Sherlock Holmes just might be the man to give the Mary Winspear Centre a jumpstart. Among the 42 recommendations for the community meeting place on Sidney's Beacon Avenue is the notion that it should host a series of festivals—with an annual Sherlock Holmes-inspired gathering topping the list.

"There are hundreds of Sherlock Holmes clubs around the world," said Michael Wicks, author of an 80-page report on the centre, commissioned by the Town of Sidney. "We certainly believe that there's huge mileage in that. There's all sorts of things one could tie in with it."

"Basically what we're saying is it's an incredibly wonderful facility that's not really quite making the most of it. There's an opportunity there to do great things."

One step would be for the nonprofit Memorial Park Society, which runs the centre, to take more of an "entrepreneurial" approach, Wicks said. "It just needs to become a little bit more commercial-minded."

Wicks said the presence of the 310-seat Charlie White Theatre sets the Mary Winspear Centre apart from many other community centres. "One of the points we made was that with a facility like that, it's very easy to run it just as if it was a community centre, and really it's more of a multiplex facility."

"A March 2008 visit to the Centre's website shows that recent and/or upcoming events include an evening of New Orleans music; musical performer Lorne Elliott; dancer and mimist Christian Swensen; the play "Hockey Mom Hockey Dad"; a performance by the Victoria Chamber Orchestra; the Peninsula Players presentation of "A Shot in the Dark"; a concert by Johnny Bagpipes; the Gilbert & Sullivan Society's presentation of "Patience"; and the Four Seasons Musical Theatre presentation of "The Little Mermaid", but alas nothing at all Sherlockian!"
The Red Circle is our Mystery for April Meeting

The April 14 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 to order dinner and catch up with other SOBs! Many arrive as early as 5:00.

Same month, different case...as REDC follows ILLU by a mere 3 weeks in September 1902. Says PFL David:

Mrs. Warren, who lets rooms in her Bloomsbury house, has consulted Holmes about a strange lodger with strange requests. Holmes deduces a system of messages being sent via the Daily Gazette’s agony columns.

What follow are the abduction of Mrs. Warren’s husband, a chance encounter with Inspector Gregson and a Pinkerton detective from the U.S., and the murder of one Giuseppe Gorgiano, a vicious killer well-known to Holmes.

But what is this “red circle”, and how have these simple folk been ensnared with Inspector Gregson and a Pinkerton detective from the U.S., and the murder of one Giuseppe Gorgiano, a vicious killer well-known to Holmes.

But what is this “red circle”, and how have these simple folk been ensnared by it? Round up all the facts by reading The Adventure of the Red Circle!

Lots of Activities Coming in Spring, Summer!

Need your Sherlockian fix?? There’s lots to do in the months ahead! Let us count the ways:

1. Look in at the Sumner Library before March month-end to view the dozen literary hand-made dolls by 15-year-old Margaret Hoang, including one of Sherlock Holmes! See the item on Page 3 under Things to See, Buy, Do & Know.

2. On Saturday, March 29, celebrate the 28th year of the SOBs by attending an elegant tea and auction of Sherlockian items at the Haugen’s. If possible, send Terri an email to let her know that you are coming, and assist her in menu planning by indicating what food items you plan to bring.

3. Saturday, May 3 meet in Tumwater/Olympia for the annual commemorative wreath throw and delightful (Dutch treat) lunch following at the Falls Terrace Restaurant. James Romnes generously volunteered to coordinate the event. James probably will wear “authentic” Victorian garb, so dust off your time-appropriate garments and wear them to the wreath throw. It is another way to get potential new members from folks who stop to ask what’s going on.

There is also a chance that Sam & Louise Fry will again open their lovely home in Olympia for the dessert portion of this event. If so, we will ask you to please bring along a dessert to share for those festivities.

4. Attend the May 12th SOB Meeting, which Margie Deck is chairing again. Not to put her on the spot, but she usually has some surprises up her sleeves when she fills in for PFL David.

5. Consider acting as PFL-for-a-Meeting on June 9. With the Haugen’s away traveling, there’s an opening in the schedule for you to step in! PFL David can, of course, provide a prepared quiz for the Meeting, which will be on “The Three Gables.”

6. Saturday, August 2 come to the John H. Watson picnic which Paul Williams schedules for us at the great public beach location, Seahurst Park in Burien, each year. Mark the day on your calendar, defrost your weenies and look forward to a great summer day picnic.

Surely there’s something here to keep you amused!

And, don’t call me “Shirley”!!!

Interesting Items About REDC:

1. Did Gorgiano’s clean-shaven appearance and Luca’s black beard and mustache signal a change in previously perceived symbols of evil?

2. The Carbonari were a secret society formed in Naples during the early 19th century to establish a separate republic, and they were not averse to using violence to attain this end.

3. Some of the Carbonari’s customs were adopted by the Mafia, notably the practice of “omerta” or silence regarding the affairs of the society, as well as penalty for breaking the code of omerta with swift and inevitable death.

Who’s English Is This?

Ecky thump, you say?? It expresses frustration—as in, “Ecky thump, I’ve got to do the dishes.”

Source: Entertainment Weekly, 6/22/07

Five jobs at Buckingham Palace

• Keeper of the Queen’s Swans
• Royal Bargemaster

Things English: The English Calendar

Presented by Margaret Nelson at the March 10, 2008 SOB Meeting

On Groundhog Day, I heard about St. Brigit’s Day and started to explore the English calendar. I found many terms I’d heard in the old border ballads and in “Lord Peter Whimsey” and “Rumpole of the Bailey” books. Being Anglophiles, I thought you too would find interesting some unusual dates on the English calendar, along with an explanation of their meanings. I’m keeping my copy handy in a book so I can find it when next I read an English-oriented book.

