Chronicling “Generous Donations”

In The Hound of the Baskervilles, it was noted of Sir Charles Baskerville that “His generous donations to local and county charities have been frequently chronicled in these columns.” We have the pleasure of highlighting four generous donations, as unique as the donors themselves, in “these columns.”

Lee Karrer

Not snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night, or even the failure of their home’s central air conditioning system could keep Lee and Katie Karrer from the completion of their journey from Omaha, NE to Minneapolis one hot Friday morning last July. Lee had wanted to visit the Sherlock Holmes Collections for some time, and it seemed this would be the day until their air conditioning system failed. Five hours (and a large repair bill) later, Lee realized the library would be closed by the time they arrived in Minneapolis. He called Curator Tim Johnson and was happy to hear some good news. Lee wrote “Tim Johnson was good enough to stay after 5:00 pm on a Friday night to take receipt of the gift and allow me to finally see the Collection – it was wonderful!”

Lee, who is the Finance Director for the Archdiocese of Omaha, began reading Sherlockian pastiches about twenty years ago and enjoys searching bookstores for material to add to his collection. His attraction to Sherlock Holmes mirrors his profession: “logic as their core premise” in addition to the “strong characters and strong relationships.” He wrote that he didn’t start out “to be a collector as I always intend to read what I buy – which is unfortunately quite a bit. I was looking for a good home for a first gift and I knew by reputation that the U of M fit that bill. I specialize in pastiches as the Sherlockian world is too vast and one has too little time to take it all in, unless you are John Bennett Shaw. I did not know him, but would have liked to have visited him at his home.”

The listing of Lee’s donation of his collection covers almost five pages and reflects his twenty year passion for obtaining pastiches. Included are well-known and lesser-known pastiches, including those authored by Val Andrews, Lloyd Biggle, Carole Nelson Douglas, David Stuart Davies, Philip Jose Farmer, Denny Martin Flinn, Mark Frost, L. B. Greenwood, John Hall, Gerard Kelly, Laurie King, Larry Millett, Glen Petrie, June Thomson, and M. J. Trow. Although Lee never had the opportunity to visit John Bennett Shaw’s home, their books now reside together in the vaults of the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Continued on page 6
“Forerunners of Sherlock Holmes” isn’t accompanied by the name of the author. *Index to The Strand Magazine*, by Geraldine Beare, neither lists the author’s name nor includes the article in the subject index under Sherlock Holmes. The article, illustrated by H.(Harold) R. (Robert) Millar, a frequent contributor to the magazine, traces the roots of the detective who succeeds in solving a crime through deduction. It begins:

Sherlock Holmes has achieved that rarest of all reputations in literature, for he has become a symbol of a vital force in the language, and has taken his place among the small band of men who are types of their calling. For anyone to be described as Sherlock Holmes is for all the world to understand that he is an individual gifted with an extraordinary sense of logical deduction, the ability to reason clearly from cause to effect, or from effect back again to cause, and to arrange a series of given facts in their ordered sequence for the elucidation of a mystery. Brilliant creation as he was, however, Sherlock Holmes stands forth as another example of the famous dictum, ‘There is nothing new under the sun.’

Our unnamed author goes on to state that “the process of drawing deductions from established facts was as old as the sun, and the application of the principle to literature had fascinated writers from the earliest ages.” He (or she) cites the Eastern fable as one of the oldest forms. The Persian book *Nigaristan* by Muin-al-din Juwaini was written in 1335 and features the character Zadig. From his home on the Euphrates borders, Zadig “acquired a sagacity by means of which he discovered a thousand differences where other men saw nothing but uniformity.” The article describes a number of Zadig’s successful deductions and relates how Edgar Allan Poe had “the first application of the idea embodied in these stories” in his creation C. Auguste Dupin, followed by Emile Gaboriau’s M. Lecoq and Wilkie Collins’ Sergeant Cuff.

These men of extraordinary deductive prowess pre-dated Sherlock Holmes who went on to even greater success than Cuff, Lecoq, Dupin and even Zadig. The article concludes with:

Not very long ago a writer in one of the weekly papers declared that the detective in literature is passing to decay. It may be doubted, however, whether, so long as deduction exercises its fascination, he will ever disappear from the pages of fiction.

The processes on which he works are, as we have seen, of the most remote antiquity, and they have not lost their fascination yet.

