



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



BSI Weekend 2012

By SOB Webmaster Stu Nelan

I attended my fourth BSI Weekend in New York City this January 11 to 15. And what a wonderful time it was!

I was very lucky the first two years I attended—daughter Kamela lived in Manhattan. So I was able to stay with her, had a guide to the City at the same time, and a companion for some of the Sherlockian events. She has since moved to Washington, DC but still returns for a day or two for some of the doings.

I arrived Wednesday afternoon from Dallas. A short cab ride got me to the Roosevelt Hotel, headquarters for the BSI activities. And that's Teddy Roosevelt, not FDR!

The Wednesday evening activity was the ASH dinner at O'Casey's, a nice walk from the Roosevelt. About 50 people were there, including many ASHs, some familiar faces and some new ones—including several fairly young people from the NYC area.

Thursday morning was the Christopher Morley Walk, led by Jim Cox (San Francisco) and Dore Nash (NYC). Usually this event starts from the Algonquin and covers a lot of pavement in hunting down haunts of Morley—where he had an

apartment, where the Saturday Review offices were, where he wrote some of his books, other places he had been to. But this time, due to the cold and rain, we went on a ferry ride down the East River to the Financial District to see the progress on the World Trade Center buildings. We still encountered some Christopher Morley, though, as he once worked near the Trade Center.

Lunch after the walk was at McSorley's Tavern—once a favorite hangout of Morley's. There was much sawdust on the floor now and several pictures of Morley on the wall. Since McSorley's is very convenient to the Strand Bookstore, a small group of us headed there after lunch to see what we could find (a Magico reprint of Christ's "Sherlock Holmes, Raffles, and Their Prototypes" for me).

Friday morning was devoted to Otto Penzler's Mysterious Bookshop: Les Klinger and Laurie King were there autographing their new book, Volume 2 of "The Grand Game", and there were many more treasures to be had! In addition, Otto opens his basement to Sherlockians to allow us to examine (and purchase) the rare books there! Here I found a nice Ian Henry Publications pastiche "Sherlock Holmes and..."

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Indiana Holmes and the Temple of Boom

By: SOB James Romnes

They say the Chinese invented gunpowder. I doubt it. Gun powder is simply not subtle enough.

There is also a lack of subtlety in the new Sherlock Holmes movie: "Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows" but no lack of gunpowder. Much of this gunpowder, unfortunately, is smokeless.

If the original film offered Webley blackpowder revolvers, the sequel has Mauser semi-auto broomhandle pistols and machine guns aplenty. Firearms verisimilitude may seem minor but a cinematic Victorian Holmes and Watson requires an eye for such detail. Flub the firearms and strange things may happen. For example, you may end up with Holmes and Watson traveling



via horseless carriage. Or Holmes in painted underwear. Or even Mycroft without any underwear at all! Or you may fritter away major characters with untimely deaths or lifeless depictions. (Has there ever been a more flat uninteresting Moriarty than the one in "A Game of Shadows"? Brad Pitt why didn't you return those calls?)

Still, though "A Game of Shadows" may leave you unsatisfied an hour after consumption, it may serve as an appetizer to the BBC's "Sherlock". At least the Master's name is on people's lips and that, to quote the Chinese, is "to live in interesting times".

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Are Your Dues Paid Up?



The SOBs is nothing without its valuable Members! And, we hope you are getting value from

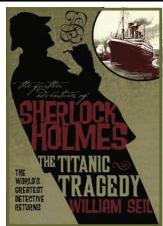
your Membership—through our meetings, our newsletter, our Christmas magazine, our website and our other Club events.

But, due to the high cost of our monthly mailings, if your dues are not renewed by June 2012, we'll have no recourse but to drop **you** from our mailing list!

Please don't let **that** happen to you!



T.S. McHugh's
Public House is at
21 Mercer Street,
Seattle, (206) 282-1910.
**Come at 5:00,
order dinner and
catch up with the
other SOBs!**



Seil's Book Sails Again!

Our own Bill Seil—will sign his *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy* (Titan, \$9.95) on Saturday, April 7, from 12:00 until 2:00 at Seattle Mystery Bookshop (117 Cherry Street, Seattle).

