



A Publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida

# Communication #173

New Series

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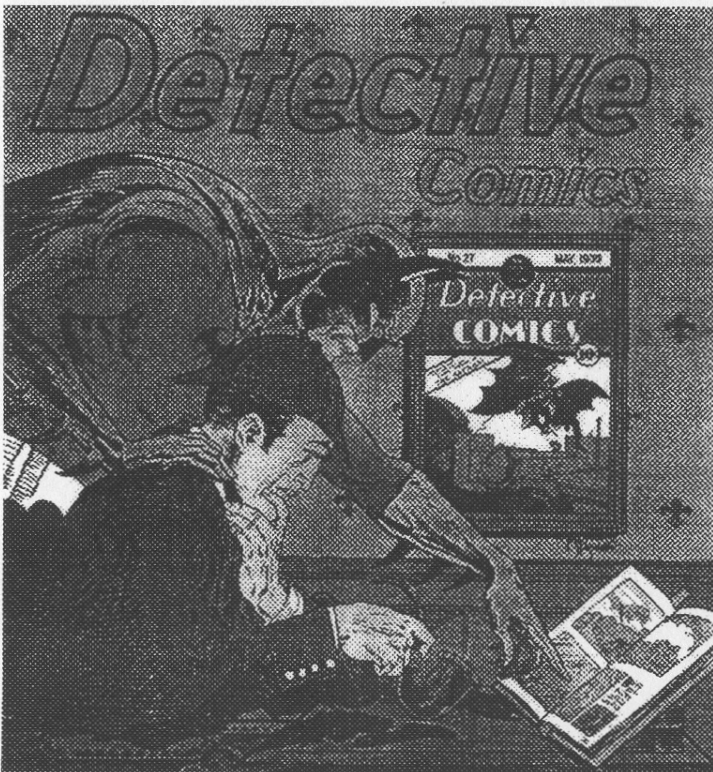
Volume 1 Issue 5

## Summer Fare

Alright, alright, alright. Who said we weren't above exploitation? However, we're not making billions of dollars from selling pieces of overcooked chicken in the shape of deerstalkers, magnifying glasses or pince-nez.

This timely cover comes courtesy of Tom Takach. Tom tells us that this is from "a 1987 Batman story in *Detective Comics*. The editors thought they would do a 100th anniversary of the first appearance of The Master by putting him in a case (albeit at the end of the story) with Batman. Holmes puts forth a plausible explanation for his longevity in one of the panels, while mentioning Baritsu in another." See page 6 for Holmes' secret. An affectionate tribute, indeed.

And while you're at it, enjoy the rest of the issue in between blockbusters. —The Papers



## Canonical Calendar

July 2, 1891: "Scandal in Bohemia" appears in the Strand.

July 9, 1930: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's death.

July 17, 1967: Basil Rathbone's death.

July 24, 1855: William Gillette's birth date.

August 6, 1873: Frederick Dorr Steele's birth date.

August 7, 1852: Dr. John H. Watson's birth date.

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## The Canonical Canines

by Judy Buddle

The Canon is kenneled with canines  
Those tail-wagging, teeth-baring  
dogs.

If you bear with new now  
To the final bow (wow).  
I'll attempt here a -er—CATalogue.

There are good dogs, like Pompey  
and Toby,  
Or like Rucastle's beast, the  
corrupt.

One could likely expound  
Upon Baskerville's hound  
Or on Watson's elusive bull-pup.

There are mastiffs and spaniels and  
wolf-hounds  
And giving the tracker his due,

There are pups who would slog  
Through a pea-souper fog  
After anise or some other clue.

There are dog-clues, like teeth  
marks and paw prints  
That made a case open and shut.  
Or the famous remark  
That a dog DIDN'T bark—  
Or poisoning the landlady's mutt.

There are drag hounds and terriers  
and "growlers"  
And of course, the occasion'l dog-  
cart,  
But let's not forget  
Trevor Junior's pet  
And the dog bite that gave Holmes  
his start!

## History Repeats Itself

From a recent news article:

A Russian woman seeking to avenge her son's death threw sulphuric acid over the three men accused of his murder as they sat in the dock of a Yekaterinburg court in Moscow. One was in the hospital with severe burns while the two others escaped serious injury. The 56-year-old woman, whose husband committed suicide after their son's death, was arrested. Her name was not disclosed.

