University of Minnesota

Friends of the

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Sherlock Holmes

Collections

"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)

Contents

Ed. Note: In the last half of 2020, we suffered the loss of two great friends, Susan Rice and John Pforr. They were losses to everyone who valued their scholarship, friendliness, and scholarly works. We celebrate them by noting their connections to the Collections but above all else, how much they added to the Sherlockian world.

The Serpentine Muse: A Quarterly Publication of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes.

By Evelyn Herzog

Susan Rice first attended an Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH) event in 1978 and was invested as an Adventuress in 1981, as "Practical Handbook of Bee Culture, with Some Observations Upon the Segregation of the Queen." She began writing for our quarterly, *The Serpentine Muse*, in 1981 as well, a review of *Sherlock Holmes and the Warburton Conspiracy* staged far, far off Broadway: she was appalled (TSM 6:1). Her last published piece for us, "Holmes in the Time of Woke" (TSM 36:1), which saw print in 2019, is a consideration of Holmes and women, a topic to which ASH has always been drawn. In the intervening years she not only frequently answered the call for themed talks or toasts at ASH meetings but also contributed to *The Serpentine Muse* a variety of longer pieces of her own choosing.

Photo courtesy of Mickey Fromkin

Susan Rice

Susan frequently wrote about ASH itself, celebrating in verse the highlights of several Birthday dinners (*TSM* 8:3, 8:4, 9:3), and ASH's special part in a gala May 1991 dinner at the Culinary Institute of America ("C.I.A.? How Do You Spell That?" *TSM* 9:4). She praised ASH's staying-power, founded on its underlying and constantly-renewing friendships ("Toast to Friendship" TSM 22:2) and reminded us that no new group can foresee whether or not success awaits

Continued on page 6

John E. Pforr, BSI, "Police Constanble Cook"

By C. Paul Martin, MD, BSI

John and Lynn Pforr presented an interesting program at a Norwegian Explorer 1993 Summer Conference in Minneapolis featuring a canonical character who had appeared in the Sherlock Holmes story of the "Bar of Gold" opium den. John depicted the individual and scene with such great skill, vigor and enthusiasm that I initially thought he was Chinese! Lynn's sound effects were also effective! Later meetings, associations and correspondence provided much Sherlockian activity for us, and John continued to return to the Conferences. Even though he was a retired government professional with lots of interesting adventures featuring possible danger and intrigue, he was a real friend to us and an active Sherlockian in his city of Baltimore. He especially enjoyed exploring aspects of New York City with me during those days of the Birthday Weekends. John and unique fellow Norwegian Explorer S. Allen Mackler, Jr. were also my associates in food and historical adventures in NYC and Minneapolis.

Following one of the Conferences he visited me in rural Marshall, Minnesota, where he was interviewed and featured by the local newspaper and appeared on the local radio station, discussing his experiences in the United States Secret Service and interests in the Sherlockian world. In many ways he tried to show the common aspects of his two interests among others in his life. He often reflected his role in the groups which exemplified these clubs of cultural interest.

In Memoriam – John E. Pforr

By Greg Ruby, BSI

I was shocked to learn of John Pforr's passing on September 23rd from complications of dementia. John was there when I attended my first Six Napoleons meeting in 2014, and he made sure that I didn't leave without purchasing one of the group's lapel pins from him. When I attended my first BSI Dinner in 2017, John took me under his wing at the pre-dinner cocktail party, introducing me to several of his old friends and making sure that I didn't miss out on any of the hors d'oeuvres that were being served.

John didn't join the Six Napoleons until after retiring in 1989, having served 25 years in the U.S. Secret Service, where he served on protection details for Presidents Johnson through Reagan. Having passed the group's Inquisition and then giving a learned presentation, John became Napoleon CCVII and within a few years became Gasogene XXV for the Six Napoleons. Later, John served as the organizer and host of the annual *A Saturday with Sherlock Holmes* programs at the Enoch Pratt Free Library for more than five years.

John received his shilling and the investiture of Police Constable Cook from the Baker Street Irregulars in 1996. When attending scion meetings in the Maryland and Pennsylvania area, you could expect to see John there, whether it was the Red Circle, Denizens of the Bar of Gold to the Sons of the Copper Beeches.

Photo from Baltimore Sun, October 2, 2020

John Pforr

A fine Sherlockian, but an even better person. He will be missed.

