Beaten’s Christmas Annual Begins Production

Author, Author!!! See your name in print...become famous...or at least infamous!! Submit your scribbling to this year’s annual publication of The Sound of the Baskervilles’ Beaten’s Christmas Annual, and you could go down in history.

Submissions are due at the November 9 meeting, or later with appropriate bribes to the Editor!! Whenever possible your submission should be in Word format via disk, snail-mail or e-mail!! Original articles, pastiches, research, essays, puzzles, quizzes, recipes and artwork are welcome. Previously published material should be properly sourced and must not violate copyright protection.

Submit your work to Terri Haugen at the November meeting or as soon as possible thereafter. (See contact info in the masthead on Page 4). If you can’t make the November 9 deadline, please contact Terri with details of your submission and your anticipated date of completion, so that space can be reserved for your work!!

Our 25th Annual Jollification is December 5

Kick off your holiday season with another Sherlockian diversion!!
John & Barbara Nelson have once again invited us to their home in Shoreline for this...our 25th holiday get-together...The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification on Saturday, December 5. The fun begins at 1:00 p.m.

Whip up your favorite dessert, snack, or beverage and bring it along to share! As PFI David is wont to say about our Jollification: “This is our salute to Victorian excess: Come have too much to eat, too much to drink, and watch too much Ronald Howard!!”

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

Don’t Miss “S.H. and the Case of the Christmas Carol”!!

Taproot Theatre is premiering “Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol” this holiday season.

A guest at the SOB’s September Meeting, playwright John Longenbaugh described his play thusly: “It’s a literary mash up of genres, wherein I attempted to give Holmes the Scrooge experience. Longenbaugh hooked us with his reading of the opening scene, which begins, “Moriarty was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that...”!!

The Club will have a presence at both the December 2 evening show—when we’ll join the Taproot company for a post-play discussion—and the December 12 matinee. Mention you’re part of “The Sound of the Baskervilles” and get $4 off your ticket price!!

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November 2009

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Have You Met... our newest SOB Sheila Holtgrieve?
She met SOB Ann Deussenberry at a cocktail thing in the Bay Area, and they got to talking about Sherlock Holmes, of course! So when Sheila moved to Seattle, she decided to look us up and joined at the September Meeting! She says she looks forward to being a part of this group and to contributing when she can!
**What Do I Want for Christmas?**

As I get older, I find that’s a harder question to answer. When I think about it, what I really want, along with health, peace, and my friends and family around me (for a week or two, anyway!) are a tradition or two that give me all of the requisite feelings of the holiday, with a few surprises thrown in. For some people this is a church service, or a shopping trip with a ride on the Bon Marche’s carousel, or a drink of Aunt Clarissa’s unexpectedly potent Christmas punch. For me, it’s a night out at the theatre.

I’ve seen “A Christmas Carol” over a dozen times, most often the superb adaptation by Gregory Falls that ACT’s mounted for over 30 years. And it never fails to provide the right amount of humor, drama, and emotion, from that first growling encounter between Scrooge and poor Bob Cratchit to the redemption of the old skinflint, dancing about in his nightshirt and ordering the prize Christmas turkey in the butcher’s window. But surprises? Not so much.

That’s why I decided two years ago to give myself a Christmas present—the sort of Yuletide play that I would like to see myself. (It turns out that several of my director friends had been looking for a similar gift—only they’re more likely to describe it as “a Christmas show that doesn’t drown in treacle or offend with irreverence.”)

And so, enter Sherlock Holmes. Conan Doyle had already given his hero a Christmas story of his own, “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle,” in which a Yuletide goose conceals a priceless jewel. But though Holmes in this story reveals a streak of Christian forgiveness and an affable acceptance of the holiday, it doesn’t dispel the impression that while Sherlock uses his great mind in the service of humanity, he doesn’t seem to like people very much. Without the friendship of loyal Watson, who is rewarded by routinely being left in the dark and peppered with sarcastic remarks about his inferior intelligence, Holmes is a solitary figure, aloof, unattached and given to perilously dark moods. He’s certainly the last person you’d find at a holiday party, and as for family, his brother Mycroft is described as even more solitary and misanthropic than he is.

Of course this is as it should be. A warm and sociable Holmes, full of good cheer and bonhomie, isn’t really Holmes at all, is he? But what if the already dark turn of his intellect were to turn...just a little darker? If Holmes had chosen retirement years before...
Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

- **From SOB Thomas R. Smith:** My new book, Baskerville Hall: The Journal of Dr. James Mortimer 1887-1928, is now available from iUniverse.com ($14.95). In this imaginary, chronological collection of private journal entries by Dr. James Mortimer, his colleagues and friends—Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson—are brought to life once again. Picking up where Doyle left off in the classic Hound of the Baskervilles, Dr. Mortimer’s gift for captivating storytelling shines through as he vividly pens his recollections of a lively cast of characters that lived in his day including Sir Henry Baskerville and Reverend Warts. He recounts many memories of his times with the quirky pair including when he viewed a Sherlock Holmes case story before his friend Dr. Watson filed it away in his battered dispatch box. In a journal that became his everlasting bedtime companion, Mortimer holds a magnifying glass up to his life and lets the world view his devotion to his beloved friends. Mortimer is fun, irascible, and multi-layered.

- **From SOB Margaret Nelson:** We saw "Bright Star", a movie about John Keats and his love Fannie Brawne at the Grand Cinema, Tacoma. It had a very good plot, you cared about the characters and the clothes were fabulous. It’s set in Hampstead (just north of London) about 1818, so if you wonder what Jane Austen would have worn had she lived longer, view this film. English lit and history buffs will enjoy it.