Turning to page 113, we find “Totems for Famous Authors” by Stephen Hallett. He writes “In devising a crest or coat of arms the Herald’s College commonly makes symbolic allusion to some principal achievement in the new armour-bearer’s career…Why should not this excellent practice prevail in the literary world?” Hallett felt that the practical side of this would be the reading public’s ability to identify an author by his or her totem, thus differentiating the author from others bearing the same or similar names.

Hallett’s article states “at a literary symposium recently, a number of novelists set about devising totems for themselves and their friends.” Illustrating the article are the totems for Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy, J. M. Barrie, J. K. Jerome, H. G. Wells, and George Bernard Shaw, to name several, although it isn’t noted which novelist did the drawing. He wrote “At first blush it would seem as if a pair of handcuffs would be the most fitting totem for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, if one remembers only the brilliant Sherlock Holmes stories; but Sir Arthur has hopes of being best remembered in another and more classic vein, of which “The White Company” and “Sir Nigel” are examples. Certainly “The Song of the Bow”
In October 1956, my article “Mycroft Holmes: Private Detective” appeared in The Baker Street Journal. I had published articles in my high school and college newspapers, but this was my first appearance in a national publication. Over the years it has received more attention than anything else I have written about Sherlock Holmes. It has been anthologized by Peter Haining (without advance warning), referred to in a footnote in William Baring-Gould’s Annotated Sherlock Holmes and its thesis dismissed as unworkable by another Sherlockian. I was 19 and a student at St. Olaf College when I wrote it. How did this come about, you ask? Let me tell you a story.

I first learned of the Baker Street Irregulars in an article condensed and reprinted from The Baker Street Journal in the March 1950 Reader’s Digest. It was “The Case of the Baker Street Plans,” by Ellery Hudspeth; it had appeared in 1949 as “Baker Street Plans,” by Ellery Hudspeth; it had been a history of the genre written by Haycraft. In one of the libraries I found the Irregulars’ 1948 edition of “The Case of the Baker Street Plans,” by Ellery Hudspeth. I had read the book in blue, edited by Edgar W. Smith and containing an introduction by Christopher Morley.

By the time I was graduated from high school I had decided to become a professional librarian. It was while working in the High School Library during study hall that I had this epiphany. I went off to St. Olaf to gain a liberal arts education, something I had read was necessary preparation for a career as a librarian. I took along some of my small detective fiction collection, including the two-volume Doubleday edition of The Complete Sherlock Holmes. In Freshman English the teacher asked us if there weren’t some writer that we would like to meet. I think he expected us to mention Shakespeare or Ernest Hemingway or even T. S. Eliot. For some reason I decided that it might not be wise to say that the writer I most wanted to meet at that point was John Dickson Carr.

My private studies of the history of detective fiction had introduced me to the writings of Arthur Morrison, author of the Martin Hewitt stories. It was probably in one of Howard Haycraft’s anthologies that I learned that while Hewitt might be less spectacular than Holmes, he followed closely in his footsteps. If the stories were that good, I wanted to read them. I read all those that I could find.

I began my subscription to The Baker Street Journal early in 1956 while I was at St. Olaf and after reading a number of issues, decided to write an article for the magazine. My choice of a topic for my first effort was simple. Sidney Paget had illustrated the first collection of Martin Hewitt stories, Martin Hewitt, Investigator as well as the early Sherlock Holmes stories for The Strand, and his pictures of Hewitt resembled his portrait of Mycroft Holmes. The similarity of their initials seemed providential. What if? So I wove my theory that Sherlock Holmes’ brother had been a private detective in his younger days. I quickly wrote my first draft in pencil in a small notebook and later typed it up on my 1920s Remington Portable (revising it as well) and mailed it to Edgar W. Smith.

