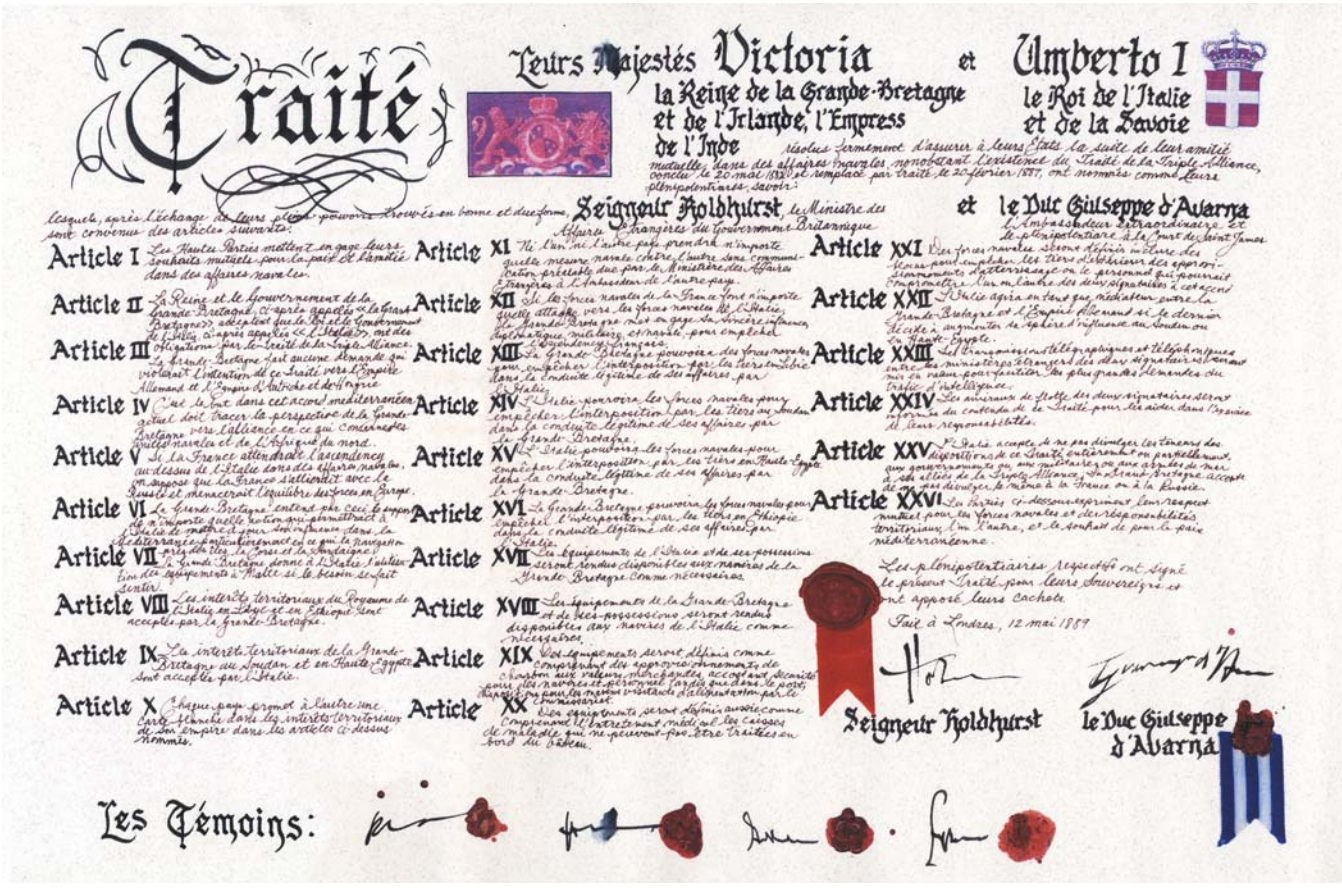
Presented by

Watson's Tin Box

IRENE'S CABINET

Results of the Literary and Artistic Aspirations
of the Membership in the form of essays, poetry,
and art with particular regard for the Victorian era
in honor of all things

Sherlockian



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Volume 10
2012

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The Naval Treaty – Genuine Faux
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Many thanks to Brent Morris
for his unstinting help with all things grammatical.
Without his help, I'd still he "looking it up."
BA

"And Mademoiselle's address?" he asked.
"Is Briony Lodge, Serpentine Avenue, St. John's Wood."
Holmes took a note or it. "One other question," said he.
"Was the photograph a cabinet?"
It was.
"Then, good night, your Majesty."
– *A Scandal in Bohemia*

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Note from the Editor

This is the 10th anniversary *of Irene's Cabinet* and we decided we needed to make it special. Watson's Tin Box is a very precious organization to its membership. We have been in existence since 1989 and have met continuously since our inception. Our founders, Paul Churchill, Rod McCaslin, and Steve Clarkson could not have imagined just how deeply their idea would take root and grow.

We asked our contributors this year to provide a memoir of sorts – to recall how they had come to the Tin Box or to be Sherlockians. The results are recorded here along with some memorabilia from the earliest meetings: meeting minutes, invitations and an early Mycroft quiz from the twisted and calculating mind of Steve Clarkson.

It's been fun wandering down memory lane and we truly hope you will enjoy wandering with us.

And So It Began

– Rod McCaslin

It was Christy's mind that first conceived of what would become Watson's Tin Box. A studious young lady who looked it, seventeen years old with bobbed brown hair and glasses, she attended classes at Centennial High School in Ellicott City with a diligent interest and a maturity beyond her years. Her mother Mary, whose appearance was similar to that of her daughter in both hairstyle, glasses and bookish demeanor, had married an eminent Sherlockian, Steve Clarkson, a leader not only of the renowned Six Napoleons of Baltimore as Harker I, Gasogene XII, Commissionaire IX and Napoleon XL VII, but also the son of a preeminent "two shilling" holder of the Baker Street Irregulars and a member himself of the BSI, alias *Morse Hudson.* As a result, Christy's home was filled with the paraphernalia of the Sherlockian universe – busts, *objets d'art* and, of course, shelves of books containing various versions of the Canon along with multitudinous volumes of relevant ancillary interpretive literature collected over two generations. This environment piqued Christy's interest and her step-father never tired of encouraging his new daughter in her reading of the cases of the preeminent detective and discussing them at length. In addition, America had recently been introduced to the Granada Television productions starring Jeremy Brett through "Mystery" on PBS, and these were avidly watched and critiqued by the members of the Clarkson household.

It seems that Christy couldn't escape the characteristic features of Sherlock Holmes. In two of her classes her teachers kept mentioning him and his stories to illustrate their lessons and lectures. First, in her World History class, her instructor (your humble memoirist), donned an Inverness cape, a deerstalker, and with a classically shaped but unlit pipe clenched in the teeth at the comer of his mouth, began in clipped sentences telling a story (more in the style of Hammett or Chandler than Doyle, however) meant to illustrate the similarities between the work of the historian and that of the detectives of mystery literature. Later, her Latin teacher, Mr. Paul Churchill, not only dressed as the great detective on Halloween (again the ubiquitous deerstalker) but often drew caricatures and cartoons utilizing characters from the Canon (Paul was a splendid and naturally gifted artist and illustrator) to enhance his own lessons making Latin seem anything but a dead language.

Along with being a motivational and beloved teacher, an instant and imaginative illustrator, and the most devoted of all husbands (his wife, who had recently passed away, had suffered the long debilitating trial of degenerative Lou Gehrig's disease and had the benefit of his close attentiveness and care to the end), Paul was also an insatiable collector. His first love was Coca-Cola and all the *accoutrements* associated with its labeling, bottling and design. However, it was Christy who would lead Paul to put soft drink advertising behind and send

him creating a collection of objects related to the cases of Sherlock Holmes second to none. She had approached her Latin teacher one day after class and asked him about his interest in things Holmesian. Paul told her that he had loved the stories since he was a child and that he had recently found the time to begin rereading them and found them more fascinating than ever. He also told her that he had been considering starting a Sherlock Holmes reading club for students along the lines of other clubs he had heard about. It was then that Christy told him that her world history teacher, Mr. McCaslin (me, again), also seemed to have a fascination with the stories, and she wondered if we would like to meet her step-father who had experience in the world of Sherlock Holmes associations. "Of course," he said.

One day, as I entered the social studies planning area, one of my colleagues told me that Paul Churchill had been looking for me. I knew Paul only casually as a member of the faculty whose appearance and attitude was that of a Falstaff with ethics. Rotund, bearded and with a ready wit, he would occasionally appear in the American history classes to speak, in tones of pathos, humility and humor, about his experiences in the Vietnam War (the extent of his military accomplishments were only revealed to me after his death.) Having been a part of the staff, I believe, since the founding of Centennial High, Paul's reputation as a teacher, as the life of any faculty party, and as a man quickly entered the consciousness of any new employee. At the time, I had just started my third year as a teacher.

Paul's inevitable place of sanctuary during the work day was the faculty smoking room. (Yes, that's what I said. Even the recent past is a foreign country.) This was an enclosed space behind the copy room that was anathema to non-smokers. As I opened the door, I had to peer through a cloud of tobacco smog equal to any fog one would have experienced in London in 1895. Wading into the miasma, I found Paul in the back of the room. There he told me, while my eyes watered and burned, about his conversation with Christy and asked if I was interested in meeting with her stepfather, Steve Clarkson, and finding out the mysteries of a Sherlock Holmes reading club with the intent of sponsoring such a group for students at Centennial High.

So, early one chilly evening, December 8, 1988, a time whose date I remember only because it was the same night as the premiere U.S. showing of Brett's *Hound of the Baskervilles,* I rendezvoused with Paul at the Clarkson home. At the door, Mary Clarkson (Christy's mother) greeted me, and I was ushered into her living room. There I joined Paul who was sitting on a printed, overstaffed couch flanked on two sides (at least in my memory) by imposing and over-stacked bookshelves, conveniently placed end tables for the drinks we were offered (single malt Scotch for me, no less), and ash trays. Here I was introduced to Steve. Somewhat professorial of aspect, confident, and intellectually intimidating, he began asking us about our interest in Sherlock Holmes and what our future visions entailed. Of course, since Paul and I were what my students today would call "newbs," our questions

were, well, elementary. And so the tutorial began. Starting with the Canon, the required text was the green-bound two volume annotated set of Baring-Gould's – not easily acquired in the '80s – we then moved on to the identification of Victorian objects such as a gasogene and a tantalus. It was at this point I believe that Paul's collection of Holmesian objects was first conceived, later becoming his "evidence boxes" for every story and novel gleaned from myriad antique dealers, E-Bay excursions and, as Paul called them, "faux originals." This was then followed by the Clarkson lecture on the workings of a Sherlock Holmes club – the titles of officers (also involving gasogenes and tantali); the story of the evening and discussion; and the notorious quiz with suitable prizes, not to mention the particularly painful puns and ribald references gleaned from the texts.

