



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



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“Your merits should be publicly recognized” (STUD)

“The Spirit of Sherlock Holmes”: Reflections of a First Time Minneapolis Conference Attendee

by Elyse Locurto, ASH

After spending the month of July in my apartment recovering from surgery, I was thrilled to re-enter the outside world by attending the August 6-8 conference, *The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes*, presented by The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and The University of Minnesota Libraries. This was my first trip to Minneapolis and the experience was delightful from start to finish.

The pre-conference opening reception, which was held at the lovely home of Julie and Mike McKuras, was a wonderful way to start the weekend. Everyone had a chance to socialize over cocktails and dinner, before the serious business commenced the following day.

The conference itself spanned three days and included an impressive array of wonderful programs, exhibits, speakers, and presentations. As the main topic was “Spirits” (be it alcohol-related, a lively quality, a supernatural being, or pertaining to the soul), it was most interesting to see how each speaker cleverly interpreted the meaning of the word and how it applied to Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle. Accolades to Ray Betzner, Steven Rothman, Gideon Hill, Russell Merritt, (and Julie McKuras who graciously delivered Russell’s paper in his absence); Les Klinger, Evelyn Herzog, Tim Reich and S.E. Dahlinger.

In addition, there was quite a lively debate between Jon Lellenberg and Richard J. Sveum as to whether or not Monsignor Ronald A. Knox was the true founder of Sherlockian scholarship.

There were two very interesting panel discussions introduced by Timothy J. Johnson (the newly endowed E.W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections and Curator of Special Collections & Rare Books), featuring Neil McCaw, Academic Director of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection



Peggy Perdue

Photo by Julie McKuras

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A Note from the Conference Co-Chair

What a conference! It started out with a *StarTribune* article (which gained us four more attendees) that mistakenly said four copies of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887 resided at a local Sherlockian home, instead of at the Andersen Library. We had fun with that all weekend beginning with a bogus press release announcing a S.W.A.T. team executing a search warrant on the house in Apple Valley. The Conference included two sessions with four librarians representing the University of Minnesota, Toronto Public Library, London's Marylebone Library, and Portsmouth Library. The first session outlined the state of their collections and the second looked into the future. In addition, the Sherlock Holmes material that the Library staff used for the exhibits in Andersen and Wilson Libraries were well organized, displayed, and captioned. The Friends meeting took place in Wilson Library and showed off the wonderful replica of 221B that belonged to our friend Allen Mackler. Both my co-chair Michael Eckman and I want to extend our thanks to all of the speakers and the conference committee for a wonderful weekend. Did someone say 2013? ♡

Gary Thaden

A Funny and Scholarly Talk

Dick Sveum was being silent about something, but I didn't know what. There was a quality of hopeful hovering as he stood beside the

Wessex Press table during the January Birthday Weekend in New York, looking as nonplussed as our publishers, while two screaming strangers tried to buy sold-out books, and Les Klinger and I attached our shaky signatures to our new book, *Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle and The Bookman*. But suddenly the good doctor melted away, and I did not find out what he wanted until Les told me we had been invited to speak in Minnesota, and did I want to go? Of course I said yes and rapidly found myself on the hook for a paper for *The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes*. I assumed this would be a dog and pony show based on *The Bookman*, but my fellow editor assumed we were presenting separately. Ulp.

So, I thought, how about a scholarly talk on haunting libraries and conducting primary research? A. It's what I do and B. We were installing

our beloved "new" curator and some of our favorite librarians would be there. It seemed a plausible idea until I realized I was speaking last, in a time slot where people's minds would be on packing, brunch, and planes. Thus, a *funny* scholarly talk was called for. Double Ulp.

So, I threw several CDs full of pictures and a couple of books in a bag and got on the plane with absolutely No Idea of what I'd talk about. Then I realized the

conference's poster child was William Gillette. Gravy! I decided to show photos from Stanley Mackenzie's collection of pictures of the Royal Shakespeare Company revival of Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes* (now part of the Richard Lance-lynn Green Bequest at Portsmouth), discuss Toronto's help with researching the missing Paget illustrations from Gillette's mutilated copy of *The Adventures* (key to understanding why he costumed his Holmes as he did), and beg Tim Johnson to pull the first edition of *The Adventures* and the stills from Gillette's lost silent film of *Sherlock Holmes* so I could shoot them to illustrate the talk.