*Could she be a relation of Kitty Winter?—Editors.*

## Mark Your Calendars

The Fall Gathering of the PPOf has been set for November 1, 1997. The setting will be Palm Harbor at the residence of The Representative With Both the Servants and the Tradespeople. Carl Heifetz will host this gathering. The adventure is "The Blanched Soldier." Contact Carl (see back page).

## A Call to Arms...or Pipes

Anyone interested in helping to establish a Sherlockian Society serving the greater Orlando, Florida area please contact Dave Scott at  
or by e-mail at

## PUBLISHED PPOfers

Carl Heifetz, "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Pearls of Death," in *The Hounds of the Internet Collection*, Volume 2.

Carl also will appear in *The Formidable Scrap-Book of Baker Street*, published by Classic Specialties Books, P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH, 45219. Carl's contribution is "Unexpected Guests at the Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium or Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

Tom Takach's artwork also appears in *The Formidable Scrap-Book of Baker Street*.

This same *Scrap-Book* boasts Wanda Dow's "Subject: A Modern Holmes." So, the PPOf is quite well represented.



## Staying Focused

by Carl Heifetz

I would like to express my opinion, as a retired research scientist, on the true personality attributes of Mr. Sherlock Holmes. It is not my goal to get into the discussion regarding Jeremy Brett's characterization of Sherlock Holmes. I think that he did a great job with what he intended to accomplish, that is, to portray Sherlock Holmes as a deeply troubled man with psychiatric problems, and possibly biologically derived bipolar disorder.

However, as much as I respect his ability to interpret Sherlock Holmes along these lines, I believe that he was completely incorrect in his basic premise. In my opinion, Sherlock Holmes acted like many otherwise normal, but highly motivated and intensely focused, scientists that I have known over the years. I think that the interpretive problem stems from the fact that most of the actors, directors, writers, and others who toil in the entertainment industry have absolutely no concept of how scientists behave and what their motivations are.

This is very clearly evidenced by the way that they depict scientists in their motion pictures and television productions. Even science

fiction, that branch of art that should present a more accurate depiction of scientists, has, in films and television at least, contributed to this image. Who are the science officers in the original *Star Trek*, in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and in *Deep Space Nine*? One is a pointy-eared Vulcan, another an android, and the third is a symbiont. And can we ever forget the idiotic Dr. Smith of *Lost in Space*, or the evil Dr. Nirvana in, I believe, Captain Marvel comics.

In other words, to the members of the world of theatre and among the literati, scientists are strange and unwordly. Arthur Conan Doyle, on the other hand, did understand scientists. Thus, he was able to properly depict his "scientific" detective Sherlock Holmes and his overbearing explorer Professor Challenger.

A discussion of how scientists are different from other folks may help explain my opinion on how Sherlock Holmes' character was constructed. I hope that appropriate analogies will be useful. In the first place, scientists are perfectly content to work on what interests them even if they could make a lot more money doing something

else. If they are working on something interesting they might skip a meal or two getting experiments set up. When you talk to them, they may seem distracted as their mind is on other things. It almost always is. They may get up in the middle of the night to write down a thought that came to them about their work. Some (not ever me) have worked all night on a project, get their experiments set up, and then go home to sleep all day. When they are on vacation, you might not know that they are scientists except for the fact that they may not know who is today's popular singing star of who won the Super Bowl. If it is outside of their field, such as astronomy to a chemist, they might not know if the earth circles the sun or not. There have been scientists who were world class athletes, or actors, clergy, womanizers, etc. But when they are involved in their work, do not interrupt them. They will get very angry and yell at you.

I would like to close this rambling discourse by

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talking about a scientist whom I knew during my stint in the pharmaceutical industry. What a guy. He was one of the innovators in the early days of electron microscopy. If he wanted to improve his instruments, he would lay on the floor, often in tandem with a plumber or electrician, and struggle and struggle night and day until the scope did what he wanted it to do. He never wore a tie, even in the 1950s when everyone did. He ate at very odd times, never with anyone else, always in the lab.,

But when it was World Series time, everything stopped. He brought in a popcorn maker and a TV set, and heaven help anyone, including the big bosses, if they interrupted him during the game. Yet, if you visited him during his more relaxed hours or went to ask for help or advice he was very friendly and helpful. And his assistants all worshipped and respected him highly, and truly liked him for his kindness.

Not all scientists are outrageous in their behavior, but all have one or the other of these attributes that distinguish them. Thus, I maintain that the character given to Sherlock Holmes—his Bohemianism, absolute need of mental stimulation, his alternating moods of high energy and languor, and many other of his characteristics—do not necessarily depict a person with deep emotional instability, just those of a typical research scientist.

