



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



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"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)

From a Little Adobe House to the Sherlock Holmes Collections

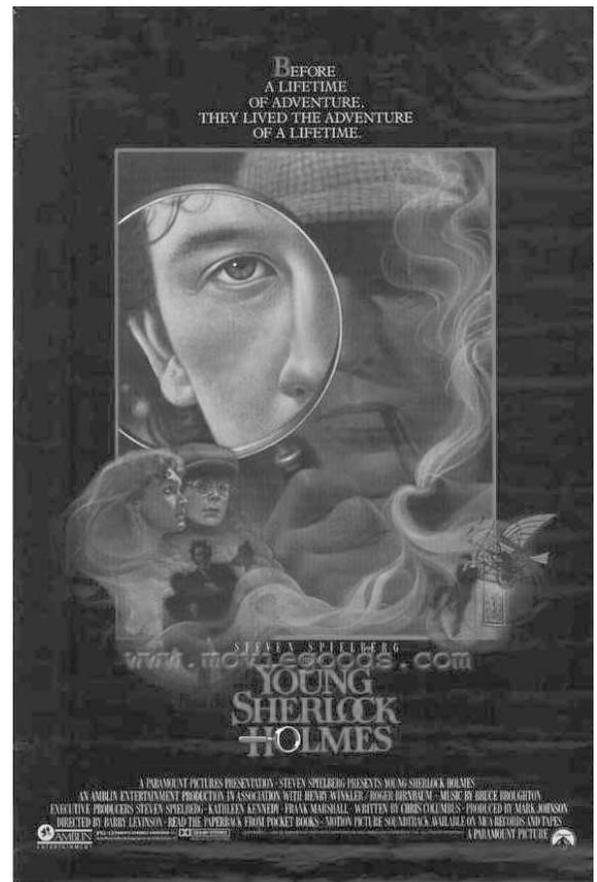
By Jim Hawkins

The dedication of the John Bennett Shaw Library, now part of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, took place in October of 1995. John had often quipped, "the University will get my entire collection over my dead body." Indeed, John had made arrangements for his materials to be placed in the

Collections as part of his will. The Shaw Library had been shipped, box by box, to the University by Mr. Shaw himself during the last years of his life.

According to Shaw, his was the largest privately held collection of Sherlockian material in the world. And until the move, there it sat in a little adobe house on a dusty street in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I would not have missed this final dedication for anything, for it was the culmination of twenty years of friendship with John Shaw.

On one occasion as my children and I sat and visited with John in the "slumber room," the room in the back of his adobe where he painstakingly catalogued thousands of books, posters, pamphlets, pictures, dolls, toys, deerstalkers, and every imaginable kind of Sherlockian collectible ever produced, John confessed to having the selectivity of a vacuum cleaner when it came to collecting. He also told us for the first time about a movie project that he was working on with Steven Spielberg for Paramount Pictures. Concerned



"Young Sherlock Holmes" movie poster

Photo by Jim Hawkins

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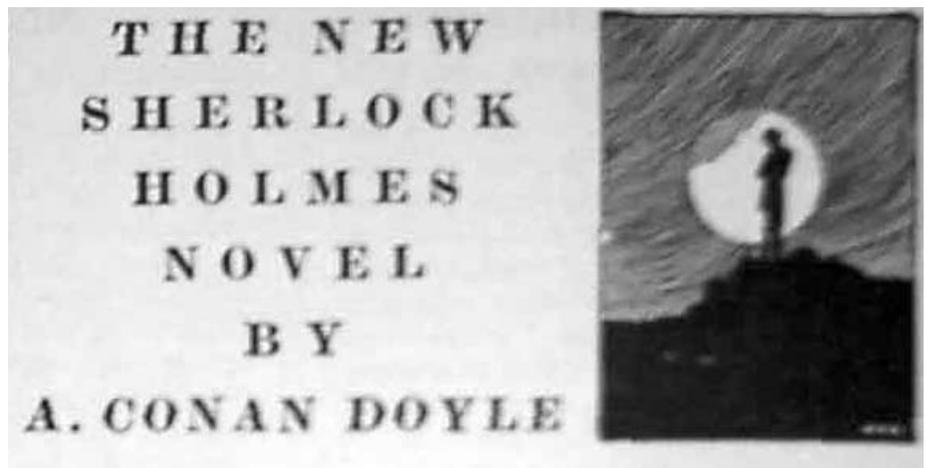
100