Tim did, and I had an act. Feigning helplessness with PowerPoint, I made my way merrily through some interesting and amusing archival research in a style that was part scholarly talk and part floorshow. And I would do it again. It was fun to make people laugh while teaching them a little something about theatre history. Thanks for asking me. ♡



Brad Keefauver with the spirit of William Gillette

Photo by Julie McKuras

S. E. Dahlinger, ASH, BSI

The E.W. McDiarmid Curator of The Sherlock Holmes Collections

On August 6, 2010, the University of Minnesota Libraries named Tim Johnson as the first E.W. McDiarmid Curator for the Sherlock Holmes Collections. What a thrill it was to finally see this curatorship, the first of its kind, become a reality after 10 years of development work, and generous donations. The Norwegian Explorers, Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections and of course, the University of Minnesota Libraries deserve so much credit for their diligence and perseverance in making this happen by preserving as well as developing the largest and most comprehensive collection of Sherlockian materials in the world. And it is right here at the University of Minnesota!

My father, fondly know as “Mac,” would have been so proud that Tim Johnson accepted this important position as Curator of this extraordinary collection. I remember when he invited Tim and his wife Beth to dinner and afterwards told me what a clever, intelligent and delight-

ful person he was and how very pleased he was that Tim shared the same passion for the Sherlock Holmes Collections as he did. He felt very confident and relieved that the Libraries had found such a talented individual to care for it.

The Collections are now on its way to attaining even greater stature throughout the world and becoming even more accessible to so many more people: students, scholars and members of the public who discovered a fascination for the Canon and the adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

It was especially significant that the announcement of this new curatorship was a kickoff to an amazing conference with Sherlockians from all over the world. The program was interesting, varied and brilliantly presented. Most importantly, the conferees enjoyed themselves and each other throughout the delightful three days of the event as new friendships were made and old ones renewed. ♥

Mary McDiarmid



Gary Thaden, Tim Johnson and Dick Sveum

Photo by Julie McKuras



Mac McDiarmid's family and friends; Susan McNellis, Jim DeLeo, Tim Johnson and Mary McDiarmid

Photo by Julie McKuras

Viewing the Exhibit

When Peter (Blau) led me into the exhibit area, I had no idea I was about to see a plate on display that I had produced more than thirty years ago. It had been created as a table centerpiece for the Master's Class (MC) of Philadelphia dinner that followed the BSI weekend in 1978. I was proud of the effort if not the actual art work, and with some self-consciousness had sent one to John Bennett Shaw if for no other reason than that I heard he collected everything. I thought he wouldn't mind one more item, however folk art and unsophisticated it might be, and it tickled me to think I could be in his collection.

Seeing the plate in the exhibit, I was reminded of my early days learning to

become a Sherlockian. Compared to others on the MC board, I was so green and shy that it took me three meetings before I even had the courage to ask who this Peter Blau was they kept talking about. But some, like Mike Kean and Norm Winokur (and John) were supportive and while the plate might not be in the polished style of a trained artist, it was graciously accepted in the spirit it was offered, a contribution from someone seeking a way to participate. That so many years later this plate should be part of an exhibit honoring John Bennett Shaw strikes me as appropriate, not because it's great art, because it isn't, but because in its humble way, it represents the kindness and encouragement John offered newcomers, a practice the Norwegian Explorers carry on so well. ♥

Bev Wolov, ASH



Bev Wolov and Tim Johnson

The Plate

Photo by Julie McKuras

Mackler Memories

I first met Allen at a Red Circle meeting in Washington after he moved there from Chicago around 1975. For those of you who did not know him, Allen was short and fat, dressed without the slightest attention to appearance, and not socially adept. Some were put off by Allen's appearance, sloppiness, and neediness, but I thought he was interesting and found him to be quite expert about certain things, and began using him as a *Baker Street Miscellanea* rapporteur, on musical and culinary topics especially, when opportunity arose.

What brought him to Washington was a job. He loved classical music, and had decided upon a new career in radio. The first job he found was, hilariously, at a country-western station. It would be hard to imagine a greater gulf, and it didn't last long. But he was befriended by the best classical radio personality I've ever heard, Bill Cerri at Washington's NPR affiliate WETA-FM, who helped Allen get a job there as the station's records librarian.