## A Milestone

Congratulations to The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn. They celebrated their 100th Consecutive Monthly Meeting on April 25, 1997. Since the story for this meeting was "The Cardboard Box," we can honestly say, "Ears to you."

Heartiest accolades, Harpooners. And many more.

## CRYPTOGRAM PLUS

The answer to last issue's puzzle:

**ABZ EHLEIZHA TO ABZ ITR**

is

**THE INCIDENT OF THE DOG**

which is a quote from (surprise!) "The Lion's Mane". The quote from "Silver Blaze" is "the curious incident of the dog."  
And the winners are Peter Blau, Joseph Coppola, and Dave Scott.



## BIZARRO



**RED CIRCLE, RED HERRING?**  
by David & Janet Bensley

"What to make of it Watson..."— strange tenants, Italian toughs, Pinkerton agents, and the ubiquitous Scotland Yard thrown in for good measure. How do we begin to sort out this "Adventure of the Red Circle"? One could be forgiven if drawn to the conclusion that Holmes's career had departed from his standard fair — retrieving state secrets, recovering priceless gems and matching wits with master criminals. He now appears to be content dealing with troublesome tenants. Are we to believe that perhaps Holmes would be amenable to locating the occasional lost dog, or repossessing a hansom or two? Are we to find Holmes removing himself to the low rent side of London? Replacing his deerstalker for a well worn fedora, his Victorian drawing room for an institutional desk and chair; a large glass pane door with a distinctive private eye etched into the smoke-glazed, crystal exterior? Where Holmes reclines with feet on the table and a glass of cheap gin resting next to a Phone which seldom rings?

"Different threads, but leading up to the same tangle." Perhaps we should follow the threads of this case; not just seeing but also observing. What are the facts? We have a mysterious tenant who not only wishes to remain completely undisturbed, but is willing to pay well for the privilege. The only clue to a Presence in the room is a quickstep pacing up and down, and an empty meal tray returned to a strategically placed chair in the hallway. We have not only Scotland Yard, but Pinkerton agents on the trail of dangerous "Italians." Last, but not least, we are introduced to the final remains of the fiend Gorgiano, formally of the Red Circle.

"The Red Circle," such a sinister name. The name, I propose, tells more than the story itself. The name must have been known to various elements of London society in connection with events which occurred in and around the boarding house of note.

What gem of information could have been provided by a distraught landlady which would perk Holmes's interest in engaging his formidable deductive powers on her behalf? Reclusive tenants are surely not uncommon. The rooms could also provide a comfortable sanctuary for various liaisons frowned upon by proper Victorians. It is safe to assume that, on the surface, there is little to engage Holmes unless he was on the scent of a trail more of his mettle.

The roots of this story are deeply buried. So deeply, in fact, that only one individual could have initiated this adventure --Mycroft Holmes.

I speculate that the story actually began with the engagement of Holmes by Mycroft to uncover the existence and nature of a potentially dangerous group known only as "the Red Circle." Bolsheviks, surely. They have infiltrated the inner sanctum of government itself. Everyone is suspect, but all are above reproach. The very liberty of the Isle is at stake. Links were soon established between the Red Circle and America, specifically New York. Odd purchases of advanced telephone equipment by Castalotte & Zambe, fruit importers, a company known to have links to the Red Circle, were being investigated by Pinkerton agents on behalf of the United States government. Shipments were known to have been made to London, and accordingly, agents were dispatched. The

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**MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM**



## Holmesian Homily

by Dr. Robert Ennis

Have you ever wondered where the names of the places and persons come from in the Sherlock Holmes Adventures? In order to “protect his sources,” Dr. Watson’s literary agent, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, suggested many of them. But where did he get his inspiration? If the thought has ever crossed your mind, you should know that it also puzzled Donald A. Redmond, librarian at the Douglas Library, Queen’s University. Redmond’s 1982 landmark book, *Sherlock Holmes—A Study in Sources*, researches more than 800 characters. Did you know, for instance, that Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard was named for Doyle’s classmate and Professor Moriarty for a Royal Navy Chaplain?

In “The Adventure of the Stockbroker’s Clerk,” half of the dozen characters come from medical antecedents. Old Mr. Farquhar, who suffers from a nervous disorder, derived from William Farquhar, Deputy Surgeon of the Madras Army and author of a treatise on neurological diseases. (A sly in-joke!) Mr. Harris, an alias, may have been Alfred Harris, a year ahead of Doyle at Edinburgh. On the other hand Hall Pycroft appears to have been drawn from the sporting world. The original was the Rev. James Pycroft, who was a clergyman, a Greek scholar, author of 16 books, and a noted cricket player.