Soon those humble visions of an after-school book club for teens evolved into the idea of the first adult Sherlock Holmes club in Howard County, Maryland with possible recognition as a scion society by the mother of all Holmes organizations, the Baker Street Irregulars. It is not hard to imagine that this was Steve's goal all along. His own vision of this new group included three requirements derived from Steve's concerns about his experience with the Six Napoleons at that time. First, the group must allow female members (excluded from the Six Napoleons despite some arduous reform efforts led by Steve and friends.) Second, it must encourage new members to be actively involved reserving leadership positions initially to those joining the club after its founding. Hence neither Steve nor Paul served initially as officers. As a young man beginning my third decade with a wife and two young children, a relatively new career, and not being fully conscious (one isn't until 40), I had no desire for the responsibility.

Finally, it must be fun. This seems to be an elusive quality for some Sherlock Holmes groups, one that gratefully Watson's Tin Box has retained. This initial meeting also saw the first discussion of the aim of encouraging young people to read the Canon through the sponsoring of an essay writing contest. This goal, though initiated within the first year of the club's creation by an appeal to Howard County high schools, would not succeed until several years later when organized and developed as a middle school program by Andrew Solberg. The evening ended when Steve gifted Paul and me, to our surprised delight, copies of Gavin Brend's *My Dear Holmes: A Study in Sherlock* taken from his bookshelf.

Over the next year, Paul began his career as a full-fledged Sherlockian. His immediate goal, it seemed, was to recreate the sitting room of 221 B as a replacement for the living room of his own home. His skills as a collector of Coca-Cola memorabilia were now put into overdrive as the words of Dr. Watson began to take tangible form; photographs, paintings, prints, cheques, medals, weapons, and of course a gasogene and a tantalus. It was also during that year that The Agency, the formative name of the new club, met twice, consisting of four or five attendees around a window table at the front of the noisy Phoenix Emporium bar in downtown Ellicott City, chosen for its Victorian motif. The founding members at these initial meetings included Mary Clarkson; Paul's son Mark,

who would later engage as a private detective himself; Paul Lankin, whose wife M.H. was the head of the English Department at Centennial High; and Bruce Eberle, who later became the third Gasogene. The Agency's first Gasogene, elected at the third meeting in February of 1990, along with Mark Churchill as Tantalus (quizmaster); and Mary Clarkson as Commissionaire (tally-keeper of the bar tab) was Kern White – an artist and engineer who had also been involved in the Six Napoleons along with Steve. It is thanks to his careful recording of the proceedings of the meetings from that point that the names of attendees and the dreams and ambitions of the original members of what would be renamed in March 1990, Watson's Tin Box, are colorfully preserved. The following excerpt from his notes discussing the requirements of membership, thankfully never came to fruition:

> Postulants will be required to submit to a test of 60 questions – one for each story and novel in the canon – and be required to answer correctly some as yet undecided number of them. The charter members will each come up with 60 questions from the stories. The questions can be difficult as needed but the answers cannot require specialized knowledge (thereby eliminating nearly impossible questions that might be posited by Mark [Churchill] or Rod [McCaslin].)

By 1993, I had drifted away from regular attendance. At one point I was even sent five orange pips for missing three consecutive meetings. Unfortunately job, continuing education, and children distracted me from the pleasures of Sherlockian friendship, conviviality, and Canonical hermeneutics. I was never far away, however, as I received regular reports and copies of quizzes from Paul as we passed in the hall or sat together at faculty meetings often indulging in our school teacher memories of the studious teenager who first brought us together and led us to share with each other and, now many others, that "romantic chamber of the heart," that "nostalgic country of the mind, where it is always 1895."

I Had Heard of Him Everywhere

– April Curnow

It was late in the day when I met Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Though I had heard of him everywhere, his likeness and accounts of his cases abound, though some are of dubious and questionable accuracy – my true introduction to the great detective was unfortunately delayed. Time and again our paths nearly crossed, only to diverge. Holmes's endeavors to assist the King of Bohemia were treated in one of my school textbooks, but the class did not examine this problem and several years would go by before I discovered it myself. Likewise, allusions to his nemesis, Professor Moriarty, appeared in some of our symbolic logic exercises; alas, my own professor chose not to discuss this significant fact. And when the dramatic portrayal of Holmes by a certain Mr. Brett gained popularity, I enjoyed the actor's performance yet still could not claim a genuine acquaintance with the detective himself. That I ultimately became a student and admirer of Holmes (I will not say friend: he forges the bonds of friendship with very few) I credit to the convivial society known as Watson's Tin Box.

For some years now I have worked in a public library, where my greatest joy is introducing children to books. One spring, I read by chance of an essay contest sponsored by Watson's Tin Box with the support of the library and the schools. Its goal was to encourage students to examine Sherlock Holmes's investigations as chronicled by his trusted friend, Dr. John Watson. "What a wonderful idea," I mused. "And what a peculiar name for an organization with such worthy ambitions!" I resolved to learn more about both the contest and its sponsor.

My inquiry to the group's Gasogene – another peculiar name – was received cordially. Yes, the monthly meetings took place in a local restaurant. Certainly newcomers were welcome to attend. I confess, however, to some trepidation when I presented myself on the appointed evening and threaded my way through a crowd of diners toward the area set aside for this gathering, where seats were filling quickly. I realized I knew none of the people around me, and comparatively little of the towering figure whose extraordinary mind and capabilities has brought them all together. Yet here I was. A family of three invited me to join their table, and we fell into conversation.

Soon a bespectacled gentleman with a white beard approached us. He clasped my hand firmly as we made our introductions. I recall that he expressed interest in my surname, which is of Cornish derivation, and spoke of Mr. Holmes's language studies.

“Who are you with?” the gentleman asked. I was taken aback. Did I need a sponsor to gain admittance? “I’m not with anybody,” I replied.

“Then you’re with everybody,” he concluded. Such encouragement, encountered at every turn throughout the evening made me feel at home despite my diffidence, hopeful despite my ignorance. I left the meeting in higher spirits than I had enjoyed in months, eager now to become accepted by these Sherlockians and, in so doing, learn more of Sherlock Holmes himself.

If we are judged by the company we keep, so too do we absorb the qualities of that company. The members of Watson’s Tin Box spend a great deal of time with Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson. They have studied Holmes’s methods – but more significantly, they have embraced his spirit. Observant, often irreverent, sometimes disputatious yet clearly broad-minded, good listeners all and supportive in times of trouble, they reflect the finest qualities of the great detective. So I have, to my benefit and pleasure, joined their ranks and wholeheartedly made their game my own.

Crisp March Evening

Good night
Mr. Sherlock Holmes.
Bested at own game.

– Rick Warrington

Chair à Canon
No Place Like Home

– Andrew L. Solberg, ASH, BSI

Imagine, if you will, a Sherlockian who will not go to local Sherlockian Scion Societies. He will travel north to Philadelphia, or south to Washington, D.C., but will not venture a handful of miles to attend one. That person you are imagining was me back in 1994.

I had stopped going to scion societies in Baltimore. I had my reasons, and let's just say that they were legitimate. I was dug in, and nothing could coax me back.

Then, in 1994, Les Moskowitz, a Sherlockian friend for many years, told me about a Sherlockian group he had begun attending that met in Ellicott City. I was living in Columbia. "Andy, I know that you don't like going to local groups, but I think that you should try this." Then it was, "Andy, I really think that you should attempt the Ellicott City group." Then I received a very kind letter from a Diane Knoth (then Gasogene of the Tin Box) inviting me to attend. Still, I held back. By early 1995, Les resorted to, "For God's sake, it's in your back yard! You really have no excuse."

Finally, on one summer day in 1995 (last Monday of the month), I drove over to Bippy's Pub on Route 40 to finally try this group. Les was speaking that night, and I promised him that I would come to see him. There were about ten people at the table. Sitting at the head of the table was Steve Clarkson. Neither of us knew each other, as Steve had stopped going to other local scions even before I had. John Wenstrup was the Gasogene of the Tin Box at this time, and, when I had arrived and introduced myself, he asked if I would give the traditional toast to "The Woman" later that night. Huh? Um, okay. So I sat down with the napkin and started to draft something.

Born not very far from here
A century ago and some thirty five years
She was a contralto of obvious talent
And stole the heart of the royal ungallant.

Having committed the crime of being indiscrete,
She would not also become victim to Holmes's deceit.
She outwitted the Master in his own game
And instantly jumped into even greater fame.

(Please remember, it was on the spot, so try to be forgiving.) I showed it to John and asked if that was adequate. He looked confused, asked my pardon, and consulted Steve. When he came back he told me that that it was fine, but that, up to that point, people just stood up and said, "To The Woman!" I was, however, entitled to give any kind of toast to The Woman I wanted. He assured me because he had first checked with Steve.

Steve Clarkson was, I was to learn soon enough, a real conundrum. He was generous and mentoring to new Sherlockians more than any Sherlockian I have ever met. No one in my experience, then or now, exceeds Steve's caring nature and generosity. It really was quite remarkable. Then, there was also the Steve who flaunted his Sherlockian pedigree (his father had been an early member of the BSI and recipient of the Two Shilling Award in 1975,) and Steve was, himself, one of the youngest members ever to be made a BSI. He was competitive with other seasoned Sherlockians and could be gruff and blustery. That meeting, I learned that Steve may not be the Gasogene, but the Tin Box was very much Steve's "baby." Steve led what little discussion there was. Paul was the Tantalus, and the meeting was pretty much just the toasts and the quiz, with some toleration of Les's fine presentation. But, it wasn't boring, and it was fun to be with Sherlockians again. It was particularly fun because Steve and Paul were truly punsters. How could you not love a group called Watson's Tin Box that literally kept its meager "treasury" in a tin can called "Watson's Tin Can?"

The location, Bippy's Pub, was not the perfect place for the gathering. We did not have a room of our own, but only had a table, sitting elbow to elbow with other non-Sherlockian patrons. Also, the bar was in the same room as our table, so there were folks having heated conversations of their own after one too many drinks at the bar. I could hardly hear anyone at our table speak. For me, it was made a bit more interesting because it turned out that Bippy's was a favorite watering hole of a good friend. So, when he saw me, he inevitably would come over, say hello, and want to talk. Since he had been at the bar for a while already, he was usually not entirely coherent or easy to shake. Eventually, I was able to explain to him that I was there for a Sherlockian dinner, and he kept his visits short.