This was a good fit, but WETA's library wasn't half as interesting as Allen's. He had a one-bedroom apartment in a blue-collar suburb of Washington called Oxon Hill, Maryland, where he slept on a sofa-bed in the living-room because the entire bedroom was his library — many thousands of vintage 78rpm recordings that he scrounged at yard sales and junk shops, I think something like 16,000 discs all told.

Eventually Allen got his own program on WETA called Collectors Forum, on which, with good, well-delivered commentary, he'd highlight a composer, orchestra, soloist, or conductor via historic recordings from his collection. It became Allen's pride and joy. He produced it himself on a veritable recording studio's worth of professional equipment that soon filled his dining-room. And because of that, he ate — and Allen was the best amateur cook I knew — on

a small desk, rather like an upright piano, in his living-room.

That apartment of his was full of pigs. China pigs, pewter pigs, wooden pigs, stuffed-toy pigs, pictures of pigs, even a pig lamp made out of pigskin. Several hundred, all over the place. I asked how come, and he said that when he'd been a boy, he'd been sloppy (saying this as if discussing something out of the ancient past); and whenever his mother tried to get him to clean up his act, she'd give him a pig: "This is you, Allen!" The sole result of this therapy was to make him a collector of pigs. His mother divided her time between Georgetown and Florida, and both she and her own Georgetown home were small, slender, exquisite, and immaculate.



Jon Lellenberg and Paul Martin

His apartment's closets were full of paraphernalia, not clothes. I've never known anyone with as few clothes as Allen. Plus one pair of L. L. Bean shoes, renewed by mail-order each year. When he was first invited to the BSI annual dinner, black tie by then, Peter Blau and I took Allen out to dinner and suggested to him that he might feel out of place at the BSI dinner without a tuxedo. He looked goggle-eyed at us as if we'd suddenly started speaking in tongues. But he did purchase a used tuxedo at a thrift store that sort of fit. It lacked a cummerbund, and we were not able to convince him that that was a part of the rig. You could only do so much with Allen sartorially.

I got to know Allen best through the Dining Detectives club that he, Peter Ashman, and I started after a three-hour lunch one blazing hot day in August 1976 that was such tremendous fun we decided to keep it going. When five or so years later Peter was about to move to Alaska, Bob Katz was moving to Baltimore, making for a seamless transition one night on the *Deathship Dandy*, a floating restaurant on the Potomac River that was Allen's choice for us that month, and so excruciatingly hideous an experience in every way that we never let him forget about it. I hope where Allen is now, he knows I'm still telling this story on him.

The Dining Detectives had sixteen years of monthly lunches and dinners at whimsically if canonically chosen venues in Washington, Baltimore, and their environs, stretching from Maryland's Eastern Shore to Virginia's Shenandoah Mountains. Not much of the talk was ever about Sherlock Holmes; instead it was about everything else in the world, and it was wonderful. I became so fond of Allen I even let him drive occasionally when we were joining Peter or Bob in Baltimore, and some of you probably know about Allen as a driver.

In time, things changed. At WETA, Bill Cerri died on the air one day, taking away Allen's great friend and mentor there. The station was already changing for the worse, becoming a clubhouse for self-indulgent personalities. It came under control of a clique of such people, like the one who'd take ten minutes to introduce a two-minute piece of music, and nine of the ten minutes would be about himself. They took away others' air-time and gave it to themselves, and one victim of this was Allen's "Collectors Forum," cancelled to make way for a weekly show by the member of the clique I just mentioned and another of them, a show called, I swear to God, "Songs for Aging Children." Allen grew miserable.

Continued on page 5

Mackler Memories...Continued from Page 4

But when his mother died she left him a good deal of money, and Allen used it to retire. He was so alienated from WETA by this time that he also got rid of his immense collection of antique records. He called a charity and said come and get them. I'd never dreamed Allen could turn his back so completely on something that had meant so much to him for so long, and felt pretty aghast about it, but came to realize that to him it meant a new start.

Part of that was leaving Washington, whose swampy climate he had always loathed. When I asked where he'd go, he told me Minneapolis because, he said, "you know how I hate hot weather." I thought about that a moment, and then said: "Allen, I'm guessing you've never been in Minneapolis in the sum-

mer?" And it came as a shock to him, his first summer here.