February 1: Imbolc was a spring festival that was sacred to the goddess Brigit, now St. Bridgit’s day. It was this time of the year, when ewes begin to lactate. Imbolc is traditionally a time of weather prognostication, and the old tradition of watching to see if serpents or badgers came from their winter dens is perhaps a precursor to the North American Groundhog Day. A Scottish Gaelic proverb about the day is: “The serpent will come from the hole On the brown Day of Bride, Though there should be three feet of snow On the flat surface of the ground.”

Fire and purification are an important aspect of this festival. As goddess and saint Brigid is associated with holy wells, sacred flames, and healing. Lighting of candles and fires represents the return of warmth and the increasing power of the Sun over the coming months.

March 1: Beltane was a great fire festival, held according to the Celtic calendar at mid-year, which is May Day. The festival marked the beginning of summer and was sacred to the god Belenus. Traditionally, the people normally ate Beltaine cake or bannocks.

August 1: Lugnasad was a harvest festival sacred to the Irish god Lugh or the Gallic god Lugus. It is the wake of Lugh, the Sun-King, whose light begins to dwindle after the summer solstice. The grain dies so that the people might live. In English-speaking countries in the Northern Hemisphere, August 1 is Lammas Day (loaf-mass day), the festival of the first wheat harvest of the year. On this day it was customary to bring to church a loaf made from the new crop. In many parts of England, tenants were bound to present freshly harvested wheat to their landlords on or before the first day of August.

September 29: Michaelmas (pronounced mi-kohlmas’; also the Feast of Ss. Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael) is a day in the Christian calendar which occurs on 29 September. Because it falls near the equinox, it is associated with the beginning of autumn and the shortening of days.

November 1: The Samhain marked the end of summer, and the start of a Celtic New Year. According to Celtic myth, the night of Samhain (or Samhain-eve, October 31) was the Feast of the Dead, where the gods visit people’s lives. Watson was correctly identified by 59% of the respondents, Sir Alexander Fleming (51%), Dr. Kildare (47%), Dr Frazier Crane (43%), and Florence Nightingale (37%). (PFL David would argue that Watson has, indeed, made a difference in people’s lives—if only for his emphasis on the curative powers of brandy!)

Don’t Forget St. Swithin!

Thanks for the information on the English calendar, Marge. But you missed one of my favorite days: July 15th, St. Swithin’s Day—a day on which people watch the weather saying that whatever the weather is like on St. Swithin’s Day, it will continue so for the next forty days. St. Swithin was a Saxon Bishop of Winchester, who as he lay on his deathbed, asked to be buried out of doors. For nine years, his wishes were followed, but then, the monks of Winchester moved his remains to a splendid shrine inside the cathedral on 15 July 971. According to legend, there was a heavy rain storm either during the ceremony or on its anniversary, which led to the aforesaid old wives’ tale.

However, according to the Met Office, this wives’ tale is a myth, having been put to the test on 55 occasions, when it has been wet on St. Swithin’s Day and 40 days of rain did not follow.

Yours In Sherlock, PFL David
The Sound of the Baskervilles

By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

Ineffable Twaddle

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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Member News & Updates

News & Notes:

Those attending the March Meeting, presided over by Margie Deck, were:

Stephen Adkins  Al Nelson  Hank Deck
Nachree Osuna   Joyce Funk  John Nelson
Margaret Nelson  Ed Funk    Verne Johnson
Lauran Stevens  Thom Walls  Barbara Nelson
Herb Leake      Ann McElvaney  Kat Stevens
Michael McElvaney

• This month it was Editor Terri who was over-taken by a case of The Black Formosa Corruption and PFL David felt the need to stay home and nurse her back to health. Coming to the rescue again was Margie, who agreed to step in—that day—to chair the Meeting!! What a sav-iour she’s been! Thank you, Margie!

• Marge Nelson filled in handily as Secretary, with very detailed notes of goings-on. Thank you, Marge!

• We see Herb made it back again—an absence since last Veterans’ Day, Sir!! We hope you’re well!

• Returning after an even longer absence is Ann McElvaney—formerly “Stevens”—with her daughter Kat Stevens and new hubby Michael. Recall that Ann and Michael were married at Christmas time 2006, and this is the first time they’ve been able to join us since!!! Welcome to you all!!

• From Marge Nelson’s notes on the Meeting:

\[ Vern \] brought in a box of Sherlock Holmes Journals and encouraged attendees to borrow, read and return them next month for other members to check out. Many were checked out by meeting’s end. Thanks, Vern, for “bringing the mountain to Mohammed”.


\[ Re: “I see you everywhere” comments. Oddly enough, this term comes up in a mystery novel “The Barker Street Regulars” by Susan Conant which Marge Nelson brought in to the Meeting. Set in con-temporary Massachusetts, it makes reference to many of the stories of the Canon. In fact, next to the body, they find the footprints of a gigantic hound. Conant’s character Holly Winter (yes, they mentioned The Ill-lustrious Client’s Ms. Winter in the novel) also men-ioned how many references to Sherlock there are to be found in daily life and uses the above quote in the book. An amusing book for a fan of ACD.\]