A Reminiscence of John E. Pforr, BSI

By Denny Dobry, BSI

I knew John for almost twenty years although, with a few exceptions, we only spent time together when attending a Sherlockian function. During meetings, John remained pretty quiet unless he was giving one of his entertaining and well-researched presentations, or quietly offering a critical or witty comment heard only by those sitting near him. And John could be very witty and very critical! Our times together at meetings in these early years of our relationship defined who John was to me.

In 2016, John and I unexpectedly lost our good friend, Jim Arva. Jim was John's chauffer for many years, picking John up at his home in Timonium, Maryland and carting him off to meetings in Baltimore and the D.C. area. With Jim's passing, I assumed the role of John's chauffer, and during the many trips back and forth to Six Napoleon meetings, Sherlockians of Baltimore meetings and Peter Blau's annual tree-trimming parties, I learned another side of John's personality. I found that he and I shared the same political and social opinions. These shared positions led to many non-Sherlockian lunches with several other like-minded individuals.

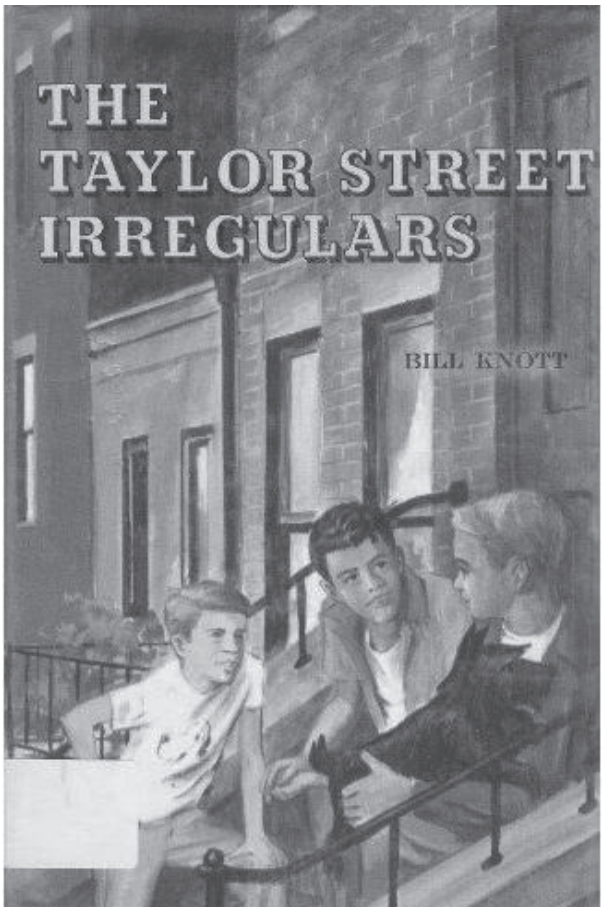
Another side of John's personality, unfortunately, wasn't revealed to me until I attended his funeral service. From the testimonials presented by John's family and close friends, I learned that John was very active in his church and devoted to his Christian faith. He was a supportive and loving husband, father and grandfather, as evident by the emotional eulogies given by family members. John had many life-long friends from both his early school days and his professional career as a Secret Service agent.

Surprisingly, at least to me, because John never displayed his passion, he was an avid collector of Sherlockiana. At the funeral Service, Lynn, John's wife, told me that John wanted his collection to be donated to the Baker Street Irregulars Trust.

I will miss the rides with John to Baltimore and our conversations about politics and the state of the world. He was a good friend, a gentleman, a patriot, and a Sherlockian.

50 YEARS AGO

I didn't get to meet John Bennett Shaw, but like many of you reading this issue, I have heard the stories regarding his collecting enthusiasm. His massive collection, which was donated to the University of Minnesota, reflects his interest in adding anything, no matter how tangential the connection, related to Sherlock Holmes. One of the books that bears his bookplate is *The Taylor Street Irregulars.*



The Taylor Street Irregulars

Written by Bill Knott for young readers and published by Steck-Vaght Company of Austin, Texas in 1970, the four main characters of *The Taylor Street Irregulars* are Boots, his faithful dog Tiger, Tony, and T.J. What must have caught Shaw's eye was the dust jacket note which states "Boots beomes the young Sherlock Holmes of the group, but it takes help from Tony and T.J., and most of all from Tiger, before he becomes any kind of detective."