But he found new friends here while keeping old ones elsewhere, and new causes in The Norwegian Explorers and the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and he was happy here, with his thermostat set permanently to 55 F the way it had been in Washington. He built this lovely room, and it was his new pride and joy. One of my favorite memories of Allen is the day he took me to see it. It was worth a ride in the deathseat with Allen at the wheel: the room was utterly charming, and Allen was full of touching pride to which he was fully entitled. I miss him greatly, and am glad this work of his will live on. ♡

Jon Lellenberg, BSI



Phil Bergem and Yale Stenzler, listening to remarks about Allen Mackler

Photo by Julie McKuras



Allen Mackler's room

Photo by Julie McKuras

Acquisitions

Joe Eckrich added a copy of the August 5, 2010 *USA Today* which featured a review of "The Murder Room: The Heirs of Sherlock Holmes Gather to Solve the World's Most Perplexing Cold Cases."



Tim Johnson and Soren Eversoll

Photo by Julie McKuras

Soren Eversoll, the youngest member of the Norwegian Explorers, presented Curator Tim Johnson with a Sherlockian pipe he'd purchased at an estate sale.

Don Hobbs added to the foreign language holdings of the Collections with several editions of Holmes adventures.

Jens Byskov Jensen donated commemorative items from the fiftieth anniversary dinner of The Cimbrian Friends of Baker Street, which was held in Aalborg, Denmark on July 17th. Jens presented a coffee mug, dinner program, *Silver Blaze Sweepstakes & Professor Moriarty Memorial*, and Jen's *Fifty Years in Baker Street*.



Jens Byskov Jensen and Julie McKuras, Aalborg

Photo by Mike McKuras

David Mitchell added a picture album from a Holmes exhibit done at a Brookings, South Dakota library.

Emory Lee mailed a large box of materials which had the "charm of variety." Among the treasures were a number of DVDs, books that focus on Holmes in film, a

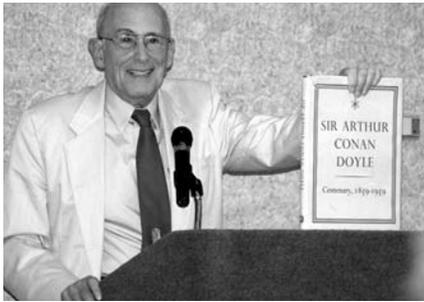
coffee mug, periodicals, a framed print of a Frederic Dorr Steele illustration of Sherlock Holmes, framed "Turf" cigarette cards from the collection of John Michael Gibson, and a binder full of articles that Emory has compiled since 2006.

Gayle Lange Puhl donated a set of Sherlock Holmes nesting dolls that she hand-painted.

Andrew Vetsch was able to personally donate items to the Collections while he attended the recent conference. Those items include *Entertainment Weekly* featuring Robert Downey Jr. on cover; the *Scholastic Scope* magazine with a cover story about Sherlock Holmes and the new movie; newspaper clippings on Holmes, the movie, and Conan Doyle; a Sherlock Holmes business card from the Holmes Museum in London; a Wayside Theatre (located in Middletown, VA) program with production of "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" by Steven Dietz; and printouts of items he found on the Internet, all presented in a bag from the Holmes Museum in London. Considering how young Andrew is, he already "has the collection mania in its most acute form." ♡

“The Spirit of Sherlock Holmes”... Continued from Page 1

Photo by Julie McKuras



Peter Blau, Auctioneer

at Portsmouth; Catherine Cooke, manager of Marylebone's Sherlock Holmes Collection in London; and Peggy Perdue, Curator of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library. The panels covered both “The Current State of Affairs” and “Future Directions” of various international Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle library collections.

Paul Martin and Jon Lellenberg provided an emotionally stirring tribute to their close friend Allen Mackler (whose collection was bequeathed to the University, as was his impressive, full-size reproduction of the 221B Baker Street sitting room, which is on permanent display in the Wilson Library).

From the President

The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes international conference was a great success promoting the library and I enjoyed seeing many of our friends and showing off the collections with two great exhibits.