I still have the postcard he sent accepting my article for publication. Dated June 20, 1956, it arrived on June 25. In his own hand Edgar W. Smith wrote “Excellent! The BSJ will be proud to publish your treatise on Mycroft!” The excitement of having my manuscript accepted was matched only by my delight at seeing it in print a few months later. While I have written countless articles and published several books since, the joy of that first publication has never been equaled. The final evidence that I had become a published author came when my mother ordered the first volume of the Heritage Press Sherlock Holmes from Edgar W. Smith and had him send it to me at St. Olaf for my birthday. Smith’s postcard to her read, in part, “Did you see the October Journal, with his article in it?” It would be difficult to determine which of us was proudest of that achievement.
Dorothy Stix Donation

The Sherlock Holmes Collections recently received a vintage videotape featuring a CNN interview with Baker Street Irregulars Tom Stix, Jr. and John Bennett Shaw. The interview was made at the Baker Street Irregular Birthday Weekend on January 7, 1987, which celebrated the centenary of the publication of the first Sherlock Holmes story, “A Study in Scarlet.” The video shows the legendary John Bennett Shaw and past leader Tom Stix, Jr. being questioned about several canonical matters; their classical visages and characteristic witty responses are well shown and now available for future generations of Sherlockians. The videotape had been presented during a 1995 conference of the Norwegian Explorers when they celebrated the addition of John Bennett Shaw’s library to the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

The collections are indebted to the present “Wiggins,” Mike Whelan, who located the tape when I brought up its existence, and Mrs. Dorothy Stix, widow of Tom Stix, Jr., who donated the videotape. C. Paul Marten, MD, BSI

From the President

I want to thank all those that donated material to the Sherlock Holmes Collections, especially Lee Karrer, Jerry Margolin, Andy Peck, Otto Penzler, and Elliott Black. Everyone who contributes money or material helps us to achieve our goal of becoming the world center for the study and appreciation of Sherlock Holmes.

I remind all Friends to send in your contribution for 2006. A donation of at least ten dollars qualifies for membership and a subscription for the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Newsletter. Richard Sveum, MD, BSI

Musings

Delivery service, by mail and in one case by personal delivery, from the East Coast, the West Coast, and points in between to Minneapolis has been busy – Andy Peck and Otto Penzler from New York, Lee Karrer from Omaha, and Jerry Margolin from Portland Oregon. I would like to thank all four not only for their generous contributions but for the time each took to provide us with additional information. In Acquisitions, we take note of Elliott Black’s continuing donations. In addition to these gifts, Curator Tim Johnson is always grateful for the receipt of newsletters, books, articles, and the miscellanea that enables the continued growth of The Sherlock Holmes Collections.

J. Randolph Cox (“The Conk-Singleton Forgery Case,” 1967) was happy to comply with our request to write about his 1956 essay that appeared in The Baker Street Journal, and was surprised to see his still had his original notes. When asked if he had a continuous subscription to The Baker Street Journal, Randy’s answer was “Yes, by God! I have been a subscriber to the BSJ for 50 years! I bought whatever extra copies there were of the New Series pre-1956 from EWS (Ed. Note: Edgar W. Smith) and the entire Old Series from him. I filled in the gaps later with photocopies.” Our 100 Years Ago article focuses on The Strand Magazine and the readers who were eager to hear of Sherlock Holmes and his literary agent.

Paul Martin has written about the donation made by Dorothy Stix. Paul noted that the donation of the videotape reflects the “kindness of Dorothy Stix in donating the tape and the importance of BSI members and all Sherlockians in recording and documenting BSI history.” We thank all of you for your kindness in donating funds and materials. Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI
An Update from the Collections

It may be a process of time, or a deepening of acquaintance and friendship, or a greater level of comfort or confidence, or a combination of all those things (and any number of other factors), but for whatever reason, I came back from January's New York festivities thinking (and saying to anyone who would listen) “that was the best time I've had in New York since I started attending.” I want to publicly thank Mike Whelan, Mary Ann Bradley and the many other Irregulars who organize, assist, and in various ways make the New York weekend of the Baker Street Irregulars such an enjoyable and rewarding time.

What made it such a good weekend for me? In part, it was the lecture by Leroy Lad Panek. I came away from his talk on Thursday evening having learned new things and wanting to read new books – both signs for me of a successful evening. I tend to rate movies and lectures by the number of times I look at my watch. The fewer looks at the watch, the higher the rating. I didn’t look at my watch once during the course of the evening.

Or, it was the dinner on Friday night with the special highlight – for me - of hearing Terry Belanger (Cartwright) make those memorable comments, “…that’s not book collecting, that’s shopping.” Terry holds a special place in the library world as the director of the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia. As a past participant in the Rare Book School, I highly recommend the program that Terry has developed and would encourage readers to investigate the many offerings of the school. Complete information on Rare Book School may be found at http://www.virginia.edu/oldbooks/. I usually see Terry at the annual American Library Association/Rare Books and Manuscript Section conference, so it was an added delight to see and hear him in New York.