The story opens with Boots and Tony discussing the events of the previous evening when the police captured a jewel thief who unsuccessfully hid in an abandoned building. The only evidence of the theft the police found was a pearl, "…a single small pearl, worth in the neighborhood of twenty-five thousand dollars" whose value must have rivaled the Black Pearl of the Borgias, that "enormously valuable prize." When Tiger, who has a habit of dragging things home, arrives with a lone glove with $40 tucked inside and a valuable necklace, the boys decide to search the abandoned building again. What transpires is a thrilling discovery, a hidden pillowcase containing "the riches of an empire," and the knowledge that a second thief still on the loose knows they have it. The question of when to turn the jewelry in to the police is hampered by the fact that they've spent the $40 cash. Are they innocent? As Tony says "There is no law against dogs that do that or people who take what dogs bring them." When Boots agrees, Tony's reply sounds quite familiar; "Precisely, my dear Watson." There are more Sherlockian references such as "You sure blew that one, Sherlock." The University Library summarizes the book as "When a pet dog brings two twenty dollar bills home in a rubber glove, the three 'Taylor Street Irregulars' find themselves launched on an adventure." As one expects of a book written for a younger audience, all ends well.

Besides the Sherlockian references, there are several themes that run throughout the story. There are lessons for young readers (and adults should they need a reminder) about the damage caused by bullying and greed, and the value of making new friends and honesty. So what do we know about the author?

William Cecil Knott, Jr. wrote under his own name and others including Will C. Knott, Tabor Evans, Bill J. Carol, and Bryan Swift. He was born in Boston in August 1927 and served in the U.S. Air Force for several years after World War II. A talented artist, he graduated with a B.S. from Boston University in 1951 but was unsuccessful in selling any of the short stories he wrote during this period. He turned to teaching English to junior high students in West Virginia, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey until 1967 before serving as an assistant professor of English at the State University of New York in Pottsdam until 1982.

An avid sports fan, he published his first book, *Junk Pitcher*, in 1963 and went on to write more than a dozen books in that genre before turning his writing skills to science fiction, westerns, fiction, mysteries, and western historical novels. The Western Writers of America website notes that "He felt that the western genre was a more modern version of Greek tragedy – and that was how he wrote his westerns." He was described as a "workaholic [who] listened to classical music turned up loud as he wrote during the day, and on headphones at night when his children were sleeping." He often said he had no idea what people did with their time if they didn't write. Knott acted as president of the Western Writers of America in 1981-82.

Knott passed away in October 2008. He left behind the work of a lifetime: over 130 books including nonfiction books about the art of writing.

Julie McKuras

From the President

The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Committee met in November, remotely of course. Reports from the various board members are included here.

The University Libraries are still on restricted access, but our online access it still wide and varied. One example is the Chaska MN High School version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, available at: https://www.continuum.umn.edu/2020/11/the-plays-afoot-on-air/.

Our intrepid editor, Julie McKuras, reported on the difficulty of featuring, in the newsletter, something from the collection when she does not have access to the collection. Membership is holding steady, and renewal envelopes went out with the fall newsletter.

A large number of members of the committee have spoken at a variety of local and national Sherlockian Society events in the last few months. Remote meetings have their advantages.

Tim Johnson and others reported on the latest contributions of materials to the collections. The current fund balances are adequate (but not flush, and here is how you can help by becoming a member and contributing: https://www.lib.umn.edu/holmes/become-friend-holmes). Tim continues to post artwork by Frederic Dorr Steele online, and a past conference book will soon be posted. The committee discussed the 2022 Conference in Minnesota, along with various other conferences and exhibits in light of COVID. We were updated on the latest activities of the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota and plans for future events where Explorers may appear.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 2021. There may be a vaccine for COVID, but there is no vaccine for Sherlock Holmes.

Gary Thaden, President
Friends of the
Sherlock Holmes Collections

Musings

This issue was a bittersweet experience to compile. Our goal in selecting people and items to be featured always hinges on one thing; how are they connected to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. We couldn't fail to highlight two friends who meant so much to not only the Holmes Collections but to the Sherlockian world in general. The names of these friends, Susan Rice and John Pforr, are well known to us, be it in published works, photographs, or as speakers at various conferences held in Minneapolis by the Libraries, the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and the Norwegian Explorers.

Our thanks go to Ray Betzner and Evelyn Herzog for sharing their knowledge and memories of the remarkable Susan Rice, and listing her many contributions. As Evelyn said during a recent Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes zoom meeting, "Susan treated everyone with affection and respect," and I can think of no higher praise.