YEARS AGO

The March 1901 visit to Cromer and Dartmoor by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has been the subject of much interest and speculation. It was during these visits that Conan Doyle learned of the Dartmoor legend of a vengeful hound from his friend Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and decided that they should “do a small book together.” (Green and Gibson, 129) And who better to investigate this tale than Sherlock Holmes? For his reading public it meant at least one more story about the Master Detective who had been taken from them in his prime.

The *Strand Magazine* began running the serialized story in 1901. It proved to be highly successful for both the English and the American editions, raising the circulation numbers considerably in both countries. Before the conclusion of the serialization, one reader decided to write a letter to Conan Doyle. The January 23, 1902 issue of *The Cambridge Review* included a letter from F. S. The first paragraph states:

Dear Dr. Watson, - Before the appearance of the February number of the *Strand Magazine*, it is my desire to draw your attention to one or two points in your story. ‘The Hound of the Baskervilles,’ in which the world was rejoiced to welcome the reappearance of the late Sherlock Holmes. Whether you can escape all the charges of inconsistency which I shall bring against you, without straining the bonds of literary morality, is to me, and I hope to others, an important question.



"The Hound of the Baskervilles" advertising from *The Bookman*

Photo by Julie McKuras

Inconsistency by Dr. Watson? It would appear that F. S. was playing the great game even before Msgr. Ronald Knox gave his seminal lecture on that same subject in 1911, later published in *Essays in Satire*. One possible discrepancy noted by F. S. was "...Mrs. Laura Lyons says that she 'saw his...death in the paper the next morning.' That was quick work anyhow, as Sir Charles was not discovered till midnight on Saturday; and are local Sunday papers so common in villages such as Coombe Tracy?" F. S. went on to comment about a number of dates given in the story, especially Watson's October 14th diary entry and the sighting of the man on the Tor. The October 15th entry had nothing of excitement to relate, but on October 16th Watson wrote of "the abortive chase of the convict." F. S. wrote "Your 'abortive chase' was on the night of October 14th as is proved by your writing the diary of it on the 15th. This you cannot escape...is this an intentional subterfuge?" F. S. would not give Watson the benefit of the doubt with his final point; "Lastly, and worst of all, you cannot have been living with Sherlock in Baker Street at the date of the beginning of this story. In the 'Sign of Four' you became engaged to Miss Mary Morstan in September, 1888, and you were married 'a few months later.'

How then in September, 1889, were you still a bachelor in Baker Street?"

Despite such inconsistencies, the tale was so successful that "The American publisher realized that there was still a large potential market." (Green and Gibson, 130) The story in book form was set for publication in March 1902 at a proposed sale cost of \$1.50 per copy. "When the complete manuscript of the novel was sent to McClure, Phillips in New York, they in turn handed the sheets, after they had served their purposes, to the American News Company for advertising purposes. Single sheets were sent to booksellers all over the country, where many of them were framed and used for window displays." (Baring-Gould, 113) Due to the success of the publicity campaign, the demand for a larger print run of the book necessitated a delay in printing until April 15, with the added benefit of reducing the cost to \$1.25. Further advertising included a one-page ad in the May, 1902 *The Bookman* in which it was stated the story was "the highest achievement of Dr. Doyle's genius in a field where he stands alone."

Continued on page 7

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YEARS AGO

In 1952 the Norwegian Explorers of St. Paul & Minneapolis published their first anthology, *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective*. This charming collection of essays, edited by University of Minnesota Deans Theodore C. Blegen and E.W. McDiarmid, followed by a year Blegen's monograph *The Crowded Box Room: Sherlock Holmes as Poet*.¹ As was *The Crowded Box Room*, the anthology *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective* was published by Emerson Wulling's Sumac Press of La Crosse, Wisconsin.² As Wulling stated in a promotional announcement for the anthology, "strong backed and neat bound in full cloth, brightened with rubric, and gleefully printed by the Sumac Press ... for the fortunate 500... this book will delight a friend of the right sort and beguile one's happier moments." The book was priced at two dollars, double that of *The Crowded Box Room*, which had been issued only in paper wrappers. These original prices bring a rueful smile to present-day Sherlockian collectors, who find themselves paying \$200 or more for a near-fine copy of either of these rare volumes.

Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective was one of the first anthologies published by a Sherlockian scion society, following only collections by The Three Students of Long Island and The Speckled Band of Boston, both in 1947, and The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis in 1948 and 1949. The Sherlock Holmes Collections hold six copies of *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective*. Four are bound in blue cloth, including one bearing the name of co-editor E.W. McDiarmid. Two are bound in red cloth, one of which is inscribed "4 - 27 - 53 to Dr. Phil Hench" and signed by Blegen and McDiarmid. One

of the non-inscribed copies came to the Collections from the library of John Bennett Shaw, who gave the title a place of honor in his "Shaw 100" list of basic Sherlockian items.

The anthology consists of six delightful pieces. Leading off is the keynote "Salute to Sherlock Holmes," co-authored by Blegen and McDiarmid, in which the authors enchantingly survey "some of the reasons why the adventures of Sherlock Holmes are among the most enjoyable of the world's literature." In "Along Comes Charles – Or Was Sherlock Holmes a Sportsman?" Blegen wittily takes issue with the arguments of his neighbor Charles, who had taken issue with Blegen's claim in *The Crowded Box Room* that Holmes was an avid sportsman. In "Did Sherlock Holmes Return?" McDiarmid proposes that Holmes actually had retired from active practice after battling Professor Moriarty to the death at Reichenbach Falls and that Watson "carried on the fiction that Holmes was practicing by continuing to issue stories of Holmes's doings." In Anne Oakins Rosso's whimsical pastiche "The Adventure of the Tired Housewife," Holmes and Watson pay a visit to Mrs. Godfrey Norton (*nee* Irene Adler), now the domesticated mother of a small boy. In "An East Wind Coming," Dean Willard Wilson of the University of Hawaii spins a tale of an encounter with a mysterious figure in Peking (Beijing) in 1931 who just may have been Holmes in disguise. In the best tradition of Sherlockian scholarship, Minneapolis attorney Stephen G. Palmer III, in "Sherlock Holmes and the Law," refutes the findings of another Sherlockian scholar. The other scholar in this instance was Albert P. Blaustein, a Baltimore attorney who had published an article in the *Baker Street Journal* titled "Sherlock Holmes as a Lawyer."³ Citing Canonical references, Blaustein had made the case that Holmes must have been a trained lawyer. Citing other Canonical references, Palmer gently but persuasively picks apart Blaustein's case.

Stephen Palmer, now retired from the bar, still lives in Minneapolis and is still a dues-paying member of the Norwegian Explorers. In a recent conversation Palmer recounted how his article came to be included in the anthology: "Deans McDiarmid and Blegen were the brainchildren of the project. I had delivered a shorter talk on 'Sherlock Holmes and the Law' at a meeting of the Norwegian Explorers at the University of Minnesota. McDiarmid later called me and asked whether I could expand my talk into an article for publication in what was to become *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective*. I was happy to do so." Palmer added, "Blegen and McDiarmid, who were close friends as well as academic and Sherlockian colleagues, were very willing to take time away from their academic duties to promote the Norwegian Explorers. I recall them giving talks about Sherlock Holmes and the Explorers to fascinated audiences at women's sewing circles."

Possibly because of the good-spirited way that Palmer took exception to Blaustein's findings, Palmer's article led to a meeting between the two attorney-scholars. Palmer recalls, "One day at my office I got a call from Albert Blaustein, who was in the Twin Cities on business, and I took him to lunch. He bore me no ill will, and we parted as good friends as two people could possibly be after only a brief meeting."

Thanks to Steve Palmer and his now departed co-authors, *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective* still "beguiles one's happier moments" just as it did fifty years ago.

John Bergquist

1. See Dr. Richard Sveum's "50 Years Ago" column in the March 2001 issue of the *Friends* newsletter for more about Dean Blegen and *The Crowded Box Room*.
2. The Sumac Press also published the Norwegian Explorers' later anthologies *Exploring Sherlock Holmes* (1957) and *Cultivating Sherlock Holmes* (1978).
3. *BSJ* [OS], 3, No. 3 (July 1948).