Come and help Bill celebrate and pick up a copy of his extraordinarily enjoyable adventure. **PFL David & Terri will host appropriate refreshments**—cake and bubbly—during Bill's signing. Afterwards, those remaining may wish to join us for further refreshment at Collins Pub (526—2nd Avenue).

To assure adequate quantities, please contact Seattle Mystery Bookshop ([206] 587-5737, www.seattlemystery.com) in advance to reserve your copy of Bill's book!

Kudos & Thanks go to...

...SOBs who—as of this writing—have added a little something to their dues renewals:

- ★ Larry Brown
- ★ Terry Burns
- ★ Nola & Daniel Cheff
- ★ Peter & Kay Chelemedos
- ★ Pat Connelly
- ★ Charlie Cook
- ★ Sheila Holtgrieve
- ★ John Longenbaugh
- ★ Pat McIntosh
- ★ Jon Strandberg

Your generosity is most appreciated!

A Locked-Room Mystery is EMPT!

The **April 9** Business Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at **6:30 p.m.** at T.S. McHugh's Public House. **The social hour starts at 5:30 p.m.!**

Our 28th tale—in publication date order—appeared first in *The Strand* for October 1903. Oddly, Doyle ranked this case 6th in his list of favourite stories. **Says PFL David:** Col. Moran is alive and cheating at cards. Ronald Adair is dead “under unusual and inexplicable circumstances”. And, Watson is off to visit the murder scene...detecting?... and alone in the world, except for some “poor bibliophile” he’s picked up along the way! Are you up to unraveling the tangle Watson’s taken on? Read again “**The Adventure of the Empty House**” to discover the best surprise of all!



Maiwand 1880 Excerpted from Guns & Ammo Magazine, November 2011

“One of the rare instances where British troops were defeated by native forces, the Battle of Maiwand...began when British forces led by Brigadier-General George Burrows engaged a force of Afghans under Ayub Khan at Helmand, where he was deserted by his native levies. Burrows retired to Kushk-i-Nakud, in order to surprise Ayub Khan if he moved toward Kandahar. Burrows received information that the Afghans were indeed on the move and sent troops (numbering less than 2,500) to intercept them.” (Unfortunately, Ayub Khan’s forces numbered 25,000.)

What follows in this article is an analysis of “an intermixture of archaic and modern arms” employed in the fateful battle, including full-colour photos of guns, bayonets and, of course, a “jezail projectile”.

Of import also is the sidebar titled “They were There: Dr. John H. Watson”, which notes:



The associate and chronicler of famed consulting detective Sherlock Holmes, Dr. John H. Watson had some early adventures of his own. As a surgeon with the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers, he took part in the Second Afghan War and was injured in the Battle of Maiwand. He mentions in *A Study in Scarlet* that he was wounded by a jezail bullet in the shoulder, “grazing the subclavian artery”. However, in *The Sign of Four* and *The Noble Bachelor*, Watson makes reference to a leg wound. One would think that if one was shot with a half-ounce lead ball he’d remember where he was hit. The only reasonable answer is probably that the good doctor was struck twice—once in the shoulder and once in the leg. Fortunately, wherever the bullet hit, it didn’t stop him from supplying us with a wealth of wonderful stories.



Librarian's Corner

“It is a great thing to start life with a small number of really good books which are your very own.” — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

A Review of The Italian Secretary

by Caleb Carr (2005), commissioned by the ACD estate, afterward by Jon Lellenberg, U.S. agent for the estate.

The Italian Secretary, narrated by JHW, takes place sometime in the 1890s. Mycroft, via a coded telegram, asks Holmes and Watson to take an overnight train to Edinburgh and Holyroodhouse. Something strange is afoot there—two men have been killed very bizarrely. One is a renowned architect recently hired to restore Mary Queen of Scots’ rooms; the other his construction foreman. These rooms are the place where Mary’s Italian secretary and companion David Rizzio was brutally murdered by her husband Lord Darnley and a few co-conspirators in 1566. Mycroft vaguely indicates that there is a plot on to harm the Queen, so perhaps these murders are connected. He is traveling to Scotland to see the Queen and meet Sherlock. He actually leaves Pall Mall, it’s that serious! Any more of a synopsis here would be a spoiler. Suffice it to say that Holmes, of course, finds a practical solution in spite of the ghosts of Mary and Rizzio and medieval war engines. Did I like the book? Hmm—I’d say mixed. It’s a good read overall, but isn’t really Canonically plausible to my mind and is, therefore, weaker than other pastiches. For example, Holmes’ logic is not as tight at times and that he might “see” ghosts is pretty silly; the story gets quite weird as the practical solution unfolds. Perhaps you might try it and let me know what you think?