There were a number of other events and activities that contributed to a successful weekend, but for me the most memorable times were those spent in conversation with fellow Sherlockians. Some of those talks – in the Algonquin, at breakfast, over dinner – were quite long and explored any number of angles and avenues. Others, in many of the same venues, were brief or in passing. But all of them meant something and were important to me. I was especially pleased to meet Peggy Perdue, Curator of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Public Library, and look forward to working with her.

Many of you talked to me about gifts or potential future gifts. Some of those gifts, now realized and received by the University of Minnesota Libraries, are featured in these pages. On behalf of the Libraries, my thanks to all who remember the Collections with their financial and material gifts. These gifts continue to move us toward our vision “to be the world center for the study and appreciation of Sherlock Holmes.”

Tim Johnson

100 Years... Continued from Page 2

is a fine performance.” It is from these Conan Doyle stories that the elements of his totem are composed.

It would appear the 1906 readers of Strand Magazine couldn’t get enough of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or Sherlock Holmes. The same can be said of readers today. 😊

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI


References: http://www.bakerstreet-dozen.com/newstrandmag.html

http://www.strandmag.com/hist.htm
Generous Donations... Continued from Page 1

JERRY MARGOLIN
Jerry Margolin ("Hilton Cubitt," 1977) has been a collector for almost forty years. His collecting mania began with "car models, baseball cards, signed baseballs (Yankees only!!)" and other items. At the age of ten his brother gave him the complete Sherlock Holmes, and in his own words, he "was hooked." He began to buy paperback books and other relatively inexpensive items relating to Holmes shortly before his marriage thirty-five years ago.

In his early collecting career, Jerry followed the "vacuum style collecting" method championed by his friend John Bennett Shaw, but it was Norman Nolan, ("Godfrey Norton" 1972) who introduced him to collecting rare books. Jerry's Sherlockian collection has grown to an impressive state and includes almost all of the first British, American, Colonial and Continental editions, with the exception of the 1887 Beeton's Christmas Annual and the first and second impressions of the first book appearances of Study in Scarlet in 1888. A number of his first editions are in the original dust jackets, and he has a great number of rare pamphlets, ephemera and early parodies and pastiches. His art collection contains over "500 pieces of original art dealing with Holmes by the top cartoonists and illustrators in the country. It goes all the way up to an original Paget and an original Steele." Jerry's collecting focus is now on artwork and material from no later than the 1940s. Jerry, who works for a software company, is a member of The Baker Street Irregulars and the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

Jerry donated copies of the Poor Bibliophiles International's newsletter The Call of the Hunt, playbills of the Nov. 1974 production of "Sherlock Holmes" and Feb. 1965 Baker Street, mementos of BSI dinners and Gillette luncheons, several books, a Sherlock Holmes action figure, the Cleveland Public Library's "Sherlock Holmes: A Bibliography," a small needlepoint of Holmes, a children's menu with Sherlockian mask from Denny's Restaurant, the Oct. 23, 1991 This Week article "Crazy Collectors" which features Jerry on the cover, and a number of catalogs. When asked why he chose the University of Minnesota's Sherlock Holmes Collections as the recipient of his donation, he replied "It is the only place I thought to send it since I believe it is a great thing you all do to keep all this material alive for those collectors, scholars and Sherlockians who come after me and my generation of Holmes enthusiasts."

ANDREW PECK
When asked how long he'd been interested in all things canonical, Andrew Peck wrote "I've been a Sherlockian since elementary (what else?) school." He attended his first BSI dinner at the age of seventeen in 1970, and was one of the youngest people to receive an investiture ("Inspector Baynes, Surrey Constabulary") when he was given his shilling at the 1973 BSI dinner. His investiture reflected his professional interests: he went on to work as a litigator at a major New York law firm. He was appointed a United States magistrate judge for the Southern District of New York in Feb., 1995.

Andy wrote that when he first began buying Sherlockiana, he did it as "a (John Bennett) Shaw disciple, which is to say I wanted to be like John (and Peter Blau) and collect everything about Holmes." He now focuses on collecting a bit less than everything, and buys only those items which really interest him.