Within a short distance from Doyle’s home on Tenison Road in South Norwood lived several physicians whose names appear in the adventures—including Parker (who used to be Coxon’s manager) named after Theodophilus Robert Blush Parker, M.D. of 18 Werndee Road. In fact, Theodophilus (Johnson) crops up again in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. For more insights, read Redmond’s book!

*This article appears courtesy of The Tropical Deerstalkers Sherlockian Society of Miami.*



Continued from Page 5

facts were obvious; the reason transparent. Surely it was at this point in which, by chance, Holmes was alerted to the presence of the mysterious boarder. An individual who remains unseen, does not sleep, and eats little.

Was it really candles which were observed at the window? Or wires? Operatives pacing up and down to relieve the boredom of endless listening, headphones draped over the head, frantic transcription followed by long periods of tedium. And when the rooms were raided, there was the inconvenience of poor “Gorgiano”—a bit too much zeal with the truncheon. Mysterious tenants, Pinkerton agents, Scotland Yard all about, Red Circles, and a corpse to boot. Talk, far too much talk! Yes, our good friend Watson. Perhaps he could embellish the story just a bit. Bolsheviks... Italians might be more prudent. Illusions to the black hand, damsels in distress... Just the thing!

*This article appears courtesy of “The Camden House Journal.”*



## Agony Column



*A Silver Jubilee, 25 Years of the Mycroft Holmes Society of Syracuse*, limited edition hardcover 195 pages. "Was Watson Jack the Ripper" and other fine papers. \$27.50 post paid. Joseph Coppola,

plans not only of the "b" apartment, but of all the floors in the building. \$7.50 plus \$3.50 Postage and Handling. Item No. Bk/Floor. Classic Specialties, Box 19058; Cincinnati, OH 45219.

Any member who has not received a membership card, please notify The Papers.

LOST in Charing Cross Station waiting room, human canine. Return to S. Holmes, 221 B Baker Street.

Canonical Map. 11" x 17" map plus eight page gazetteer shows the geographical sites of the cases. \$14.95 plus \$4.25 Postage and Handling. Item No. Map. Classic Specialties, Box 19058; Cincinnati, OH 45219.

*The Sherlock Holmes Reference Manual*, by Hugh Scullion. 32-page booklet on characters and things for each story. \$14.00 US, checks payable to H. Scullion. Cadds Printing Ltd, 59 Lancaster Ave., West Norwood, London SE27 9EL.

*The Floor Plans of Baker Street*, by Edward S. Smith, Jr. Presents floor

FOR SALE *Cyanea capillata*. Great addition to any aquarium. Inquire S. Holmes, Sussex.

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## Word of Mouth

Just to let you know about other publications out there - and there are THOUSANDS of them! - we will try to include here other club newsletter information. Let us know who *you* subscribe to and like. Be sure to send us addresses and subscription costs, as well as whether or not you know if they will send out a free publication "on spec." And for those out there who are wondering if someone will, it doesn't hurt to ask.

**The Sherlock Holmes Society of Australia** publishes a quarterly newsletter, "News from the Diggings." An annual subscription is \$15 US, and includes membership in the SHS of Australia. Applications can be sent to Alan C. Olding, South Australia. A sample copy can be obtained on request with an International Mail Coupon.

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### ROSTER UPDATE

*The front page of the Roster should read "A Corresponding Scion Society of The Baker Street Irregulars"*

**Additions:**

**Wissusik, Donald W.**, Counselor, Nom: *Sir Henry Baskerville*,

**Genaro, M./Holmes,S.**, 818-888-6010 (Non-resident member), address withheld by request

**Corrections:**

**Mosiondz, Peter, Jr.**, Government Employ, new address withheld by request

**Blau, Peter**, e-mail:

If you have not received your Roster by now, please contact the Papers on the Sundial.

**The Pleasant Places of Florida**

*Founded: 1972  
by Leslie Marshall (dec.)*

**Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood**

For the record:

**THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS**

**David McCallister**, Master of the House,

**Jeff & Wanda Dow**, The Papers on the Sundial,

**Carl L. Heifetz**, Representative both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople,

IF YOU SEE A RED CHECK HERE: , THIS IS YOUR LAST COMMUNICATION! USE  
THE RENEWAL FORM INSIDE TO CONTINUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP.

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