Sheila Holtgrieve, SOB Librarian, sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

● **From SOB Bill Seil:** "Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century—Complete Series" is now available from Mill Creek Entertainment (\$12.98). This is the cartoon series wherein, "After Sherlock Holmes is brought back from the dead, he is rejuvenated to that of a 25-year-old to help good friend Inspector Beth Lestrade battle an unprecedented crime wave wreaking havoc on this peaceful future. To assist Holmes, the personality of his loyal friend and companion, Dr. John Watson, is programmed into the brain of an android."



● **From SOB Librarian Sheila Holtgrieve:** Follow this link to Toby Young's comment that "It's a national scandal that fewer than 100 pupils who sat for the most popular examination paper in English Lit studied a novel written before the 20th century" and his "list of the 10 Victorian novels every child should have read by the age of 18": <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/tobyyoung/100082173/the-10-victorian-novels-every-child-should-read/>

● **From Entertainment Weekly, 2/24/2012:** Reviewer Ken Tucker noted the upcoming "passing" of Hugh Laurie's series "House", saying "House paved the way for lesser gourches...and indirectly helped bring the show's origins full circle to the Sherlock Holmes revival that's made Benedict Cumberbatch a Stateside cult favorite."

● **From SOB Pat McIntosh:** I was given a Sherlockian DVD with Douglas Wilmer as Holmes and Nigel Stock as Watson by my sister as a birthday gift. They are pretty good. It's a leisurely time to be able to sit down and watch them. There's much I haven't seen, so I can't do very much comparison; I hope to do more though!

● **From Peter Blau:**

⇒ At the William Gillette Luncheon in New York as part of celebration of Holmes' 158th birthday, the Jan Whimsey Award for the most whimsical piece in "The Serpentine Muse" last year was awarded to SOB Karen Murdock for her piece "Do You Write Like Arthur Conan Doyle". She received a certificate and a check for \$221.17.

⇒ John Linsenmeyer offers a discovery for anyone who's investigating forensic or medicolegal aspects of the Canon. Important textbooks written by Alfred Swaine Taylor (1806-1880), who has been called the father of British forensic medicine, are available free at www.books.google.com by searching for "Alfred Swaine Taylor".

⇒ "Professor Moriarty: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles" by Kim Newman (Titan Books, \$14.95) is described by the author as "a novel disguised as a collection." The book is full of interesting characters, some even borrowed from other authors. It is recommended.



BSI Weekend 2012

...the Midnight Bell".

Friday evening was the Gaslight Gala, the highlight of the weekend. The theme was "Jewels in the Canon", with songs, toasts, a buffet dinner, skits, quizzes, and more. I had been asked to read the list of over 30 Sherlockian scions and societies represented by the 100 people attending, with many countries and all parts of the U.S. represented: SH Societies of Japan, France and London; several Canadian societies; quite a few from the U.S., especially the NYC area and, of course, **The Sound of the Baskervilles**.

Saturday morning was the Vendor's Room at the Roosevelt, where book dealers and others brought in their wares: Vinny Brosnan (SherlockinLA), George Vanderburgh (Battered Silicon Dispatch Box), Steve Doyle (Gasogene Books and Wessex Press), Gary Lovisi (Gryphon), Peter Stern, and quite a few others in a room that quickly became crowded with enthusiastic buyers. I picked up "The Dragnet Solar Pons" here, contrasting early and later versions of some of the first of August Derleth stories.

Continued from Page 1

The Saturday evening dinner was appropriately named "Lost in New York with a Bunch of Sherlockians" at Pete's Tavern. A wonderful venue up about 17 steps (*I saw but did not observe the exact number*) in a room crowded with Sherlockians, featured door prizes, raffles and a quiz on SH films and plays. (*Can YOU name all 14 Rathbone/Bruce Sherlock Holmes movies??*) Kamela joined me for the Gaslight Gala (her fourth one, also), and we took the opportunity to do some non-Sherlockian things (*heresy, I know!*)—an off-Broadway play, the Whitney Museum and MOMA. She's considering starting a "Daughters of Sherlockians" scion society—where the only thing forbidden is to talk of Sherlock Holmes!

