOB. The Summer 2008 issue (Vol. 31, No. 1) includes the first in the series, which reads:

*"Chinese" Gordon met his doom
At the tragic Battle of Khartoum.
Watson remembered that it is said:
To this very day the Nile runs red."*

• Seattle Mystery Bookshop (117 Cherry St, Seattle, WA 98104, 206-587-5737) has a new Sherlockian short story collection. **Gaslight Grimoire: Fantastic Tales of Sherlock Holmes**, edited by J.R. Campbell and Charles Prepolec (Edge Publishing, Canada, trade paperback original, \$16.95), contains 11 previously unknown cases recently found in Watson's dispatch box that "confront the irrational, the unexpected and the fantastic in the weird worlds of the Gaslight Grimoire." Authors include Barbara Roden, M.J. Elliot, Martin Powell, Peter Calamai, and Kim Newman. Forward is by David Stuart Davies.

• **From Peter Blau via former SOB Ray de-Groat:** I enjoyed Bouchercon 39. Bouchercon 40 is in Indianapolis October 15-18, 2009, and Bouchercon 41 is in San Francisco, October 14-17, 2010. This is a wonderful convention and anyone who reads mysteries will enjoy it. You can see what went on in Baltimore at www.charmedtodeath.com.

• **From Peter Blau**

⇒ **Moriarty**, by John Gardner (Harcourt, \$24.00) is the third and last of a trilogy begun by the author in 1974 with "The Return of Moriarty" and "The Revenge of Moriarty" in 1975. He died in August, 2007, but had already completed the book. Peter says it's a well told story.

⇒ **Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters** won the Anthony for Best Critical Work, an Agatha from Malice Domestic, and an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America at Bouchercon39 in Baltimore.

⇒ **Randall Stock has a new URL** for his excellent website "The Best of Sherlock Holmes"; go to www.bestofsherlock.com.

⇒ To see pictures of the actors from the upcoming **Sherlock Holmes** film in costume, go to www.justjared.buzznet.com and search "Sherlock Holmes".

⇒ There may be a movie based on Doyle's **Brigadier Gerard** stories. Steve Carell of "The Office" and "Get Smart" is interested in starring in it.

• **From Roger Johnson: The Adventure of Arthur Conan Doyle**, by Russell Miller (Thomas Dunne Books, \$27.95) is a new biography due in the U.S. in December. The author had access to all the material from Richard Lancelyn Green.



Two Sherlockian Plays to See!!

⇒ Federal Way's Centerstage Theatre is showing **"The Crucifer of Blood"** February 27 through March 15, 2009. Tickets: (253) 661-1444 or www.centerstagetheatre.com.

We'll vote at the December or January Meeting which performance to attend. Depending on the date, Al & Marge Nelson may host a tea or dessert the day of the performance!!

⇒ The Bellingham Theatre Guild is presenting **"The Penultimate Problem of Sherlock Holmes"** January 30 through February 15, 2009. Tickets: (360) 733-1811 or www.bellinghamtheatreguild.com.

Can we get a group up to Bellingham for one of their performances?

Test Your Knowledge of Great Britain, Part III

Geography Source: *The Daily Telegraph (London)*

1) Britain is: a) England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland; b) only the first three because if you add Northern Ireland, it's the United Kingdom; c) a prosperous federation of culturally diverse regions on the northwest edge of the European Union; d) smaller than Oregon.

2) The northernmost point in Britain is: a) Out Stack, Shetland Islands; b) Dunnett Head, Caithness, Scotland; c) Watford; d) even colder and wetter than the rest.

3) The southernmost point in Britain is: a) less cold and wet than the rest; b) Les Minquiers Reef, Jersey; c) Dover; d) Chiantishire, Tuscany.

4) The principal exports of Britain are: a) money; b) manufactured goods, fuels and chemicals; c) expats; d) crusader troops bent on re-establishing imperial hegemony over the developing nations of the world.

5) The principal imports of Britain are: a) being scavenged on a beach in east Devon; b) manufactured goods, machinery, fuels; c) feckless, lazy individuals from other countries trying to take our jobs/benefits and unblock our u-bends; d) much cheaper than anything we can make of the same quality.