My report of the Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, which took place on August 6, 2010 at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, began with our big news that Kris Kiesling, Andersen Librarian, named Timothy J. Johnson as the endowed E.W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. The membership meeting included committee reports and the election of Officers: President Dick

The festivities continued on Saturday night with a lovely banquet that gave everyone further opportunity to mingle. The program for the evening included a series of clever toasts, the presentation of awards, an auction, and an entertaining after-dinner talk delivered by Brad Keefauver.

The conference came to a close on Sunday with a “spirited” production of “The Giant Rat of Sumatra,” an original 1932 radio script written by Edith Meiser and skillfully performed by The Red-Throated League of the Norwegian Explorers.

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections also took place over the weekend. I am proud to be a new member of such a worthwhile organization.

I have always found that one of the highpoints of any Sherlockian conference is having the opportunity not only reconnect with old friends, but meet new ones as well. This conference was no exception. I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Soren Eversoll, a Norwegian Explorer who, at age 9, was a first-time conference attendee. Soren is

Sveum, Vice President John Bergquist, Secretary Mike Eckman and Treasurer Tim Johnson. Re-Elected Board Members-at-Large are Lucy Brusich, Julie McKuras, Mike McKuras, Tim Reich, Steve Stilwell and Gary Thaden.

The Bryce L. Crawford, Jr. Award for best article in the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections newsletter in the last year was awarded to Thaddeus Holt for his article “100 Years Ago; A Case of Coincidence Relating to Sir A. Conan Doyle.” I was also happy to add the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota to the Sigerson Society for their cumulative donation of over ten thousand dollars to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. I was pleased that we had several new members join the Friends and that

a remarkable young man whose interest and knowledge of the Canon, as well as the Sherlockian world in general, is quite inspirational to see in one so young. He is an excellent example of what one hopes the future will be for those who strive to “keep the Master’s memory green.”

Looking back on the weekend, my only regret is not staying a bit longer to tour Minneapolis-Saint Paul, which definitely warrants further exploration. Thankfully, this problem can be easily rectified with a return trip – hopefully before the next conference in 2013 – which I can’t wait to attend! ♡



Photo by Julie McKuras

The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes

we did well with our silent and live auctions which benefit the Collections.

Our next triennial conference will be in 2013 and will be sponsored by the Friends, the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, and the Special Collections and Rare Books division of the University of Minnesota Libraries. I look forward to seeing everyone next year at our membership meeting or in 2013. I hope that you will not wait but consider making an immediate donation of material, money or volunteering your time. Together we can make the Sherlock Holmes Collections a center for the study of all things Sherlockian. ♡

Richard J. Sveum, MD, BSI

An Update from the Collections

Where does one begin and what can one say except “thank you” to the many people who made our conference such a wonderful success. I was especially pleased to have Andrew, Soren and Jessica—our youngest Sherlockians—in attendance. They are the future and it truly warmed my heart to see how they embraced the conference and how you embraced them. And I was delighted to have my professional colleagues—Catherine, Peggy, and Neil—participate in our “working breakfast,” the panels, and the conference in general. I value their counsel and friendship. In addition, I was pleased that other friends, unofficially representing collections from Boston, Chicago, and Toronto, accepted my invitation for an extended conversation about libraries and the future of Sherlockian research. For myself, it will be a time I will always remember and cherish. Perhaps my father, who was present for the festivities on Friday evening, said it best: “I wouldn’t have missed this for the world.”

And so we are energized and excited about continuing our work. Based on feedback from the conference, we’ve already made some small changes to the website to help researchers in their quest for materials. More changes will come in the future. Watch this space

for announcements, especially with the launch of our Media Repository.

Finally, let me share an announcement made in mid-August about the Elmer L. Andersen Research Scholars Program. This program supports scholarly research projects using materials from the Libraries’ rare and special collec-



Tim Johnson and Jessica Abson

tions. The Research Scholars program is available to scholars including faculty, graduate, postgraduate, and independent researchers using the collections in the Department of Archives and Special Collections. The program will provide annual support for up to two research projects that require use of one or more of the collections. Awards range from \$500 to \$2,000 and provide funds for travel, housing and other research-related costs. The final research product (e.g., journal article, documentary film) must acknowledge the Libraries’ support and be depos-



The *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections* is a quarterly newsletter published by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections which seek to promote the activities, interests and needs of the Special Collections and Rare Books Department, University of Minnesota Libraries.