A year and a half (and one Gasogene) later, not only was I still attending the Tin Box, but I was asked to be Gasogene. I wanted to make some changes. But I knew that I had to have Steve's support because it really was his baby. I knew that, if Steve approved, Paul would, as well. So, one afternoon, I took Steve to lunch. I explained that I thought we needed a room of our own. I also wanted to have us discuss the stories more and have regular presentations. Steve listened to me without interruption, looked at me with that devilish look that Paul captured so perfectly for Steve's quiz book, and simply said..., "You're the Gasogene."

And, so I found that the Pizza Hut on Route 108 near Route 29 had a "party room" that they allowed groups to use. We met there for several months. Then the curse of the Tin Box

emerged.[1] The waiter informed us that this would be our last meeting there, as the Pizza Hut was closing down the party room. Searching in a panic, I found Giovanni's, an Italian restaurant (duh!) on Route 40. Giovanni, the owner, was an amateur boxer, actor, and professional chef and restaurateur. He loved our monthly visits. Ultimately, he, too, was struck by the curse of the Tin Box. He developed health problems, and his doctor told him that he had to give up his stressful restaurant business. He literally had tears in his eyes when he told us that we couldn't meet there anymore and that he was closing.

Before my term as Gasogene ended, The Six Napoleons in Baltimore asked me if the Tin Box would agree to be added as a co-sponsor to the Saturday with Sherlock Holmes annual program at the Pratt Library. Steve, like myself, had some deeply rooted issues with the Napoleons and I knew this would be a touchy subject. I decided that I would just notify the Tin Boxers of the request but pointedly not call for a decision. Steve was, as expected, completely opposed to the idea. He actually threatened to quit the Tin Box if we agreed to it. I told him to just think about it, as the decision date was many months away. In the interim, I discussed it with Paul. Over time, Steve cooled down and became less opposed to the idea. By the time we had to make a decision Debbie Clark was Gasogene, and she got Steve to agree that he would not leave.

In 2004,1 noticed that, while *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was on my daughter's 7th and 8th grade suggested summer reading list, none of the children in her school chose to read it. I thought that we needed to do something about that, and the idea came to me of holding an essay contest for middle schoolers. My concept was that they would read a Sherlockian short story and write essays as part of a competition. We would judge the essays and give prizes. My initial idea was that we would do it through the local public school system here in Howard County, Maryland. However, I had no idea where to begin.

I decided that in order to sell the concept, I had to project two characteristics of the contest. I started from the point that this was going to happen one way or another – a lot of hubris for someone who didn't know what he was doing. I also decided that no potential partner would be interested in doing this if it meant that it was going to cost them either money or time.

In February 2005,1 proposed the contest to the Tin Box at our monthly dinner. Nearly all of the Tin Boxers wanted to be on the Essay Contest Committee. While we enjoyed

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[1]Either while the Tin Box was meeting there, or shortly thereafter, the following restaurants have closed. Pizza Hut Party Room, Giovanni's Restaurant, The Tavern (at the site of Café de Paris), Rocky Run Tap & Grill, Luna C at River Hill, and China Chef's. We call this *The Curse of the Tin Box.*

debating what story the essays should involve, I pushed hard for having the children read "The Speckled Band," since that has consistently been rated the favorite story in all surveys taken since 1946 and because it does not mention cocaine. The Committee, kindly but rather reluctantly, acceded to my bullying. We also decided to develop a booklet for the contest that includes the story (which is in the public domain,) acknowledgments, pre-reading activities, post-reading activities, a glossary of British terms used in the story, tips on writing essays, recommended essay questions, and a contest entry form.

Luckily, Jacquelynn Morris works for the local Public Library, and she approached the Library Associate Director to determine the Library's interest in collaborating on the project. Without asking me, the Library representatives invited the Middle School Reading Specialist for the Howard County Public Schools to join in a planning meeting. We now had our entry into the school system.

The Library representatives could not have been more enthusiastic. We decided that the contest should target 7th graders. The Library said on the spot that it would collaborate on the essay project, making participation available to private and home-schooled children if the school system made it available to public school students. If the school system did not choose to participate, the Library would make it available for all students.

The representative of the school system was more reserved about participating. She told me that I had to develop a proposal for the school system. If the proposal was approved, they would make participation optional for the 7th grade English teachers. I said that I would be happy to develop the proposal, and I asked what it had to include. She told me that it should include a full description of the contest and the Tin Box, and it had to include a "rubric." I had about a month to submit the proposal, and I promised them that I would get it in on time. Not having the slightest idea what a rubric was, I searched the web and found that a rubric is a matrix of the judging criteria. I e-mailed my daughter's 8th grade English teacher, explained the essay contest, and simply asked her if she had a favorite website that had good sample rubrics. Luckily, she became very enthusiastic about the contest and became very involved. She reviewed our work, made many suggestions for the contest booklet, drafted a number of pre-reading and post reading questions, drafted the essay questions, and wrote the rubric.

During the planning of the contest, Steve Clarkson became critically ill with cancer. Before Steve eventually passed away, we were pleased to tell him that the Tin Box decided to call the First Prize in the essay contest *The Clarkson Prize* in his honor. Paul went to visit Steve in the hospital and told him. Steve smiled when he heard it. A few days later, Steve passed away.[2]

[2] Actually, it was the next day. See Paul's eulogy to Steve in the 2005 issue of *Irene's Cabinet* – Les

The school system approved the proposal, and the contest is now entering its ninth year. We have now reached over 2,550 students, introducing them to Sherlock Holmes. In 2008, the Tin Box won the prestigious Beacon Award from the Beacon Society, an organization that promotes the inclusion of Sherlock Holmes in education and library programs.

I continue to enjoy the Tin Box because it embodies all that a Sherlockian literary society should be. It is fun. It is informal, relaxing, and welcoming. The discussions are stimulating. The members are interesting dinner companions. The mix of seasoned Sherlockians and people reading the story for the first time results in many refreshing points of view. Tin Boxers are also creative activists, enthusiastic about helping each other's Sherlockian projects. Steve's requirement that the Gasogene change every year has kept the Tin Box fresh and remarkably free of personality domination by any one person. It also encourages newer Sherlockians to step up and take leadership roles. No person, when asked to be Gasogene, initially thinks that s/he is capable. Each does a great job. Yes, we have lost Steve and Paul, among others, all tremendous losses. But the strength of an organization is the extent to which it continues in spite of these kinds of losses. I see a long future for the Tin Box.

The earliest meeting minutes in the WTB Archive

– Kem White, Gasogene I

3-27-1990 Record of *Watson's Tin Box* Meetings.
19 February 1990 – My first meeting. We chose a name (*The Agency*) and officers (myself as Gasogene, Mark Churchill as Tantalus, Mary Clarkson as Commissionaire.) We discussed *The Gloria Scott*. This was the third meeting of the group to discuss Sherlockian doings. Rod McKaslin [*sic*]was not present.

26 March 1990 – My second meeting and first as gasogene. We discussed *The Musgrave Ritual*. Paul Churchill showed the assembly of a beautiful diorama he had put together of the Holmes' sitting room. Mary Clarkson was not present. We agreed to change the name to *Watson's Tin Box*. Mark is going to contact Peter Blau about whether it is taken and appropriate as a name. Rod McKaslin [*sic*] gave an interesting monologue on why he thought the 5 un-chronicled cases mentioned in MUSG were in fact three and why Vanberry the wine merchant was in fact a noted travel writer in the 1880's.

These minutes or early Tin Box dinners are part or the Tin Box Archives. Authored hy Kem White at the time, they reflect the early organisation of the Tin Box.

Of Petty Crime and Canonical Enthusiasm

– Peter Jacoby

Fittingly enough, the inception of my interest in the Canon occurred as the result of a real life crime, although it was not one that would have required the skills of Sherlock Holmes to solve and, indeed, circumstances showed was well within the abilities of my local version of "The Yard" to address. Flowing out of that incident have come my later introduction to, and interest in, Sherlockian scholarship and my acquaintance and friendship with other devotees of the Canon.

In 1962, one of my junior high school classmates and I were walking on the Upper East Side of Manhattan when we were accosted by three older and much larger teenagers, one of whom displayed a knife, and we were relieved by them of our folding money. The miscreants then disappeared around the comer, but my friend and I were fortunate to flag down a passing New York City police patrol car, which quickly followed the route that our assailants had taken and apprehended them. Inasmuch as they were all minors, they were released into the custody of their parents and the case was set for a hearing in the Family Court, then in the Chelsea district where I have since participated in some Sherlockian events.

On the hearing date I went with my mother to attend as a complainant/witness. The case was far down on the day's docket, and by the lunch hour break still had yet to be called. My mother, who was a great believer in productively using all available time to the improvement of my education, took me to a local bookstore to pick up some appropriate reading matter to occupy our afternoon until the hearing.

Browsing through the bookstore's wares, I happened upon a volume with an interesting cover depicting both an Oriental palace and a treasure chest, as well as several figures, some in Indian garb and others in European attire. The back cover indicated that the book's contents included plot lines about a secret treasure, mysterious killings, and the pursuit and capture of the guilty parties – all of which were catnip for a teenager's interests in that long ago time before the advent of video games. (The plot description may also have included some reference to a love interest as part of the tale, but if so it made no impression on me then.) I showed the book to my mother and, somewhat to my surprise, she nodded approvingly about purchasing it. The book was titled *The Sign of Four* by an author then unknown to me named Arthur Conan Doyle.

During the two hours in the afternoon before my case was called, I began devouring the story, which was for me a compelling "read." I was somewhat unhappy to have to break

away from it when the case was at last called, but fortunately the hearing lasted only a few minutes and my disappointment at the outcome (the defendants were simply encouraged in Biblical fashion to "go and sin no more") was tempered by being able to return to my reading on the bus ride uptown back to our home.

I finished my reading that same night, in awe of the story and especially the detective who was the protagonist. To my pleasant surprise, the frontispiece of the book indicated that there were several other related works by the same author, and in succeeding weeks my allowance went for purchases of all of the other volumes in the Canon, which I read with delight. So engrossed was I in the stories that I was not even disappointed by the quality of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes,* although the introduction indicating that these were to be the last writings in the Canon was a decided letdown.

Fast forward to the mid-1970s, when my further indoctrination as a Sherlockian occurred while on a week's visit to my in-laws at their home in Fort Lauderdale. Scanning the bookshelves there, I noticed a pair of oversize volumes titled *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* by William S. Baring-Gould. Naturally, I took them down from the shelf and soon found myself reading the same stories I had enjoyed as a teenager, but now replete with references to scholarly analyses of numerous factual matters in the Canon. In this way I was introduced to the hitherto unknown to me "Writings About the Sacred Writings."

Finally, during the winter of 1990-1991,1 was scanning the catalogue of a local continuing education lecture group and noted that there would be a presentation about Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes on a rare evening when fortunately I was not going to be occupied with my law practice. Seizing that opportunity, I attended the lecture and at the conclusion the presenter invited attendees to join at the upcoming meeting of his chapter of devotees of the Canon, The Red-Headed League of Jersey, of which the lecturer, the late Ira Dworkin, was a founding member.

