



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



Stuart Davies Has New Play

Huddersfield Daily Examiner
March 6, 2008

Sherlock Holmes has kept Huddersfield writer David Stuart Davies very busy over the last decade. His award-winning play about Arthur Conan Doyle's Victorian sleuth is still touring, nine years after its premiere at Salisbury Playhouse in 1999 with Roger Llewellyn.

Now he has another Holmes play about to delight theatregoers. **The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes**, once again starring Roger Llewellyn, premieres at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford tonight. It then goes on tour, including a trip to Belfast, and will have a two-week season in Edinburgh during the city's festival in August.

It's a subject which has interested David since he was a student at Leeds University and wrote a guide to films featuring the fictional detective. But he also has another hero to focus on—Johnny Hawke, better known as Johnny One Eye. Sure enough, he's a detective and a private one at that. But the time period has moved on to WWII.

Davies, a member of the national committee of the Crime Writers' Association and editor of its monthly magazine, Red Herring, admits to being not very hands-on with his play, although he did travel to Surrey to see a rehearsal. "My work is with the words. Once the script is finalised, it's over to the actors, although I might be asked for comments from time to time," says David.

He has vowed in the past to move away from Sherlock Holmes—but it is a subject which keeps returning. "Holmes has supplied me with a lot of material and I have met a lot of people through him, for instance travelling to New York every January for a convention over there...He's a character that fascinates people, so I suppose I shall never give him up completely." 

Old News, Part Deux

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)
February 16, 2006 Thursday

Report Urges Better Use of Sidney, B.C. Facility

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! 

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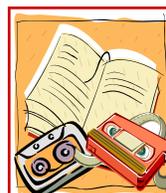
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Have you got books, cassettes (audio or video) or DVDs lying on your shelves collecting dust? Please consider donating them to The SOB's Lending Library!!

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.

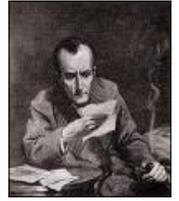
Same month, different case...as REDC follows ILLU by a mere 3 weeks in September 1902. **Says PFL David:**

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 by it? Round up all the facts by reading The Adventure of the Red Circle! 

"Well, Mrs. Warren, I cannot see that you have any particular cause for uneasiness, nor do I understand why I, whose time is of some value, should interfere in the matter. I really have other things to engage me." So spoke Sherlock Holmes and turned back to the great scrapbook in which he was arranging and indexing some of his recent material. But the landlady had the pertinacity and also the cunning of her sex. She held her ground firmly.



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:

- ❶ 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.
- ❷ 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.
- ❸ 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.

❹ 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.

❺ 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.

❻ Consider acting as PFL-for-a-Meeting on June 9. With the Haugens 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."

❼ 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:

- ☞ Did Gorgiano's clean-shaven appearance and Lucca's black beard and moustache signal a change in previously perceived symbols of evil?
- ☞ 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.
- ☞ 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.



Another Puzzler!

Down Clue:
"Sherlock Holmes
portrayer"

Answer: Basil Rathbone

Source: *New York Times Crossword*,
No. 0828

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

Titles remain, though duties change through the years:

- Backstairs Sauce Chef
- Yeoman Bed Hangers and Bed-Goers (prepare beds)
- Yeoman of the Glass and China Pantry
- Keeper of the Queen's Swans
- Royal Bargemaster

Source: *Tacoma News Tribune*; "On Royalty" (Jeremy Paxman, Penguin Pub., 2006)

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 Brigit 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.

May 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: Lughnasad 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 Lammass 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 mĪkəlməs/; 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 roamed the land.

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

• The Toronto Public Library has made available a digital edition of [Lady Conan Doyle's Diary](#) from the Doyles' 1914 tour of Canada. The URL is: ve.Torontopubliclibrary.ca/Showcase/Lcd_Diary.

• **Things that you can no longer do in London:** Ride a horse drawn cab through the parks, as The Royal Parks says it was banned because it advertised the Sherlock Holmes Museum.

• **Thanks to Peter Blau for these:**

⇒ According to a poll commissioned by a British health insurer, Dr. Watson "is sadly more well-known to the average Brit than many real-life medics that have actually made a genuine difference to 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 Nightengale (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!)

⇒ At www.sherlockiancalendar.homestead.com, you'll find a site that lists **Sherlockian events throughout the world**. A perfect place for the traveling Sherlockian to be able to visit fellow followers of The Great Detective, including SOB Monthly Meetings.

⇒ **Teenager gives dolls literary makeovers.** Margaret Hoang is a 15-year-old doll clothing crafter from Edgewood, WA who makes Barbie versions of famous characters from literature like Sherlock Holmes and Jane Eyre. Her work is on display at the Sumner Library through March.

Number of dolls she's made: 12.

Her first doll: Sherlock Holmes.

Time to produce a doll: One to three days.

Library hours: 1-5 p.m. Sundays, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Fridays, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. Saturdays.

The "Legal Year"

In English law, the legal year is the calendar during which the judges sit in court. The year is divided into four terms:

- ☀ Michaelmas, from October to December;
- ☀ Hilary, from January to April (Hilary's feast is January 14);
- ☀ Easter, from April to May; and
- ☀ Trinity term, from June to July.

Between terms the Courts are in vacation and no trials are heard.

As an example, Michaelmas term is used in the extended sense of autumn, as the name of the first term of the academic year, which begins at this time, at various educational institutions in the United Kingdom and Ireland (typically those with lengthy history and traditions).

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



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By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

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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

- **March 29**
Anniversary Tea & Auction
- **March 31**
Dues are due!!
- **April 14**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
T.S. McHugh's
- **May 3**
Annual Wreath Throw, Tumwater; meet at 11:30; lunch at 1:00
- **May 12**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
T.S. McHugh's
- **June 9**
Regular Monthly Meeting,
T.S. McHugh's

Member News & Updates

News & Notes:

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

Stephen Adkins	Al Nelson	Hank Deck
Nacho Ospina	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 overtaken 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 saviour 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 Christmastime 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".

➡ Seattle Mystery Bookshop lists Sherlockiana and includes the following. "The Mysterious World of Sherlock Holmes: The Illustrated Guide to the Famous Cases, Infamous Adversaries, and Ingenious Methods of the Famous Detective" by Bruce Wexler (May, Courage, \$14.98). 150 illustrations, most in color. "For the serious fan and the curious novice". Contact the store for more information at (206)-587-5737, or www.seattlemystery.com.

➡ Re: the "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 contemporary 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 Illustrious Client's Ms. Winter in the novel) also mentioned 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.