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



Tailor-Made to Play Villains

Mark Strong was interviewed in regards to his role in Guy Ritchie's newest film, *RocknRolla*.

The last question is intriguing:

You're reteaming with Ritchie for Sherlock Holmes starring Robert Downey Jr., and playing a villain named Blackwood. Was he ever in the books?

Replied Strong, *"Blackwood doesn't exist [in the books], but he's very much a classic [Arthur Conan] Doyle character in that he's unremittingly evil. I love to play the bad guy and try to find something in him that makes him likable, but I'm going to be hard-pressed to do that with this one."*

Source: *Entertainment Weekly*, 10/17/08

Suggests Marge Nelson
"With our Jollification
now on December 13th, put
this event on your calendar!!"



December 6 is Wright Park's **Victorian Holiday Celebration** from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Staff and volunteers dress in costume, answer questions, serve refreshments and take donations for the Tacoma Rescue Mission Family Shelter. Santa will also be on hand.

Kung Fu Sherlock?

"Downey's version of the detective (in the upcoming film *Sherlock Holmes*) won't be spending much time puffing a pipe or examining stuff with a magnifying glass. No, this Sherlock has kung fu moves..."

Notes Downey, "In the books, there's a physical side to the character...we're just extrapolating from the original material."

Source: *Entertainment Weekly*, 11/21/08

Answers to the Trivia Quiz Appearing on Page 2

1. *Games & Gambling:* A "fruit machine" is a **slot machine**.
2. *Railroad terminology:* These supporting bars are called "sleepers." **Crossties**.
3. *London:* Buckingham Palace has been open to tourists **since 1993**.



The Sound
of the
Baskervilles

By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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A monthly publication of
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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

- **December 8**
Regular
Monthly
Meeting,
T.S. McHugh's
- **December 13**
The Will Crakes
Memorial
Jollification,
1:00 p. m., at the
John Nelsons'
home.
- **January 3**
Our Annual
Master's Dinner,
2:00 p. m., at
Barnaby's in
Tukwila; dessert
buffet follows
immediately at
Jean Mac-
donald's.

Member News & Updates

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

Al Nelson **Barbara Nelson** **John Nelson**
Lauran Stevens **Terri Haugen** **Margie Deck**
Hank Deck

News & Notes:

• This even-more-intimate group than in October dubbed itself "**The True Believers**". Following PFL David's opening toast to Murray—whom **Al** noted we'd be meeting for the first time tonight—we had, even without the long boring part, a lengthy discussion of the novel **A Study in Scarlet**.

Interesting facts and remarks included:

✧ **John** felt that because Watson's war wound is first reported as being on his shoulder, we should accept as truth that his shoulder was the site of his primary injury. Questions about later reports (SIGN and elsewhere) that his wound was in his leg are easily answered: It was simply a secondary wound.

✧ When asked whether anyone has ever given Stamford credit for encapsulating Holmes' character so well, this group agreed he was spot on.

✧ Wondering why Holmes was hanging around St. Bart's anyway, this group decided he might have been

renting lab space and/or even have been employed there...since detecting wasn't taking up all that much of his time at this point.

- Decreed PFL David, it will be **at either the December or the January Meeting that we will decide** whether—and on which date—we'll attend as a group a performance of "**The Crucifer of Blood**" being presented by Federal Way's Centerstage Theatre. The dates to choose from are: February 28, March 1, 7, 8, 14, or 15.
- ✧ **Al & Marge Nelson** may host a tea or dessert at their home, depending on the date selected.
- ✧ As in the past, our procedure is to decide upon the date and everyone buys their own ticket. Ticket

buying info is on Page 3.

- The ladies at the November Meeting decided that a **cookie exchange will be held at the December Meeting**. Join in this fun holiday activity by making or buying at least 3 dozen cookies, and bringing 6 small bags of 6 cookies each to trade!!! Then enjoy another study of The Blue Carbuncle over a cookie and coffee!!

- Get started now! Who would you nominate for The Footprints of a Gigantic Hound Award, and would you like to offer a formal toast at the Master's Dinner? Please e-mail PFL David at: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com