Prior to that time. I had been aware of the existence of the Baker Street Irregulars, but the fact there were scion societies was then unknown to me. I was instantly taken by the thought of meeting with other enthusiasts, and in April 1991 attended the Red-Headed League's semiannual dinner. Over the years since then I have been an inveterate participant there, as much for my immense enjoyment of the company of the members as for our mutual interest in matters Canonical. I have even had the great pleasure and privilege of being an after dinner speaker there on several occasions to address various matters of Sherlockian interest, such as the missing manuscripts of parts of the Canon and Holmes's interest in and knowledge of the America of his day.

I also learned there that other scions were very welcoming to devotees of the Canon, and have participated in meetings of a number of those groups as well, thus widening my circle of acquaintances in the Sherlockian world. Participating in the events in the annual Sherlockian weekend in New York City, such as the Gillette Luncheon and the Baskerville Bash dinner, has also given me the opportunity to meet and break bread with Sherlockians from across the United States and even from other nations, all of us united by a common interest in the duo of Holmes and Watson.

Being a Sherlockian has immeasurably enriched my life, and I owe it all to my good fortune in being held up in New York City a half century ago!

Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest

2102 Clarkson Prize Winning Essay

This year, Watson's Tin Box is celebrating its Eighth Annual Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for seventh graders in Howard County, Maryland. Once again, the Tin Box partnered with Howard County Library and Howard County Public Schools. Participating students read *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* and wrote essays. English teachers in the public schools voluntarily participated, and Howard County Library made the participation possible for home school, private school, and public school students (whose teachers do not participate). Watson's Tin Box is very grateful to its partners for making this contest such a success. We survey the teachers to find out how many of them used *Speckled Band* as part of their curriculum as a result of the contest. This year, we reached approximately 350 children. Over the last eight years, the contest has reached more than 2,550 students.

Each year, the Tin Box has awarded First, Second, and Third Place Prizes to the top three essays. The First Prize in the contest is *The Clarkson Prize,* an award named after Tin Box founder Steve Clarkson, BSI, who was a mentor to so many young Sherlockians. Steve started a Sherlock Holmes literary society for young people in the late 1960s. It included members from across the country. Before the advent of email, the young Sherlockians would distribute their analyses of the Sherlock Holmes stories to each other in real envelopes. Steve continued his mentoring of young Sherlockians until he passed away in 2004.

This year, the Essay Contest winners are:

First Prize – The Clarkson Prize
Matt Rutkowski
Grade 7
Age 12
Bonnie Branch Middle School
Teacher: Ms Taylor

Second Prize
Eli Vogel
Grade 7
Age 12
Home Schooled
Entered via Howard County Public Library

Third Prize
Jessica Kerry
Grade 7
Age 12
Burleigh Manor Middle School
Teacher: Ms Manack

A hearty congratulations for a job well done goes to all three winners. With the approval of *The Clarkson Prize* winner, the winning essay is published in *Irene's Cabinet.* It is with great pride that we publish this year's *Clarkson Prize* winning essay on *The Speckled Band.* Mr. Rutkowski can be proud to be a young published author.

The Adventure of the Speckled Band

– Matt Rutfcowski

It was in *The Adventure of The Speckled Band* that Sherlock Holmes, detective extraordinaire, met the strange and mysterious Doctor Roylott. In the case, Julia Stoner, stepdaughter to Dr. Roylott and sister to Helen Stoner, died of an unknown cause a short time before her wedding. Years later Helen, herself, began to experience the same series of events that led up to her sister's premature demise. Frightened, she sought help from Sherlock Holmes. Dr. Roylott's relationship with his stepdaughters was by no means a good one. He was unconcerned about his stepdaughters' happiness or well-being, took extreme measures to keep their mother's fortune from them, and, yet, despite it all, his stepdaughter Helen still managed to feel defensive for him.

Dr. Roylott was most certainly unconcerned about his stepdaughters' happiness and well-being. Exemplifying this, Helen says, "You can imagine from what I say that my poor sister Julia and I had no great pleasure in our lives. No servant would stay with us, and for a long time we did all the work of the house." In the beginning of this quote, Helen states that she and her sister had, "No great pleasure," in their lives. From this, it is easy to deduce (as, if anyone would know how Dr. Roylott treated his stepdaughters, it would definitely be one of the stepdaughters themselves) that Dr. Roylott really had no regard for his stepdaughters' happiness.

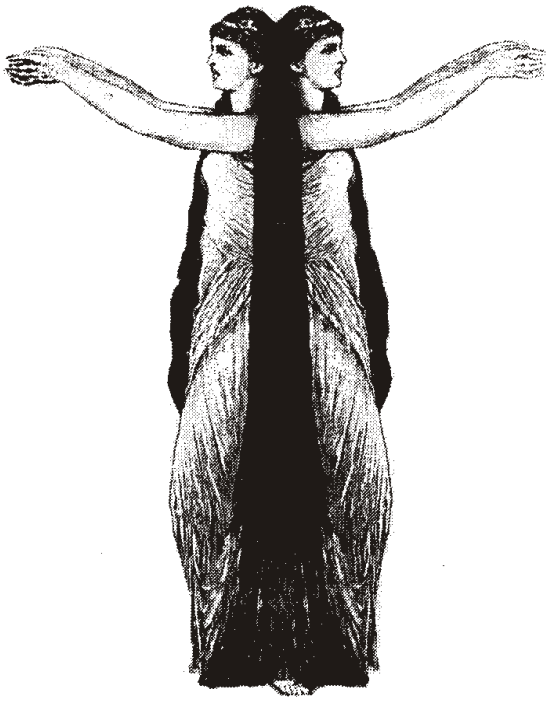
If he did, he would have endeavored to provide some sort of pleasure or source of happiness for them to brighten up their lives. Next, in the latter part of the quote, Helen tells how she and her sister were forced to do all the work in the house. Any caring parent or guardian would most certainly not allow this to happen. At the very least, they would have taken some of the work upon themselves to ease the burden on the other family members. However, Dr. Roylott literally abandoned Helen and Julia to labor away at all the household chores as he isolated himself in his room, and, as Helen states, "wandering away with them [the gypsies] sometimes for weeks on end." Obviously, this shows how little regard Dr. Roylott had for his stepdaughters' well-being, mercilessly working them by leaving them all the household work in the rundown and decrepit Roylott household.

Additionally, Dr. Roylott went to extreme measures to prevent the stepdaughters from claiming their rightful part of their mother's fortune. Holmes reveals to Watson Dr. Roylott's

method of dispatching his stepdaughters in order to keep their mother's money to himself. Holmes says, "He would put it [the swamp adder] through this ventilator at the hour that he thought best, with the certainty that it would crawl down the rope and land on the bed. It might or might not bite the occupant, perhaps she might escape every night for a week, but sooner or later she must fall a victim." This quote shows that in order to have sole claim to his wife's fortune. Dr. Roylott attempted to murder his stepdaughters, as, when married, they would have a third of the yearly £750 that Mrs. Stoner bequeathed to her family in her will. This also shows that Dr. Roylott thought of his stepdaughters so lowly that he attempted to murder them, just to ensure his future happiness. From what can be deduced from this quote, it is very evident how broken their relationship was and how Dr. Roylott did not care for his stepdaughters in the least.

Despite Dr. Roylott neglecting, disrespecting, and mistreating his stepdaughters, Helen still managed to find a place in her heart for him and felt defensive of him when he was spoken against. For example, when Sherlock Holmes discovers bruises left by her stepfather, Helen defends him, saying, "He is a hard man ... and perhaps he hardly knows his strength." It would take a good deal of love for a person to say something like that, especially after the years of mistreatment Helen had endured from her stepfather. So, despite most evidence pointing that Dr. Roylott's relationship with his stepdaughters was broken beyond repair, Helen may have just been holding it together with her love, if not for what her stepfather was now, then for what her stepfather had been – for the time before he had returned to Stoke Moran and changed into the vicious brute he was presently. In conclusion, while Dr. Roylott's relationship with his stepdaughters was most certainly a bad one, Helen still managed to have a soft spot in her heart for him and would defend him when he was subject to insult or criticism.

Dr. Roylott's relationship with his stepdaughters was broken and terrible in most respects. He had no regard for his stepdaughters' happiness or well-being; he took extreme measures to prevent the stepdaughters from taking their rightful part of the family fortune; but Helen still managed to feel defensive of him. In closure, say Helen and Julia had married. Dr. Roylott would be forced to survive on only £250 a year, and he had been accustomed to living on three times that much. Understandably, he would be afraid. So, although Dr. Roylott used extreme measures to ensure that this situation would never come to pass, he may have possibly done so out of fear, not, perhaps, simply because he was a bad person.



"No confidences, Watson, for they are mighty awkward...."

Face-to-Face Sherlockian Interactions in an Online Age

– Jaime N. Mahoney

"The rough-and-tumble work in Afghanistan, coming on the top of natural Bohemianism of disposition, has made me rather more lax than befits a medical man. But with me there is a limit, and when I find a man who keeps his cigars in the coal-scuttle, his tobacco in the toe end of a Persian slipper, and his unanswered correspondence transfixed by a jack-knife into the very centre of his wooden mantelpiece, then I begin to give myself virtuous airs. I have always held, too, that pistol practice should be distinctly an open-air pastime..." (*MUSG*)

I have it on reliable authority that I'm much more interesting in print than I am in person. There is no escaping the fact that I am hideously awkward. I all too frequently utter, "You too," when a waiter tells me to enjoy my meal, and even worse, I once inexplicably told my mother to "Have fun!" as she was on her way to a funeral. I don't know how to fill, or even be comfortable with, a long silence, and phone calls tend to leave me sweaty and pacing nervously around my living room until my cat attacks me. My high school years were the sort from which "Lifetime" movies are cultivated. I prefer books to most people, and the list of those individuals with whom I've learned to successfully interact is rather short. I am certain that I am neither the first nor will I be the last Sherlockian to ardently wish that the Diogenes Club were a real place. Face-to-face discussion, I had always thought, was both overrated and outdated.

My discovery of Sherlock Holmes as a teenager coincided with some of the earliest days of the internet. Online forums, chat rooms, and discussion boards seemed to have been just *made* for someone like me – someone who had trouble forming a cogent sentence in real life, but could be moderately successful if given the time to craft one. At this same time, I was just beginning to read the first stories in the Canon – stories about a man who had somehow managed to cultivate all his own seeming social awkwardness into a successful career, and a successful friendship. Scotland Yard may have looked at Holmes strangely as he threw himself to the ground looking for clues, but they held their tongues and called on him again. And Dr. Watson may have complained to his readers about the Persian slipper, the jack-knife, and the bullet holes in the wall, but he still wanted to be seated next to Holmes at the start of the next adventure. So, Sherlock Holmes was weird, and so was I, and the internet was opening up a whole new world of possibility for me to finally find a Dr. Watson. Although a Victor Trevor would have suited, even a Reginald Musgrave, and a Mrs. Hudson would have been better than all of the above.