My fond memories include the hair-raising cab rides, being lost in the subway system, trains so crowded that we couldn't move, and more! But especially the wonderful people—Sherlockians from everywhere, old friends and new, so many delightful people! I'm already looking forward to BSI Weekend 2013!



Decks Host Viewing of BBC's "Sherlock"

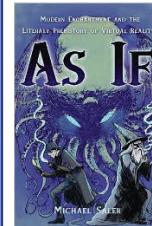
For all the scoop on the February 18 viewing of the 2nd season of



BBC's TV show "Sherlock", check out our website at: http://www.soundofthebaskerville.com/2012/Sherlock_TV_second_season.pdf

From SOB Margie Deck

Saw this review by Michael Dirda and found it of interest!



As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality by Michael Salter (Oxford University, \$27.95):

Is there no way to re-enchant our mundane, dreary lives while preserving the myriad benefits of the machine age? According to cultural historian Michael Salter, during the late 19th century people attempted to do just this through an increasing immersion in the fantastic. Spiritualism, the occult, Eastern beliefs and extreme aestheticism offered various paths back to Eden. But all too often these creeds required one to surrender reason and independent thought as a prerequisite to entering the lost garden.

In effect, "As If" explores the rewards of participatory fandom, concentrating on three groups: the devotees of Sherlock Holmes, especially the famous literary and dining club called the Baker Street Irregulars; the connoisseurs of H.P. Lovecraft and his Cthulhu Mythos; and the scholarly enthusiasts of J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth.

Using the same combination of deduction and imagination characteristic of their hero, members of the Baker Street Irregulars "play the game," as they call it...Books alone, however, aren't enough to foster an ongoing virtual reality. One also requires "public spheres of the imagination," places where fans can gather, argue and deepen their understanding of the sacred texts.



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

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President: David Haugen, PFL, SOB, PSC
Treasurer: Allen Nelson (nelsonah46@yahoo.com)
Secretary/Editor: Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Historian: Lloyd Hedberg (lloyd@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Lending Librarian: Sheila Holtgrieve (sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com)
Webmaster: Stuart Nelan (stu@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

Member News & Updates

SOBs attending the March Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

Sheila Holtgrieve	Margie Deck	Hank Deck
Stephen Adkins	Terri Haugen	Thom Wallls
Jon Strandberg	Stu Shiffman	Ed Funk
Margaret Nelson	Al Nelson	Joyce Funk
Lauran Stevens	DC Smith	Jim Nagle
Becky Geis	LCPL John Geis	Ann Milam
Pat McIntosh	Jim McIntosh	David Smith
Catherine Bancroft	Carol Smith	Jim Vavra

News & Notes:

- **SOB David Smith** gave a rousing presentation on what it means to be British today, laying the groundwork for their acceptance of the monarchy! Very enlightening!
 - PFL David reminded us that we are still looking for a **volunteer to host the 2012 Will Crakes Jolification**. If you're willing and can offer your home on Saturday, December 8, please let PFL David know!
 - **From SOB James Romnes:** "I went to Northwest Costumes in Tacoma and met Mary & Tom Johnson. Saw their 221B sitting room, and gave them an 1891 copy of the 'London Times'. Also did a roadshow of Webleys for them. Brought a large metal traveling case filled with British revolvers that have ties to Holmes and Watson. Talked for 45 minutes about the mysteries of Victorian firearms. And that ballroom they have! Wow! What a venue that would be for a Holmesian meeting."



Two More New Members Join!

✓ Ed Weiss

✓ **Ed Weiss**
an attorney from the
St. Louis area, found
us via Classic Special-
ties when he bought
our 2011 *Beaten's*
Christmas Annual! He
liked what he saw and
has joined the SOBs!!!

✓ **Jim Vavra** found us at the Sherlock 2 movie premiere in December then came to the December Meeting. He works at Genie in Redmond in info systems. He kept us guessing but now he's joined!

Welcome to you
both!!