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LIBRARIES
Archives and Special Collections

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ited with the University Libraries. The application deadline is September 30, 2010. For more information about the program see http://blog.lib.umn.edu/lib-web/news/2010/08/03/ELA_Research_Scholars2010.pdf ☛

Tim Johnson

A Note from a Speaker

Coming to speak at the University of Minnesota really felt like coming home. Although it was my first time at the lectern, the library’s holdings have been a treasure for many years. The library staff (not to mention the editor of this newsletter) have made research from a distance as easy as working in my home library. My presentation was deeply enriched by the generosity of the library, and in particular, the enthusiastic assistance of Tim Johnson.

When I started to think about Vincent Starrett’s sonnet “221B,” it seemed a small topic for a full conference presentation. After taking advantage of the library’s resources, I worried about how I could fit it all in. And the best news is that after visiting the library, I am certain there are more treasures to be unearthed! ☛



Ray Betzner with the recently
acquired Julian Wolff maps

Photo by Julie McKuras

Ray Betzner, BSI

Using the Collections

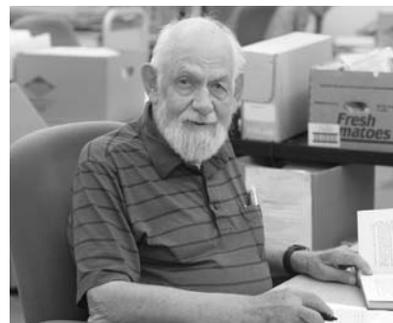
Among this summer's researchers using the Sherlock Holmes Collections were conference attendees Ben and Sue Vizoskie, Randall Stock, Cliff Goldfarb, Gayle Puhl, Susan Dahlinger, Henry Zecher, and Joe Moran ♡

Photo by Julie McKuras



Richard Sveum and Andrew Vetsch

Photo by Julie McKuras



Joe Moran

Musings

This quarter's issue of the newsletter focuses on our recent conference. We've received any number of congratulatory messages from both attendees and speakers. Neil McCaw noted "I enjoyed the conference very much. It's interesting to me to attend an event so good natured and supportive." Catherine Cooke wrote "Thank you and the Committee for putting on such a splendid conference and making it possible for me to take part as you did. That was my third and they are just getting better every time." Tulsa's Dean Clark wrote "Congratulations on a superb conference. I attended on the advice of a friend who said, 'The Minnesota conference always has the best talks.' He was certainly

right." Brad Keefauver noted "I could run down a twenty-seven year list of friendships and conferences that were all reflected in this year's gathering at Minneapolis." We couldn't be prouder than to have our conferences praised for both scholarship and friendship.

The exhibit drew a lot of visitors as did the Allen Mackler recreation of 221B on display at the Wilson Library. Our thanks go to Jon Lellenberg for providing this issue with the text of his remarks about Allen, as well as to Elyse Locurto, Mary McDiarmid, Susan Dahlinger, and Ray Betzner who contributed brief articles about their recent experiences at the conference.

It was gratifying indeed to have two well-known scholars, Susan Dahlinger and Ray Betzner, present their talks and cite the Sherlock Holmes Collections as part of their research. All of the talks were well received by our audience which featured several young people new to our cult of Sherlock Holmes as well as distinguished Sherlockians. One highlight of the weekend came with the naming of Tim Johnson as the first endowed E.W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. With Tim at the helm and with an eye toward the 2013 conference, I hope we can continue to be praised for both scholarship and friendship. ♡

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

Remembrances

In supporting the Sherlock Holmes Collections, many donors have made contributions either in honor or in memory of special persons.

In Honor Of

Charles and Margaret Henry
Timothy Johnson
Timothy Johnson

From

Ray Betzner
Tim Reich
Mike and Julie McKuras

In Memory Of

Ruth Ballew
Ralph E. Edwards, BSI
E.W. McDiarmid
Dr. A. Watson Miller
Sue Miller
Tom Stetak

From

The Occupants of the Empty House
James E. Smith II
Mike and Julie McKuras
The Occupants of the Empty House
The Occupants of the Empty House
Gordon Speck

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Mailing list corrections requested—
Because of the high cost of returned newsletters, we would appreciate being informed of changes of address or other corrections.

Timothy J. Johnson, Curator