The years went by, the internet changed, and so did I. I knew about scion societies, both big and small – what Sherlockian didn't? But I convinced myself that I need not be a part of one. The online world was rich with opportunities to express thoughts and opinions for someone like myself, and I didn't need to wait for an invitation to do so – that was the magic of the internet, after all. There was no one to ask permission or beg forgiveness. No one else's will to bend to – one of my earliest mistaken ideas about scion societies. Even Sherlock Holmes himself preferred the quick, impersonal communication of a telegram to a long, more intimate letter. The Detective seems to be, on the surface, a rather solitary creature, describing himself in terms of his profession as "the only one in the world." (STUD)

But it is all too easy to confuse "unique" with "alone," and Sherlock Holmes does not exist in a vacuum. Besides the long-suffering Dr. Watson and Mrs. Hudson, Holmes finds himself interacting constantly, with a seemingly countless array of persons: numerous members of Scotland Yard – including Inspector G. Lestrade who is one of only three persons that Holmes refers to as "friend" throughout the Canon (Klinger, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes,* 501) – and also other members of the international police force; his brother, Mycroft Holmes; his band of Baker Street Irregulars and other members of the invisible classes who provided him with help in his work, and even the endless stream of clients who found their way to the doorstep of 221B Baker Street. Even the Detective's 21st century persona, an obvious devotee of texting and email, finds himself in the offices of Scotland Yard for meetings, and with clients in his sitting room – desperate to speak to him face-to-face.

And so Sherlockians cannot exist in a vacuum either. Online interactions are easy and liberating, but even Sherlock Holmes understood the value of meeting one-on-one. Attending my first meeting of Watson's Tin Box was one of the great agonies of my life, and I cannot say that it has made me any less awkward, but I have met many people like me – who laugh at inappropriate moments or do not know how to end a conversation – but our commonalities are more than enough to overcome what I was thought were my own, singular, painful deficiencies.

All Sherlockians have a relationship with Dr. Watson's tin dispatch box and its illustrious contents (the lost tales of Mr. James Phillimore, the cutter *Alicia,* and Isadora Persano, the well-known journalist and duelist), but members of the Tin Box have a *connection* with it. It represents the vast, unknown potential of the Canon, and the limitless possibilities of this pursuit of ours. The mere existence of the Tin Box means that there is always a chance to find or learn something new. It means that there will always be new opportunities and that the door of Cox and Co., at Charing Cross will always been open for those who are trying to find their way to Baker Street. The opening paragraph to "The Problem of Thor Bridge" (where the reader is first made aware of Watson's Tin Box) holds new meaning to me now, a meaning I share with many others, and I look forward to each new person who discovers it in his or her time.

How I Came to Sherlock Holmes and Watson's Tin Box

– Debbie Clark, ASH

As far back as I can remember, I have loved mysteries. I read Nancy Drew and the Hardy boys and before that Honey Bunch and Norman and the Bobbsey Twins. When those ran out, I read Trixie Belden and other juvenile mystery series of that ilk. And that was after I read every mystery in the library of our tiny 3-room school house.

When I started junior high, CORE was in fashion. I don't remember what the acronym stands for now but it meant that you had the same teacher for English and social studies as a double period, and the teachers all read to us. I heard *Kon Tiki* and something by Rachel Carson in science, and have no idea at all what I heard in social studies. But, in English, Mrs. Russell read us Sherlock Holmes, and I was hooked from the start.

I am not sure what caught me. Was it the mysteries? Definitely. Who wouldn't be intrigued by "The Speckled Band," "The Red Headed League," and my favorite novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles*? Was it the deftly drawn setting of London in the Victorian age? Certainly. Was it the friendship of Holmes and Watson? Absolutely. But most of all, I was captured by the vivid personalities of Holmes and Watson – the cool and aloof Holmes who could solve anything through observation and deduction and the faithful Dr. Watson as his boon companion. It doesn't get much better than that, and I couldn't get enough of it!

When I first read "The Final Problem" and later "The Dying Detective" I was actually bereft, but consoled myself with the thought that Holmes *couldn't REALLY* be dead! There were other stories in other volumes out there... and I was going to find them!

Oddly, there wasn't much of anything by Doyle in the junior/senior high school library, so I tried the town library. We didn't have a public library branch there then and the Chestertown Library was a private concern run by two older ladies (one of whom was an avid mystery reader), and housed in one side of a very large converted house near the river. Each year, you bought a card for a quarter which allowed you to take out a book for two weeks. I had 4 cards and ran through the offerings of the children's room in short order. The larger adult fiction room had much more to offer, especially in the mystery category and I was a frequent borrower, but they still didn't have all the Sherlock Holmes stories.

At some point, I discovered that one of my friend's dads had several volumes of Sherlock Holmes stories, many of which I had not read! I borrowed them one at a time for months and finally decided I really needed to find a way to own them all myself, so I started a

campaign at home to get the family to join the Book of the Month Club, one of whose selections was the *Complete Sherlock Holmes.* It took a while, because my parents did not go in for book clubs; it was too easy to forget to send back the card saying you didn't want that month's selection. However, I was VERY persistent and finally wore them down. That Christmas I got the 2-volume *Complete Sherlock Holmes,* Doubleday Edition, and I was in seventh heaven!

But eventually, you have read all the stories, and then what do you do? I reread the entire Canon once a year and started looking for other resources. One day I discovered a copy of Edgar Smith's *Profiles by Gaslight* on the Chestertown Library's sale table, bought it, discovered the joys of the "writings on the writings"... and so began my journey into collecting.

Sometime later, I bought an undated, pirated edition of *The Sign of Four* I also found there, and much later, a poor copy of *The Hound of the Baskervilles.* It was held together by masking tape but it still had all the Paget drawings and a little oval photo of Gillette on the front cover. They're still two of my favorite items.

Smith's book has a whole section in it describing the Baker Street Irregulars and I made it my next goal to learn more about them. One New Year's, I discovered an article in the *Baltimore Sun* about a gathering of Irregulars in NYC and found that they published a journal. (That was how I also learned that there was a local Scion Society in Baltimore – the Six Napoleons.) There was no way I could get to NYC from the Eastern Shore of Maryland for the event (this was before I knew that women couldn't attend,) but I *could* get the *Baker Street Journal.* I wrote to Julian Wolf to ask how to subscribe and had a lovely note back from him with instructions. With a few lapses, I have subscribed more or less faithfully ever since. I even own a set of the "old series" of the *Baker Street Journal.*

I faithfully scanned the *TV Guide* for any Sherlockian offerings that came on TV. Very occasionally, you might even say, "irregularly," since TV reception outside of the three major channels was not very good; I could catch an odd episode of the Ronald Howard Sherlock Holmes series. When I could find them and it wasn't a school night, I would stay up VERY late to watch Rathbone and Bruce in the *Adventures* and the *Hound.* I managed to convince my parents I needed a tape recorder to tape them so I could listen to them anytime I wanted. (However, I usually skipped the spooky flute music in *Adventures.)*

During a vacation in Ocean City the summer I turned 14, I found a paperback "biography" of Sherlock called *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street,* by W.S. Baring-Gould which offered an explanation for some of those tantalizing questions about Holmes's early and later life which Watson chose not to share. I was enthralled! There were other people out there who were also interested in this sort of thing and played "the game" like I did!

A few years later, Baring-Gould's two-volume *Annotated Sherlock Holmes* was published and I spent a very happy Christmas break devouring it and its tantalizing and, oh so satisfying, annotations!

By the time I got to college I had discovered the *Baker Street Pages* newsletter (mimeographed and mailed in those days) and had submitted a few articles to them. I was still reading the *Annotated* cover-to-cover during breaks and keeping my eyes peeled for Sherlockiana wherever I could find it.

After grad school, I got my first teaching job and had a bit (a very little bit!) of disposable income, so when I saw Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven Percent Solution,* I scarfed it right up and probably read it in one sitting. (I saw the movie at least twice when it was finally released.) I had also discovered that occasionally the Six Napoleons sponsored a "Weekend with Sherlock Holmes" at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore and I started to attend. Around that time too, I started buying a short-lived Ellery Queen sized magazine called "Mystery" and in it I found an advertisement for "Sherlockcon" in Los Angeles. I had been to Star Trek conventions for several years (Mr. Spock being the closest thing to Holmes available at the time) but this was even more intriguing and closer to my heart! I wrote to the contact person and requested more information. She wrote back and ended her letter with: "Come if convenient, if inconvenient come all the same" and I knew I had found my 'peeps!'

I attended the convention and was delighted by the presentations, the welcoming people...and the dealers' room! It was there that I began to toy with 'realia' by buying an 1894 Baedeker's *Guide to Switzerland,* which the seller said *could* have been used by Holmes and Watson on the Hiatus. I loved the tongue-in-cheek conceit and enjoyed "playing the game." I met new friends there who invited me back to attend a John Bennett Shaw weekend workshop at Stanford a year or so later. (I actually won one of his diabolical quizzes! The poster I received is framed and still hanging in my den.) John put me in touch with Peter Blau, the first contact I had with anyone in a scion near me which accepted women.

After that, I attended several more JB Shaw weekends in Toronto, Williamsburg, and Berry College, GA, and attended the Red Circle whenever I could. (Friday nights are not the best time to travel into DC and back after a long week of teaching.)

I kept reading and collecting. Early on, I passed up a couple of bound *Strand* magazines with Holmes stories in them, because they weren't my favorite stories. (Sigh! We always regret the "ones that get away.") Then in the mid-80's a catalog came across my desk which changed everything.

In one of my several incarnations at Maryland School for the Deaf, I was on the mailing list of a number of community colleges and service organizations like the American Red Cross.

I got one from Howard County Community College's Continuing Education Division and in skimming through it, my eye landed on a short course on.....Sherlock Holmes!

The write up said students would read and discuss several Sherlock Holmes stories ... and visit the Sherlock Holmes museum in Maryland! Now, I knew of several Sherlock Holmes museums: in London, Lausanne, and Los Angeles but none in Maryland. If it hadn't been for that, I might not have gone but the curiosity got to me and I went. Thus began my introduction to Watson's Tin Box of Ellicott City, the Paul Churchill Museum and Evidence Box Collection and so much more. The game was most certainly afoot!