From the President

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections will be at 7 P.M. on Thursday, September 19, 2002 in the Givens Suites of the Elmer L. Andersen Library. The meeting is a joint effort co-sponsored with the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota. The guest speaker will be Steven Doyle, B.S.I. who is a member of the Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis as well as a writer and Sherlockian publisher. I hope that every Friends member will be able to attend the meeting.

The University of Minnesota Friends of the Library is planning an event on November 19, 2002 at 3:30 P.M. with the new University Librarian Wendy Pradt Lougee. I encourage anyone who wishes to meet the new Librarian to attend. I had an opportunity to meet with Wendy Lougee to discuss the Sherlock Holmes Collections and our fund raising effort, the E.W. McDiarmid Curator Endowment. She is an expert on digital technology and discussed a project she worked on in Michigan. 3 million pages of text of unused deteriorating 19th century fiction was converted into a digital for-

mat that is Web accessible now used by millions. Perhaps the Sherlock Holmes Collections will become the Digital World Center for the study of Sherlock Holmes and related material. It should be noted that Campaign Minnesota is going to help focus on our Investing in Libraries; currently we are at 67% of the goal of 15 million dollars with about one year to go.

Thanks again to every Friends member and to everyone who has donated time, money and materials to the Collections. Together we can help keep green the memory of the master and preserve it for future generations. ♡

Richard J. Sveum, M.D., B.S.I.

Acquisitions

Charles Prepolec donated a copy of the newly released *Curious Incidents: Being a Collection of the Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Edited by Prepolec and J. R. Campbell, the book contains adventures penned by James R. Stefanie, Kristin Vichich, G. Kelly, J. R. Campbell, Peter H. Wood and Bob Byrne. For information on ordering this book, check out the website <http://www.bakerstreetdozen.com/ciorde rs.html>. It is available for \$10 USD surface mail, \$12 USD airmail. To order by mail, the address is Mad for a Mystery, Suite D 308, 3805 Marlborough Dr. N.E., Calgary, AB, T2A 5M4, Canada.

Sherlock's Home in Minnetonka, Minnesota has recently begun a "Sherlock for Governor" campaign. Holmes made

an appearance at this locally famed micro-brewery and held a press conference announcing his plans to run for governor on the law and order platform, with no taxation on beer a special concern. Owner Bill Burdick donated several of the window decals and lapel buttons to the Collections and says that the campaign will soon intensify as other gubernatorial candidates are challenged to debate with the Great Detective.

Scion Society Newsletters continue to arrive. Among the latest are *Fools Cap Document* sent by Ben and Sue Vizoskie and *A Very Irregular Newsletter* sent by Bruce Aikin. ♡



Curious Incidents

Photo by Julie Mckuras

An Update from the Collections

As we move into the new academic year, we are also moving to the close of the Hubbs/Holmes cataloging project. The project, which will be completed at year's end, has been very successful. Readers of this newsletter who have Internet access can now search for items in the Holmes Collections through the University of Minnesota's online catalog MNCAT. The URL or web address for the catalog is <http://www.lib.umn.edu/books/>. In addition to traditional author, title, and subject searches the researcher will be able to search by keywords or phrases on multiple fields in the catalog record, limit their searches by date, language, material type (to name a few options), and either save the search results to their computer disk or have the results e-mailed to them.

Many of these features were not available on our old online system; we believe library users will be delighted with some of the "empowerment" options of the new system that went online July 1, 2002.

For those of you interested in statistics, here are a few that relate to the cataloging project. As of late summer, the total number of items cataloged stood at 13,995 or about 92% of the projected 15,610 titles. At the end of June 2002, \$132,019 had been expended from the total Hubbs Family gift of \$150,000. In addition, the University Libraries cost sharing — or monies expended beyond the Hubbs gift — amounted to \$93,846.