Greg Ruby, Denny Dobry, and C. Paul Martin took time to reflect on the recent passing of John Pforr and how much he meant to his friends. He was an Army veteran and long-time Secret Service officer. His name can be found in many issues of *The Baker Street Journal* held in the Collections, highlighting his presentations at various scion societies. Additionally, he was a speaker at our June 1993 conference "Rogues, Rascals and Ruffians," where he presented "Those Bars of Gold: Proprietors and Inhabitants of the Opium Dens of London."

Our Fifty Years Ago piece is about the book *The Taylor Street Irregulars* written for young readers by Bill Knott. The catalog for the University of Minnesota Libraries indicates that the copy in the Holmes Collection is from the collection of John Bennett Shaw and bears his bookplate. As the Andersen Library remains closed to anyone other than University affiliated faculty, staff and students, I did what I believe Shaw would have done; I bought my own copy. The fact that I learned that the copy in the Holmes Collections belonged to Shaw is a reminder that the library search engine at https://www.lib.umn.edu/ can help with some elements of research.

So as this difficult year comes to a close, we remember our friends and commemorate all that they added. May their memories be a blessing and a reminder of how people should treat each other. Stay safe, stay healthy, and here's to a better 2021.

Stay safe,
Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

An Update from the Collections

"The house was a fair-sized one, standing back from the road, with a curving drive which was banked with high evergreen shrubs." – "The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge"

Outside, November winds howl. All trees, save the evergreen, stand bare, stripped of their autumnal glory. Snow covers the ground. Little feathery fluff balls of juncos and chickadees scramble for seeds, raiding feeders or harvesting remnants from the garden. This view from my work-from-home desk sustains me even as the novel coronavirus—no longer novel—ravages the world. For some, the pandemic entered their home, uninvited and unwanted. In some ways we are Watson, recently returned to the Reichenbach, numbly holding a crumpled note in our hands, staring into the abyss.

By the time you read this, I will have worked primarily from home for about 280 days, three-quarters of the year. It has been the most challenging time of my professional career. And yet, I have been fortunate. I continue to have meaningful, engaging work surrounded by and supported by colleagues in similar situations. Some in my family circle, those closest to me, have been spared as well, even as they work in COVID wards and clinics. Now, as further restrictions seem imminent, Thanksgiving and the holidays to come are muted.

Muted, but not extinguished. As Holmes found hope in flowers, so, too, do I find hope in the evergreens. There is one thing—among many—that the pandemic has provided us over these months: time to think and contemplate. Many of my thoughts have centered on friendship. There is a phrase we sometimes easily throw around: "to keep forever green the memory of the Master." It is a powerful sentiment—an evergreen outlook—if we pause and meditate over it. It is part of our mission as a library collection of collections. Intertwined within those collections are powerful expressions of memory and friendship. Letters, photographs, recordings, books, inscriptions. The list goes on. Each item testifies to a deliberate and loving act by friends engaged in an extravagant, powerful remembrance, not only of Holmes and Watson, but of our collective times together as friends.

These acts continue through the many notices, letters, and packages we received these many months containing new publications, newsletters, meetings (will we ever forget Zoom?), artwork, and other donations. Your acts continue through comments and posts on social media or email. I thank you all for these expressions of friendship.

One of the brightest, greenest spots in the last month resided with students at Chaska High School, a western Twin Cities suburb. In August, Norwegian Explorer and Red-Throated League director Karen Ellery contacted me about Edith Meiser's radio play adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. A friend of hers directs the theater program at Chaska and wondered, given current restrictions on large gatherings and an inability to produce this fall's traditional live student production, if they might use our scripts to create an online radio play.

With the scripts delivered near the start of the school year, students and teachers began their work. Meredith Kind, Chaska's director, envisioned a virtual production of *The Hound* that might involve 40-50 students as performers or technical designers, sound effects technicians, and so forth. In October and November this wish became a reality. Starting on Halloween night, high school students performed the radio drama in six parts on consecutive nights. As a special treat—unknown to me at the time—a daughter of close friends stars in the leading role. You can enjoy these online performances by entering "Chaska high school Baskervilles" in your favorite computer search engine. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have.