NOTE – I've replaced the drawing in the printed copy (which also appears in *Irene's Cabinet*, Volume 9, 2011) with this photo of the Tin Box given to me by the scion in 1998 upon my departure from Maryland to Florida. It's one of my most prized Sherlockian artifacts and I can appreciate how Dr. Mortimer felt when he thought he had lost his walking stick. – Les

Mycroft Quiz – 1993

– Steve Clarkson, BSI "Morse Hudson"

1. What address was given at the top of Percy Phelps' note to Watson?
2. Where had Victory Hatherly laid his hat in Watson's consulting room?
3. Mr. Scott Eccles described his experience as "incredible and grotesque." How did Watson define "grotesque"?
4. What was the name of the second waiting-maid employed by Alexander Holder?
5. What was the name of the Honourable Ronald Adair's erstwhile fiancé?
6. What did the Cockneys give to England?
7. What was the color of the box sent to Miss S. Cushing?
8. How long had Colonel and Mrs. James been married?
9. In Sidney Paget's illustration for Strand magazine, Holmes is depicted wearing a "deerstalker" hat *en route* to Dartmoor and Kings' Pyland. How was this headgear described in the text?
10. How old was Professor Moriarty when he wrote his treatise upon the Binomial Theorem?
11. Where did Professor Coram's third secretary attend public school and university?
12. How many clerks lost their billets at Coxon & Woodhouse?
13. In what town did Susan Cushing reside before moving to Croyden?
14. How many tracings of Henry Wood's footmarks did Holmes obtain?
15. What colour was the dress bought by "William Darbyshire" for £35.15s?
16. On the day of his first interview with Professor Moriarty, Holmes experienced 3 separate attempts on his life. What were they, in the sequence in which they occurred?
17. Professor Coram was engaged in the study of documents from Coptic monasteries in what two countries?
18. What were the dimensions of Lord Holdhurst's private room?
19. With what firm did Victor Hatherly serve his apprenticeship?
20. What was the first name of "the noble Garcia"?
21. How old was Mary Holder when her father died and she went to live with her Uncle Alexander?
22. To what three card clubs did Ronald Adair belong?
23. Which of "Harry Pinner's" teeth was badly stuffed with gold?
24. Name the Liverpool to London boat on which Jim Browner did not serve.
25. What was the name of the street urchin Holmes used to watch Henry Wood's residence?
26. What were the contents of the bag Inspector Gregory gave to Holmes at the scene of John Straker's death?
27. At what o'clock was Watson instructed to reach the other end of the Lowther Arcade?
28. Anna Coram used three terms to describe (as opposed to name) the group in Russia of which she and her husband were members. What were those terms?
29. The Naval Treaty comprises how many articles?

30. In guessing at the location of Colonel Lysander Stark and his confederates, various members of Holmes's party opted for each of the four cardinal points of the compass. Who opted for which direction?
31. What encircled the centre of the "voodoo doll" or homunculus (for lack of a better term)?
32. What was the colour of the lining of the case containing the Beryl Coronet?
33. Where did the "old book collector" have his little bookshop?
34. What alliterative term of self-reproach did Hall Pycroft use?
35. What great musician did Holmes discuss with Watson after they learned of Sarah Cushing's sudden illness?
36. What was the official cause of death listed for Colonel James Barclay?
37. What was the winning margin in the running of the Wessex Plate?
38. What was the name of the driver of the third cab, the one taken by Watson to Lowther Arcade?
39. How was Susan Tarleton occupied at the moment Willoughby Smith received his fatal wound?
40. From what station did Percy Phelps take the train home after the theft?
41. What was the station master's "prescription" for Colonel Lysander Stark?
42. How old was "Mr. Henderson" of High Gables?
43. What was the name of Alexander Holder's residence.
44. What case did Lestrade handle "fairly well," according to Holmes?
45. What was the total compensation offered to Hall Pycroft by "Arthur Pinner"?
46. Where did Jim Browner's boat dock in London?
47. Name three different animals mentioned by Henry Wood. (Snakes don't count.)
48. Name the six horses entered in the Wessex Plate.
49. What plants fringed the footpath above the Reichenbach Falls?
50. How long was the scratch on the wooden bureau in the study at Yoxley Old Place?
51. What was the reward offered for the number of the cab that dropped a fare at the Foreign Office?
52. What colour was the exterior of Colonel Lysander Stark's house?
53. What was the name of the rustic who pulled Signora Victor Durando from the train?
54. How much did Holmes pay for a pair of Sir George Burwell's boots?
55. How many times did Mrs. Hudson change the position of the wax bust?

The remaining five questions single out items appearing in one of the Adventures upon this Mycroftian Inquisition is based. Identify the Adventure of each of the following:

56. A copy of the British Medical Journal
57. A Bunsen burner.
58. A hogshead.
59. A beef sandwich.
60. An opera-hat.

Answers on page **46**.

Sherlock by Wireless

– John C. Sherwood

Here's further evidence that the surge of interest in the Master is alive and well: Holmes and Watson recently visited a small American town, through a revival of classic radio scripts from the 1930s and 1940s. Let me tell you about it.

As longtime Tin Boxers know, this humble scribe and former gasogene was forced to search for greener pastures in 2009, driving him from the East Coast to explore Sherlockian shores in the Great Lakes area. After a few detours, he landed eventually in his hometown of Marshall, Michigan, where he reconnected with many of his old friends – including a certain Brooks Grantier. Let me tell you about him, too.

Brooks is a church organist in Marshall as well as a master of about seven or eight other musical instruments, literature and history. He's also a gifted entertainer and raconteur. Before the late, great Paul Churchill played Watson to my Holmes during a host of appearances on the East Coast (and as far off as Nashville!), there was Brooks Grantier.

From 1985 until I left Michigan for the East in 1999, Brooks and I presented approximately 100 Sherlock Holmes Mystery Weekends at the Victorian Villa Inn in Union City, Michigan. Although trained as a musician rather than as an actor, Brooks' natural Watsonian demeanor, his gentlemanly nature and his knowledge of All Things lent itself admirably to our productions.

On my return to Michigan, I naturally went to work to revive interest in our mystery weekends – and that still may happen. In the meantime, however, something else transpired that turned out to be a creative departure from the norm.

Another friend in Marshall is Randy Lake, who runs the Great Escape Stage Company, an acting troupe with its own theater in the center of town. I've served on the company's advisory board for years, and one day Randy and I sat musing about the kinds of shows that might be staged quickly without demanding a great deal of preparation or rehearsal.

I suggested a notion that's lingered in my mind since first hearing Jim Arva's great talks about the classic Holmes radio programs performed by Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. I suggested we locate a couple of these old scripts and perform them live, complete with sound effects, as if they were being performed in a radio studio.

Randy was immediately enthusiastic. He had performed in a live reading of "It's a Wonderful Life" a few years before, and knew that audiences enjoy the concept of watching

a radio show performed live. And, while he's not a Holmes fan himself, he also realized interest in the character is high because of the Guy Ritchie movies and BBC television series "Sherlock." He asked me to assemble a working script, and I went on the prowl.

The Internet is a wonderful thing. Thanks to Google, it wasn't long before I had precisely what I needed – two scripts based on original stories, to keep the theme as close to the "real Sherlock" as possible while focusing on the entertainment value. Each script's performance time would run just under a half-hour. With suitable expository material and an intermission, these could be stretched into an evening's entertainment of reasonable length.

The two public-domain scripts were found at the website **www.genericradio.com**. I selected Edith Meiser's 1939 script for "The Musgrave Ritual" and the 1945 script by Denis Green and Anthony Boucher for "The Problem of Thor Bridge."[1] (Doyle's original "Thor Bridge" remains under copyright, but that protection doesn't apply to derivative works for which the copyright has expired; we were on safe ground as long as we didn't publish or record the original.)

What was priceless was the fact that the two programs included commercials for Petri Wine and Bromo Quinine Cold Tablets. Naturally, we would include these in our staged performances, complete with props. Randy was able to manufacture a label so we would have a bottle of "Petri Wine" to display – and pour from – on the set.

Now, just patching two old scripts together does not a satisfying show make. The working script required an analysis of characters and actors, necessary sound effects and musical interludes as well as additional text to bridge between the episodes – including an introduction that would explain to audiences what we were doing.

Brooks came to the rescue by creating the many musical interludes. He transcribed that classic organ music and re-recorded it on an electronic synthesizer programmed to sound like a Hammond from the 1940s. The results were nearly indistinguishable from the originals. I also felt that the script needed to provide some historical insight into Rathbone and Bruce as real people and as personal friends, so I created a fictitious dialogue between them based on information from David Stuart Davies' "Holmes of the Movies." In the result, Watson makes an off-air remark to Rathbone that they wouldn't be telling a previously mentioned story (invented by Green and Boucher) called "The Vanishing Elephant."

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[1] Those scripts can be found at **http://www.genericradio.com/series.php?tag=sherlockholmes** - Les

BRUCE (to Rathbone)
Once of my favorites, actually. That elephant. Tough thing, leaving it out.

RATHBONE (to Bruce, dismissive):
Come now, Willie, old boy. Doyle didn’t even write it.

BRUCE:
What of it? It’s a corker, as the man said. The writers make up a lot of these out of whole cloth, and you know it just as well as I do, Basil. Doyle wrote only 60 Holmes stories, and we’ve done hundreds of these broadcasts. Those other tales have to come from somewhere. The audience demands it. So do our wallets, you know.

RATHBONE:
I suppose I’m something of a purist when it comes to Doyle.

BRUCE:
Hmpf. Even when Doyle didn’t write the story, I haven’t seen you turn down the paycheck.

RATHBONE:
Quite right, old fellow. You have me there. I admit I’m of two minds about it all, especially the character of Holmes. I rely on him for my livelihood, but I can’t say that I truly like him.

BRUCE:
Oh, now, really. You don’t like Holmes?

RATHBONE:
Oh, he’s magnificent, an astonishing reflection of Doyle’s genius. But he’s so . . . chilling. I once said to my wife the thing I would dread more than anything would be to find myself seated by him at a dinner party, because he’d frighten the daylights out of me. I think playing him has given me a kind of inferiority complex. I’m afraid that people might think I’m like that at home.

BRUCE:
Well, I know you’re not, Basil.

RATHBONE:
Yes. And I know you’re not a dunderheaded old boob.

BRUCE: (wryly)
Awfully kind of you. You know I don’t like playing Watson like that. He really was a very intelligent, brave and literate fellow.

Someone should play him straight someday. I believe you'd prefer to have the real Watson seated next to you at that dinner party.

RATHBONE:
Oh, but why should I want that when I have you! You're quite sufficient. Extraordinarily sufficient.

BRUCE: (to himself)
Hmpf. Sufficient.

This dialogue opened the second act, but we also needed something amusing with which to sustain a lighthearted, entertaining mood before diving into the depths of "Musgrave."