- **From SOB Hank & Margie Deck:** Ready for boarding The Agatha Christie Mystery Dinner Train, dressed in 1940s garb, at this Somewhere in Time event in September.

From SOB Margaret Nelson

“Mutton Chops, Care and Feeding Of” by Armand Limnander

“Sherlock Holmes is the men’s style icon for fall, but pulling off his signature mutton chops is a mystery to most men. For a clue on how to do it, contact Yves Durif, the master hairstylist at the Carlyle hotel. He has made a name for himself advising men on how to maintain their facial hair...His rule of thumb for non-Holmesian sideburns: figure out where your sideburn hairline ends, and your stubble begins, and never, ever, shave above that. ‘Men look really stupid if they do,’ he says. Case solved.”

Says Marge: “Sherlock Holmes a men’s style icon? Personally, I was hoping the clothes were the style icon referred to, not the ‘burns! Since when did Jeremy Brett have mutton chops?!”


What Do I Want for Christmas?

...his eventual trip to the Sussex Downs and the comforts of beekeeping, who would he have become, exactly?

And so two classic Victorian stories meet at an intersection, Dickens' tale of a crabbed but redeemable old miser and Conan Doyle’s immortal character, a brilliant man plagued by some very dark demons. I’m grateful to Taproot, Scott Nolte, and Terry Moore (my Holmes, who’s played the role of Scrooge at ACT on multiple occasions, and the role of Sherlock Holmes at least two or three times as well) for bringing my idea to the stage. Working with these people is not just a wonderful charge as a creative artist, but all involved routinely ask me questions about the work that makes it clear that they’re as careful about being “good stewards” of this material as I’ve endeavored to be. We want this to be as faithful to the Canonical Holmes as is possible.

I hope you’re able to join us this holiday season for “Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol.” We believe that you will find this story a pleasingly familiar Christmas concoction—with a few surprises added to give it some extra kick!

“Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol” runs at Taproot Theatre from November 20 through December 30. Call (206) 781-9707 for your tickets!
The Sound of the Baskervilles

By appointment of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria

I n e f f a b l e  T w a d d l e

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

Those attending the October 12 SOB Meeting, presided over by PFL David Haugen, were:

Al Nelson       Hank Deck        Margie Deck
Paul Williams   Barbara Nelson   John Nelson
Terri Haugen    Ed Funk          Joyce Funk
Ginie Romnes    Bill Seil        James Romnes
Becky Geis      David Smith      Stephen Adkins
Carol Smith     Sheila Holtgrieve Lauren Stevens

News & Notes:
•  **Hank** says he’s mostly working football games with Staff Pro; **Margie** got to see grandson Evan since we last saw her.  **Al** says daughter **Kate** has gotten a job at the Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art in Bellevue! Right up her alley!  **Paul** said he’s feeling fine and enjoying a vacation!  **John & Barbara** had a great trip in September to the Bay Area via a Princess Cruise and Amtrak!
•  **Becky** had more good news about Marine son **John**:  He did an 8 mile run in full pack!  **Ginie** said son **Bryan** is doing “Running Start” to finish up high school, taking physics at BCC!  **Sheila** plied us all with great cupcakes!!  **Paul** and **James** tied for 1st place on the story quiz on ENGR.  **And, David S.** made the point that Brits would have had a fear of Germans even in 1892!!
•  And, we finally held the vote on the “Dogs of the Canon”!!  Our top five worst stories were:  **YElli, 3GAR, ENGR, REDC** and, 12 for 5th place; **MAZA** and **BLAN**.  Interestingly, this is in sync with Sherlockian expert Les Klinger, who gave PFL David his list of “dogs” as YElli, MAZA and BLAN!!
•  **Bill** told us about his visit to the Seattle Antiquarian Book Fair:  “I met a book dealer named Wilfrid de Freitas, who has a good selection of rare Sherlockiana.  He is a member of the Bimetallic Question Sherlock Holmes Society in Montreal.  I invited him to our meeting, but he couldn’t stay through Monday.  There was also a booth for Adrian Harrington Rare Books of London, which had a good selection of Sherlock Holmes and Ian Fleming.”
•  **Nils Dickmann** sent a note updating us on his very exciting year.  He’s now a husband and a father.  Son Claus is an absolute doll (picture as announced).  Son Alphonse got a job at the Rosalie Whyel Museum of Doll Art in Bellevue! Right up her alley!  **Terri** sent a note updating us on his vote on the “Dogs of the Canon”!!

Dates of Interest:
•  **November 9**
  Regular Monthly Meeting, T.S. McHugh’s
  Beaton’s submissions are due!!
•  **December 5**
  The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification, 1:00 p.m., at the John Nelsons’ home.
•  **December 14**
  Regular Monthly Meeting, T.S. McHugh’s
  •  **January 9**
    Our 25th Master’s Dinner, 2:00 p.m.; NO Regular January Meeting will be held!!

Weather Alert:  If you have any question whether a scheduled SOB event will occur, please call the scheduled location.  For example, if a Monthly Meeting is in doubt, PFL David will have called T.S. McHugh’s to let them know that a Meeting has been canceled due to bad weather!  But if two or more SOBs do make the trek, be sure to take notes!!!!
•  Watch this space next month for pictures of Dwight & Gayle Holmes’ recent trip to Europe!!

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.