In his initial donation to the Sherlock Holmes Collections, Andy sent folders containing Luther Norris sales and related circulars, Hertzberg sales fliers and catalogs, Gravesend Book Catalogs and Aspen Book Catalogs. He wrote that he decided "to donate that material because it was the type of material John Shaw would have appreciated, and I don't want to compare the prices of items then with what they'd fetch on the market today...John had this way of making everyone feel that they were his best friend. I never made it out to Santa Fe, but attended 2 of his workshops (Williamsburg and Hoboken) and of course spent time with him during BSI weekends for years. He was a great guy, funny and knowledgeable and interesting beyond Sherlockiana." The Collections has Andy's letters to Shaw, and he promises the letters Shaw sent to him will "one day go to Minnesota."

OTTO PENZLER
Otto Penzler is the owner of New York City's The Mysterious Bookshop, and a seasoned bibliophile. Replying to the question as to when he started collecting books, Penzler wrote "That could take 20 pages. Pretty much around the age of 20 when I tried to buy out-of-print Sherlock Holmes books and found they were out of print and had
Generous Donations... Continued from Page 6

to start going to used book stores. Some generous booksellers helped educate me and I kept at it. I was a collector for more than 15 years before I opened the bookshop, which fellow collector friends and booksellers accused me of opening simply as a method of getting more and better books for my own collection.”

Penzler notes that this friendly accusation isn’t entirely true, “though the store and the huge number of books that passed through it did enable me to collect well.” His collecting habits were different than his friend John Bennett Shaw; he went after first editions in good condition as opposed to Shaw’s completist style of anything regarding Sherlock Holmes. Otto’s mystery fiction collection now numbers 60,000 first editions.

After an early career as a sports and news writer, he won an Edgar Award in 1977, with the late Chris Steinbrunner BSI, for The Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection. Two years later he opened the bookshop. He published The Armchair Detective (initially published by accomplished bibliographer and crime fan Allen J. Hubin of Minnesota) for seventeen years. He founded The Mysterious Press, Otto Penzler Books, and The Armchair Detective Library. He continues to write a weekly column for The New York Sun and edits an ever-growing list of anthologies. He was awarded the Ellery Queen Award in 1994.

Penzler’s donation included a file on Murray Shaw and several pastiches, as well as numerous papers and letters. He wanted the materials to come to The Sherlock Holmes Collections because it “does a fabulous job, not only a terrific collection but it makes archival material available to scholars.”

The four donations from four different individual are a welcome addition to The Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

References:
The Mysterious Bookshop website http://www.mysteriousbookshop.com/about/otto.php

Acquisitions

B
beaten’s Christmas Annual 2005, (sic) edited by Terri Haugen, recently arrived from The Sound of the Baskervilles.

Elliott Black continues to donate materials to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. A package was recently received that contained books, framed pictures, statues, newsletters and journals, CD’s, audiotapes and a 221B Brick.
Remembrances

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

In Honor Of
Gordon and Bonnie Everett
Susan Flaherty
Les Klinger
Julie McKuras
Julie McKuras
Max Michael McKuras
Liz O’Brien
Randall Stock

From
Thomas Galbo
Thomas Drucker
Andrew Peck
Richard and Fredda Caplan
Andrew Solberg
Julie and Mike McKuras
Joan O’Brien
Laura Kuhn

In Memory Of
Marlene Aig
Susan J. Beasley
Sally Bergquist
John Brousch
Steve Clarkson
James C. Cleary
Mable Clifford
Norma Edwards
Excommunicated Hounds of the Internet
Syd Goldberg
Richard Lancelyn Green
Richard Lancelyn Green
Richard Lancelyn Green
Richard Lancelyn Green
Cameron Hollyer
Dr. George Hudock
Allen Mackler
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From
Bruce Aikin
Margie J. Autry
John and Inez Bergquist
Allen J. Heiss
Jacquelyn Buckrop
The Three Garridebs
Charles Clifford
Ralph Edwards BSI
Robert Burr
Robert Hess
Vincent Brosnan
Robert Hess
I. I. Mayba
Steven Rothman and Janice Fisher
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Caroline Smerk
Jan Stauber
Jan Stauber
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Jan Stauber
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Tom Stix
George Welch

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