The project remains ahead of our time-line expectations. Contract catalogers from MINITEX have assumed

almost full responsibility for this work and will continue until the project is completed or funding expended. In July, the remaining uncataloged items were moved from Andersen Library to a vault in Wilson Library in order to assist in the final "push" of the project. Many of these items are individual pieces such as manuscripts, comic books, single issue periodicals, programs, and other ephemera or "fugitive" materials (to use a happy phrase from the library world). These individual pieces present a special challenge to the catalogers either by their format, language, or lack of existing catalog records.

Please explore the catalog for the many riches of the Sherlock Holmes Collections! And please feel free to contact me if you have suggestions on how we might make the new catalog even more user friendly. ♥

Timothy Johnson

Musings

It is always a pleasure to welcome a new writer to this newsletter. Jim Hawkins of Nashville, Tennessee, author of our lead article, has been an active member of the Sherlockian community since his wife gave him a copy of Baring-Gould's *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* in 1967. During the late 1970's he became friends with John Bennett Shaw as well as founding the Norman Nerudas, a scion society in Norman, Oklahoma. Now relocated, he stays busy with The Nashville Scholars and his website www.nashvillescholars.net. We appreciate his article about the provenance of the movie poster for "Young Sherlock Holmes."

Our 50 Years Ago column features a book that is close to the hearts of The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota. It

is always a pleasure to read about E. W. McDiarmid, who co-edited and co-wrote an essay with Theodore Blegen in *Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective*. We continue to draw upon the model of scholarship and leadership that he set as we continue our fund-raising efforts for the proposed E. W. McDiarmid Curator Endowment. Our thanks to Steve Palmer for relating his memories of this book. The 100 Years Ago column focuses on a slightly better-known book, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and some of the initial advertising and responses. Tim Johnson gives the members of the Friends an update on the Collections and the near completion of the cataloging project, and Dick Sveum's article focuses on the upcoming Friends meeting on Sept. 19 and our new University Librarian.

As we move into our sixth year of publishing this newsletter, it is gratifying to see some of the changes that have occurred since the January 1997 Friends meeting when Dick Sveum mentioned "our advisory committee thinks it would be a good idea to produce some kind of a newsletter. Anyone want to work on it?" Cataloguing of the Collections is now nearly complete, our readership continues to grow, and we are fortunate to have new writers join us in our documentation of the holdings in our treasure trove. Despite these achievements, there will always be new challenges as the Collections grow and we begin to identify the contents of the correspondence files. We hope you will enjoy all that lies before us. ♥

Julie McKuras, A.S.H., B.S.I.

From a Little Adobe House... Continued from Page 1

about the tone of a Holmes-themed script by Chris Columbus, Dame Jean Conan Doyle and her representatives had asked that the studio have John review the script for Sherlockian authenticity before proceeding. Spielberg called John from Los Angeles with an urgent request that he review the script immediately, adding that the script needed to be edited over the weekend. At first John tried to dodge the assignment, fearing it would interfere with his Brothers Three of Moriarty scion society meeting that same weekend, but Spielberg promised to fly the script to Santa Fe on a chartered jet that same day and have the cabby wait at the Shaw residence until John checked over the script. John agreed to give the project whatever hours he could spare. After John's review the various parties reached agreement, and Spielberg went on to serve as executive producer on the now famous "Young Sherlock Holmes."

Months later, back home in Oklahoma, my children and I attended the premiere of the movie, discovering to our delight that the theatre was giving out movie posters on opening night. I took two, one for us and one for Shaw, thinking that he probably had one already, having had a little to do with the project. On our next visit to Ft. Union Drive, we gave John the poster, and discovered that he was elated to have it. Characteristically, he reported to us that "(he) never got a

damned thing from Spielberg for reviewing that script!" And I don't think he thought too much of the movie itself, relieved that his name did not appear anywhere on the film. In any case, he was delighted with the Sherlockian graphics of the poster.

I had nostalgic thoughts about all this on the afternoon of the dedication as I disappeared into this crowd of Sherlockian and Shawina devotees and followed the Scottish piper from the Holiday Inn Metrodome across campus to the University of Minnesota's Wilson Library, which housed the Special Collections. A smile came to my face as I saw "our" poster prominently displayed along with hundreds of other treasures from John's collection. It was pleasing to realize that this insignificant little piece of the collection rated being displayed along with the "serious" books and priceless items owned by John during his life. It was most comforting to know that all these items would be available to Sherlockians everywhere and not scattered to the winds never to be seen again. In early 2000, the Collections moved to the new Elmer L. Andersen Library, where it is carefully watched over by professionals, and housed in perfectly climate and light controlled rooms.