I realized we couldn't do better than include the short sequence drawn from the 1945 show "Request Performance," during which Bruce and Rathbone switched roles as Holmes and Watson. That original clip can be found at **http://tinyurl.com/3hxrcjd**. I transcribed the clip, removed the references to Dick Powell's detective character, and we had what we needed.

You may already have figured this out, but the first act would be the 1945 "Thor" and the second act was the 1939 "Musgrave." I'd reversed the order in which they were written, chiefly because (a) the mumbling Watson at the end of "Thor" perfectly set up the joke for "Request Performance" at the start of the second act, and (b) while "Thor" is a great puzzle, "Musgrave" offers a far more dramatic and compelling story (and startling sound effects) with which to climax the entire show.

In fact, Meiser's script for "Musgrave" offers a compelling and dramatic embellishment from the Doyle original. Meiser made repeated references to lead the audience to believe Rachel Howells was pregnant by Brunton. Two of Meiser's lines of dialogue are exceptionally suggestive, especially for 1939 ...

RACHEL:
But you will marry me -- you must. I haven't told you before, because I didn't want to worry you, but folks are beginning to suspect and I can't --

And...

BRUNTON:
Marry you -- (LAUGHS) -- What kind of a fool do you take me for? Marry a girl like you that lets a fellow -- (LAUGHS)

Less inventive was Green and Boucher's creation of a character named "Cesar" for "Thor." This fellow appears out of the blue, and is described as a manservant who came from

Brazil with the wife of J. Neil Gibson. The character is portrayed as speaking Spanish, and the local constable expresses suspicion of him for no good reason at all other than to provide the audience with an additional red herring where none is needed.

To my mind, the creation of "Cesar" was misconceived and needless, so in a fit of hubris I decided to "fix" the Boucher-Green script. The following dialogue is my own, except for the script's original words, which are included in brackets.

[HOLMES:
Thank you, Cesar, that will be all.]

[CESAR:
Muy bueno, senor.]

[SOUND: CESAR'S FOOTSTEPS AWAY]

WATSON:
Strange thing about that man.

HOLMES:
Why do you say that, old fellow?

WATSON:
Not actually Brazilian. He speaks Spanish. The language of Brazil is Portuguese.

HOLMES:
Yes, but Portuguese is not the only language spoken there. Spanish is found throughout many surrounding countries, as well as in Brazil itself. To my eye and ear, that old fellow's rough gaucho manner revealed Argentinian roots. But are we looking for an Argentinian? Certainly not yet. Be cautious not to be distracted by suspicions of your own making.

WATSON:
Hum. Perhaps. But, [you know, Holmes, I still think the case against Miss Dunbar looks very black.]

In the case of "Thor," the perpetual burbling of a river running beneath the bridge was achieved by an actor who blew through into a straw into a glass of water. When the stone-weighted gun is pulled into the river, the sound was achieved by pulling two plungers out of a bucket of water (the sound of a plunger pushed *into a* bucket of water is, oddly enough, not as effective).

The Great Escape Stage Company draws on an array of talent, and we found an exceptional stand-in for Harry Bartell and Knox Manning, the two announcers for these original scripts. He was Chris Blackford, an actor with great vocal skills. Chris also produced a west-country accent for the role of Sgt. Coventry in "Thor" and an scholar's voice for the part of Brunton. He even sang the Petri Wine commercial, to the cast's endless amusement.

Interestingly enough, Chris happens to be something of a Holmes fan, having read a great many of the stories and novels over the years.

Chris's wife, Vanessa Blackford, had the challenge of playing the innocent and ethereal Grace Dunbar and the earthy and not-so-innocent Rachel Howells. Local actor Greg Rietsma lent his voice to the overbearing J. Neil Gibson and the effete Reginald Musgrave. Cameron Lake handled all the sound effects (he especially liked firing the gun during "Request Performance") and Kim Forde handled the technical details of lights and musical effects.

Rounding out the cast were myself and Brooks in our familiar roles as Holmes and Watson. Because we also were portraying Rathbone and Bruce for the very first time, it made for an exceptionally new experience – and we're glad to say that Marshall's audiences were very kind in their compliments!

The "Sherlock By Wireless" cast on the set of the "Mutual Broadcasting System" in June 2012: from left, Cameron Lake (sound effects), Kim Forde (technical engineer), Brooks Grantier (Nigel Bruce/Dr. Watson), Chris Blackford (Harry Bartell/Knox Manning/Sgt. Coventry/Brunton), John Sherwood (Basil Rathbone/Sherlock Holmes), Vanessa Blackford (Grace Dunbar/Rachel Howells) and Greg Rietsma (Neil Gibson/Reginald Musgrave). Randy Lake, the director and producer of the Great Escape Stage Company, is not pictured.

Si Requiris Monumentum, Circumspice

– Jacquelynn Morris, ASH

Fifteen years ago I was going through some changes in my life. Leaving a bad marriage, working outside the home for the first time since my children were born, and pursuing my interests in the mystery fiction community – I was living my life *de novo,* which means to "begin again." I'd already been involved in AOL's Mystery Fiction Forum and the Sherlock Holmes chat for about six months, enjoying finding kindred spirits online, before I "met" Watson's Tin Box.

While getting to know fellow Sherlockians and other mystery fans online I found out about an annual mystery conference in Bethesda, Maryland, where several of my new acquaintances would be in attendance. We made plans to meet up and had a marvelous time together, but most of them had flights out before the tea party at the end of the conference. I attended the tea alone and, looking for a table, found one with many empty chairs and two women, who graciously invited me to join them.

"What kind of mysteries do you like?" one of the women asked me. "Sherlock Holmes," I replied. She smiled, and exchanged a glance with her companion. And so Sherlock Holmes-by name-connected me to what would become the most rewarding time of my life.

For the woman who asked the question was Debbie Clark, member of Watson's Tin Box; she invited me to attend the next meeting. Up until a few months prior I had no idea there were other Sherlock Holmes fans, and certainly had no knowledge that scion societies even existed. Here was one nearly in my own backyard! Though I was intimidated by my own misperception that the group would know so much more about Holmes than myself that I would feel overwhelmed, Debbie's description of the welcoming nature of the Tin Box convinced me to give it a try.

Though it's been 15 years since that first meeting, I remember it well. I walked into a room of strangers, but left with a life filled with new friends. I remember very clearly that I was warmly welcomed by Andy Solberg and Paul Churchill, and, of course, Debbie who was delighted to see me again. Steve Clarkson was there as well, but I remember it took me a few meetings before I understood that his gruffness was just his way, and became part of his charm. Before too long we became good friends. At one of my first Tin Box meetings I met Beth Austin, editor of this publication, who at the time was relatively new to the group as well.

From the very start I was accepted, and never felt judged for my ignorance. Instead, I was encouraged; even the most inane comments I made were met with kindness and friendliness.

The entire group seemed to really enjoy each other's company; if there were any undercurrents of animosity or issues between anyone it never became evident to me. While at first I believed it to be too good to be true, I found that it really was true. As time went on I realized that much of it had to do with the underlying spirit of the group – we were there to share our love of Holmes and Watson and the Canon. Nothing else was relevant.

As time went on I found out that the tradition of Watson's Tin Box is to change leadership every year. The leader, or president, is called "Gasogene," and serves the group for a one-year term. The ruling Gasogene chooses their successor. I've been honored to have served as Gasogene twice. The only other person to have served twice is Andy Solberg; in fact, it was Andy who asked me to serve a second term. It's been part of the spirit of the Tin Box – with each new leader we gain a new perspective, as everyone brings something new to the group.

The tradition of allowing others to lead has encouraged many of us to pursue pet projects. Gasogenes over the years have incorporated annual events and projects into the framework of the Tin Box, such as the Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for 7th grade students, this publication – *Irene's Cabinet,* our formal dinner, a symposium, and a January gathering called The Mycroft. It was in my second term as Gasogene that I presented the Tin Box with my crazy idea of an annual symposium. The idea was well-received and I was encouraged to pursue it. During a brainstorming session the symposium became known as "A Scintillation of Scions" when Debbie Clark created a collective noun for the family-reunion type gathering I envisioned. We recently presented our fifth Scintillation, with attendance of over 80 Sherlockians from nine states (and one from London, England); word has gotten around and our 2013 event may be larger still.

Because of the Tin Box I sought out other Sherlockians and have made dear friends all over the world. I have had the privilege of attending many Sherlockian events; some of which invited me to speak. I was invited to contribute to an upcoming *BSI Manuscript Series* book, to be released in the latter part of 2012. I was invited to become a member of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes. I am part of the movement to save Undershaw, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's former home in England. It is the spirit of the Tin Box which inspired and encouraged me to pursue these many avenues, and to meet many new friends along the way.

This spirit of the Tin Box was born in the delightful personality of Paul Churchill, one of the founding fathers of the group. "Delight" is a word that aptly describes Paul, for not only did he bring delight to everyone with whom he had contact, but he delighted in everyone and everything. I never heard Paul say one mean thing about anyone – even people who might have deserved it. If you met Paul, you were his friend for life. Watson's Tin Box was, and is, the manifestation of Paul. I owe so much to the Tin Box and to Paul Churchill.

Because of that chance meeting with Debbie Clark, and the life-changing experience of being a member of the Tin Box, my life has taken a direction I never could have dreamed of. I have lived my life *de novo,* in fact, I chose it for my investiture name for the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes.

We lost our dear Paul nearly four years ago now; we lost Steve Clarkson just a few years earlier. Paul delivered a moving eulogy at Steve's funeral which seems an apt tribute to Paul himself, and to the ongoing success of Watson's Tin Box.[1] I leave you with the final words of Paul's eulogy to Steve Clarkson:

"Si requiris monumentum, circumspice: If you seek a monument, look about you. We are the monument, the legacy which he has left behind..."

[1] An abridged version of the eulogy was printed in *Irene's Cabinet*, Volume 3 - 2005. - Les

Say Black Peter

– Beth Austin

Once upon time, there lived a young girl who fancied herself literary. Her favorite past time in the whole wide world was to read. Read anything, well anything in English anyway. She had no facility for foreign languages despite her six years of public school French. Mind you, she could mimic the sound of other languages, sort of like Sid Caesar and his always entertaining "double talk," but she could never really learn one. She could never get past the concept of words being masculine and feminine. That just baffled her altogether. But in her native English? She could and *would* read anything from *War and Peace* to the label on the breakfast cereal box.

When she grew up and went to college she continued her reading ways so much so that she declared herself to be an English Literature major. She did not require non-majors (corporals, sergeants, or captains) to salute her majority but she did consider it at quiet moments while tutoring the freshmen illiterai. You know, those blank faces, so daunted by the question that everyone in the room can hear the cricket chirping in their empty, cavernous, echoing brain?