I've had many occasions to consider how fortunate we are as Sherlockians to have such a collection available to us at the University of Minnesota. Of

course I miss visiting my friend and being in the "slumber room," seeing John and Dorothy in their little adobe with the southwest 221 B tiles on the door facing. But the friendship we shared and the stories we swapped were all about Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle, about the fun of collecting and being a Sherlockian, about finding a special book in the oddest places, and getting it for a price we thought was impossible. Having access to the collection brings all this back to me. I've decided to send all my correspondence with Mr. Shaw to the Collections. I'll make an annual pilgrimage to Minneapolis just to surround myself with Shaw's books, but I'll also, on an irregular basis, take that trip to Santa Fe, drive down Ft. Union Drive, and remember. Misquoting a doctor friend of mine, "...I shall ever regard [Shaw] as the best and wisest [Sherlockian] whom I have ever known." ♡

100 Years Ago Continued from Page 2

A review of the new publication titled "A Capital Detective Story" in *The Independent* of May 1, 1902 stated;

To the dull-witted man who finds no pleasure in unraveling a detective story we commend Dr. Doyle's new book as a good stimulant; to the intellectual prig who condemns the detective story as a low form of literature, we commend the same book as a corrective; and to the poor prosaic plodder who declares that real detectives do not go to work in this way, again we commend *The Hound of the Baskervilles* as a cordial for the imagination."

This was in response to inquiries "from readers whose booksellers had never heard of the eminent gentleman – but then, of course, booksellers seldom do know anything about books." The reviewer went on to comment that the book was "good – no other author to-day could have written it – the characters are clearly, if sketchily, drawn, the supernatural element is handled with no little skill, and the interest of the plot holds out to the end. Yet with all that we confess to a feeling of disappointment." That sense of "disappointment" centered on the public's familiarity with Holmes' tricks.

So with the claims of inconsistency brought by F. S., and the sense of disappointment felt by the reviewer in *The Independent*, how does the story stand up in 2002? In *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Chapter XI, an advertisement for the book is reprinted. The May 10, 1902 *The Publisher's Weekly* ad read:

The new Sherlock Holmes novel may be dead one hundred years from now, but it's very much alive to-day. It is the high-water mark of detective fiction. Although it has been out but three weeks, more than 50,000 people have bought and read it already. Their enthusiasm over it will probably inspire 100,000 more to read, rejoice and pass the good thing along.

To the delight of many more than the projected 100,000, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is still as alive today as it was in 1902, like the great detective himself. The Sherlock Holmes Collections contains a number of the variant editions of this high-water mark of detective fiction, as well as four pages of the original manuscript from the collection of Philip S. Hench, M. D. ♡

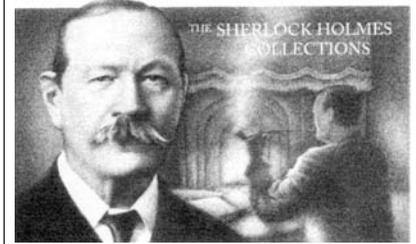
Julie McKuras, A.S.H., B.S.I.

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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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Using the Collections

Shown in the accompanying photo, Keith Novak is holding the recording of Edith Meiser's "Wisteria Lodge." The Novak family included a tour of the Sherlock Holmes Collections during an early summer visit to the Twin Cities.

In late August, Special Collections and Rare Books Curator Tim Johnson received a call from the research department of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." Stay tuned for a Sherlockian question on that television program. ♡



Photo by Julie McKuras

Keith Novak with an Edith Meiser recording

Remembrances

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

IN HONOR OF

Dr. Howard Burchell
Dr. Howard Burchell
Ronald B. DeWaal
Peasley Dungerabber
Donald B. Izban, B. S. I.
The Norwegian Explorers

IN MEMORY OF

Susan J. Beasley
Fred Page, B. S. I.
Jack Tracy

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John Pforr

FROM

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