Then the inevitable happened. She graduated from college. Horrors! She loved the academic life but knew of no way to stay there. She was no teacher, no professor. So sadly she returned to the world of her origin. The "real" world. Heavy sigh.

Time passed and she began to long for the companionship, the intuitive understanding of like-minded people. She began to actively search for other readers. She found none. Woe was she. She met any number of people but the answer to her most illuminating "get to know you" question – What was the last book you read? – was all too frequently met with loud cricket noises, or worse, the name of a magazine, *Sports Illustrated, Cosmo,* or heaven forbid *People*.

She despaired. She became depressed. She stopped smiling. She stopped showing any interest in her fellow readers. What was she to do? She had begun to lower her standards. No longer did she demand that the reader prefer LITERATURE, no longer did she require that the reader enjoy the same genre as she. She would take even a reader of Danielle Steele romance if she could find one. She found none. Oh, woe upon woe! Excited about a new book she was reading that cast Lucretia Borgia as the evil witch in Snow White, she absolutely despaired when not a single one of her young co-workers knew who Lucretia Borgia was never mind that they could not appreciate such a clever conceit.

Now, our princess was a deeply committed reader even the point of reading dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference books. She had lately acquired a dictionary of eponyms – this then is how she became the queen of the trivia game. Not only did she read the most obscure information but she retained it and in so doing transformed information into knowledge.

One day while dallying in a book store she found a most beguiling volume – *Encyclopedia Sherlockiana* by Matthew Bunson. She was intrigued. A whole encyclopedia just about Sherlock Holmes. Whoever had heard of such a thing? She recalled having read the Sherlock Holmes stories as a teen but not much more. A gift. She remembered it had been a gift. A lovely two volume boxed set in green (leather?) All of the Holmes stories with special notes and illustrations. She recalled reading it cover to cover to cover to cover and then moving on. Nothing special.

But here someone had thought enough about the stories to make an encyclopedia?! The very notion was tantalizing. She took it home for further study. She read about *The Crucifer of Blood*, cryptography, and Cubitt, Hilton. She read about Mormons, morphine, and Morphy, Alice; Lord Singleford, singlestick, and *The Six Napoleons;* Wainwright, Wales and walking sticks. Fascinating and ultimately captivating. Then she struck gold.

In the back of the *Encyclopedia Sherlockiana* was a list of Sherlockian societies. Her puny little mind was boggled. Sherlockian societies? What the heck was THAT?! Australia, Japan, France, Russia? Then the U.S. – Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Whoa! Wait a minute! Maryland? Not only Maryland, her home since birth but it was in the tiny little Eastern Shore town where her parents lived. It was a sign. Full of trepidation she contacted the Gasogene (of how one talks to a seltzer bottle she was uncertain but all went well.) She emboldened herself to ask if she might join. He encouraged her to attend. As luck would have it the Denizens of the Bar of Gold were going to meet in just one week's time. She walked into the room and was immediately seized with a desire to run far, far away and hide, but before she could get moving the host saw her. He made a bee line and welcomed her as if he had been waiting his entire life to meet her. She was charmed and completely ensnared.

Sadly at the end of the meeting which had hitherto been unfailingly wonderful and entertaining, she learned that the next meeting would not be for another six months. The Denizens only met twice a year. As enchanting as the evening had been, six months was much too long to wait to do it again. She pondered her options and started to surf the net looking for relief when what to her wondering eyes did appear but a page called "The

Sherlockian Connection" which listed Sherlockian doings in Baltimore.[1] There it was. A miracle. Watson's Tin Box, a Sherlockian society that met in Ellicott City, Maryland. Again she made contact with something called a Gasogene (she really meant to find out why they called themselves that) and was most cordially invited to attend. Bippy's Pub. Sounded benign, maybe even cute. She found her way across the countryside to the unfamiliar landscape of Howard County and negotiated her way to the parking lot of Bippy's Pub.

And there she sat. Frozen in place with fear. Shy to a fault she actually considered turning the car around and finding her way back to Montgomery County and home. Then she took hold of herself and gave herself a good talking to. "You drove here, you WANT to meet these people. Get out of this car, you coward!!" She got out of the car and went inside. Again, she was greeted as if her arrival was the only thing the host was looking forward to. Once again she was charmed. She was seated between the two founders of the group, although at the time she did not know this. Immediately she was off balance. She was told that everyone would be asked to make a toast based on "tonight's" story. Well, frankly she hadn't read the story and didn't understand the whole toast idea. But beside her was a guardian angel. A fluffy grey haired cherub with a lovely beard and the most adorable smile and twinkling eyes.

This angel leaned over to our princess, whispered, "Say Black Peter." She looked back at the angel who slowly nodded and blinked. Loud and distinctly I said "Black Peter." And I've never looked back.

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[1] This brings back memories. The Sherlockian Connection was my web site, which I ran from October 1995-May 2008. Sample pages can be found by going to **http://www.archive.org** and searching for either http:/www.bcpl.lib.md.us/~lmoskowi/holmes.html or the later URL, http://www.bcpl.net/~lmoskowi/holmes.html - Les

Mycroft Quiz Answers:

1. Briarbane, Woking
2. Atop Watson's books
3. Strange / remarkable
4. Lucy Parr
5. Edith Woodley
6. First class regiments
7. Yellow
8. Upwards of 30 years
9. Traveling cap / ear flaps
10. Twenty-one
11. Uppingham, Cambridge
12. Twenty-seven
13. Penge
14. Five
15. Dove coloured
16. Jumped away from a runaway cab, a horse van, a thrown brick
17. Egypt & Syria
18. 30 × 30
19. Venner & Matheson
20. Alyosis
21. Nineteen
22. Baldwin, Cavendish, Bagatelle
23. Second on the left
24. Conqueror
25. Simpson
26. Burnt candle, receipt, cataract knife, box of matches
27. 9:15
28. Revolutionary, nihilist, reformer
29. Twenty-six
30. North – Watson; South – Bradstreet; East – Hatherly; Wes plainclothesman
31. Double strand of white shells
32. Flesh
33. Comer of Church Street
34. Blind beetle
35. Paganini
36. Apoplexy

37. Six lengths
38. Not named
39. Hanging curtains in the front bedroom
40. Waterloo
41. “A little good Berkshire beef
42. Fifty
43. Fairbanks
44. Molesey Mystery
45. £500 and 10% commission
46. Albert dock
47. Mongoose (ichneumon or snake catcher), camel, chimpanzee, Dog, Monkey, Rat, Stoat, Terriers, Weasel
48. Silver Blaze, Pugilist, Desborough, Iris, Rasper, The Negro
49. Brambles and ferns
50. Four inches
51. £50
52. White-washed
53. JohnWarner
54. Six shillings
55. Eight
56. STOC
57. NAVA
58. CARD
59. BERY
60. EMPT

Contributing Factors

Beth Austin is a past gasogene of WTB, is the current Torquemada and is the editor and founder *of Irene's Cabinet.* In real life she performs daily as a Network Administrator but prefers, when given the choice, to spend her time amongst her particular friends in the Sherlockian world.

Debbie Clark, ASH, Gasolene IX, a proud native of Maryland's beautiful Eastern Shore, she is a retired educator of the deaf and graduate school professor. She is a lifelong Sherlockian, longtime member of WTB and a Very Irregular attendee of several Mid-Atlantic scion societies. She has appeared previously in *Irene's Cabinet,* has been published in *Violets and Vitriol,* compiled and edited by S. E. Dahlinger, and periodically presents at the annual "Saturday with Sherlock Holmes" in Baltimore. She is curator of the Paul Churchill Sherlock Holmes Evidence Box Collection and registrar for the Scintillation of Scions Sherlockian Symposium. Her favorite leisure time activity is getting together with her Sherlockian buds.

Steve Clarkson, BSI, & **Paul Churchill**, BSI, founding fathers of Watson's Tin Box were the best of friends, the worst of punsters, and benevolent and well-loved despots over their minions. Steve was proud of us; Paul adored us; and we basked in the glow of their unconditional good opinion.

April Curnow, Gasogene XXI, regards the Tin Box monthly meeting night as an especially bright spot on her calendar. Between Sherlockian gatherings she sings madrigals, paints watercolors, and works in children's services for Howard County Library.

Peter Jacoby, a retired attorney, lives in Bedminster, New Jersey. In addition to his longtime membership of The Red-Headed League of Jersey, he is a member of The Sons of the Copper Beeches of Philadelphia, in which he was elevated earlier this year to the rank of Master Beechsmith. In addition to the Canon, his interests include military history and the lore of shipwrecks from the 18th century through the modern era.

Jaime N. Mahoney is a proud member of Watson's Tin Box and is also the proprietor of the blog, "Better Holmes & Gardens" (**betterholmesandgardens.blogspot.com**), which updates frequently on a variety of Sherlockian topics. She was a speaker at the 2012 "A Scintillation of Scions V," in Maryland, and she still can't believe that someone gave her unrestricted use of a podium to talk about Sherlock Holmes.

Rod McCaslin is the husband of one, a father of three and the friend of two cocker spaniels (Bruach and Bridgid) and a black cat (Thomas Hobbes). As a historian and history teacher he lives in the past and writes for the present. He is one of the three original co-founders of Watson's Tin Box.

Jacquelynn Morris, ASH, Gasogene XI & XIX, Tantalus V, is the creator and organizer of the Sherlockian symposium, A Scintillation of Scions. She has been an invited speaker at numerous Sherlockian events, most notably the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – Sherlock Holmes Symposium in Chicago at The Newberry Library in 2011. Jacquelynn is a contributor to the newest in the BSI Manuscript Series, *The Wrong Passage*, to be released late 2012/early 2013. She is a U.S. Ambassador for The Undershaw Preservation Trust – the campaign to save and restore Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's former home. Jacquelynn maintains that if not for Holmes she would not know some of the "best and wisest" people she has ever known – her Sherlockian friends.

John C. Sherwood, Gasogene XIV, Michigan native, moved to Battle Creek, MI, after 11 years' residence near Philadelphia. He has been a journalist since 1967. He is a perennial contributor to *Irene's Cabinet* as well as to magicians' and skeptics' periodicals. His company, MysteryVisits, has staged plays and interactive mystery events in eight U. S. states and the United Kingdom.

Andrew Solberg, ASH, BSI, Gasogene VIII & XVIII, enjoys writing Sherlockian analysis and verse. He is a frequent contributor to *The Baker Street Journal* and was the co-winner of the BSJ's Morley-Montgomery Award for 2004. After attending many Sherlockian societies' dinners he considers the monthly Tin Box dinner as his home.

Rick Warrington, presently residing at Aberdeen Proving Ground, is a retired soldier who has enjoyed being stationed all around the world. When not fly fishing, motorcycle riding or sipping a single malt, he spends his days involved with charities and considers Watson's Tin Box as one of his favorite meetings each month.