These evergreen moments remind me that our friendship is longstanding and of great value. Elsewhere, in an examination of the BBC presentation of *Sherlock*, I argued that the entire series is a study in friendship. I wrote that the series was "a welcome and challenge that invites a continual search for role and meaning in life. In sometimes minor, yet fundamentally meaningful ways these encounters between Sherlockian characters point to an exploration into the meaning of friendship.… It is an exploration of what it means to be human." The pandemic has pushed many of us to our limits. In these challenging times I urge you to remember both flowers and evergreens. It is here, thanks to Holmes and to you, that friendship and love flourish. Please stay safe. I wish you well and all the best during this holiday season. Thank you for your continuing support of the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Timothy J. Johnson
E.W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections

The Serpentine Muse… *Continued from Page 1*

it but that the game is worth playing for its own sake ("Accolades Afterward" *TSM* 25:4). Susan was interested in everyone, remembered people as individuals, and was willing to do a serious job; she memorialized three of our deceased members, Anita Janda, Adeline Skillman Tinning, and Michael Riezenman with understanding and appreciation (*TSM* 23:2, 24;4, 30:2). She reviewed with well-founded praise a novel by another ASH (Gramercy Park by Paula Cohen *TSM* 18:2). She discussed the beginnings and successes of the women's Sherlockian group The Baker Street Babes from the viewpoint of an Adventuress, finding values, attitudes, and comradeship shared by the two societies, with room for new achievements and surprises in the future of this younger group ("Lighthouses of the Past and Future" *TSM* 28:3).

Admiration for Sherlockian forebears produced some of Susan's best essays: She tells the story of the William Gillette Memorial Luncheon (by then she herself was its host) in "William Gillette: A Living Memorial" (TSM 12:4). In "Vincent Starrett: The Chicago Columns" (TSM 18:2), Susan celebrates her favorite of the great Sherlockian bookmen, his breadth of knowledge and enthusiasm on all literature including, of course, the Canon, and his pawky humor. She delivers a short "Double Centenary Toast" honoring the 1913 births of John Bennett Shaw and William S. Baring-Gould (TSM 30:2). And with these I would link the charming article "By Way of Introduction" (*TSM* 27:3), in which Susan tells the tale of her own early years.

A natural buoyancy and quick wit infuses Susan's writing. Even the serious topic of Holmes's attitude to women, considered in detail in her article "Entirely to Be Trusted" (*TSM* 15:4), provokes a smile or chuckle per page at her perspicacity and phrasing. Susan's humor found ready expression in what ought to have been a staid topic – "How to Write a Sherlockian Paper" (*TSM* 24:2); in a review of the practical jokes associated with Edward VII ("Toast to 'Bertie'" *TSM* 19:2); and in an imaginative link between one Canonical and one Untold tale ("The Amateur Mendicants" *TSM* 8:4). Even pawkier humor inspired Susan and her wife, Mickey Fromkin, to pen their pair of prize-winning poems on "The Day of Reichenbach (*TSM* 29:3).

Canonicity, kindness, respect, imagination, humor – all these and more were part of Susan's gift to ASH and can be found in her writings in *The Serpentine Muse*.

U Is for Uffa: An Alphabet of Women in the Canon, composed by the Isle of Uffa Chowder & Marching Society: T. Michelle Fromkin, Evelyn Herzog, Roberta Pearson, & Susan Rice. San Francisco: Printed at The Pequod Press for The Vermissa Daily Herald, 1982. The lightest of Susan Rice's publications is this little book, submitted as an entry to a contest for short A to Z Canonical verses set by The Scowrers and Molly Maguires. Instead of submitting a letter or two, the four friends decided that each would compose a set of 26 verses and then judge as a group who had done best for each letter. Hilarity ensued, a composite alphabet of verses was submitted, and here is the lighthearted result.

The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2004: Dubious and Questionable Memories: A History of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes.'

Perhaps the greatest gift Susan Rice gave the Adventuresses was writing the history of the group. Well, no, her greatest gift was her presence – Susan had an outgoing personality that welcomed everyone, amplified by a ready wit, thorough knowledge of the Canon, and great kindness. Everything was just better with her around. Nor was she any stranger to hard work, and so she willingly tackled the cartons and tote bags containing the significant documents, correspondence, and memorabilia of thirty-plus years of Adventuressing to compose a detailed and easy-flowing story. She solicited reminiscences from many of the most active members about the group's pivotal moments and their own feelings about ASH.

While neither a founding member of ASH nor present in NYC at the dinner reconstituting the college society as a home for all women Sherlockians, Susan was a lifelong Sherlockian and a natural fit for the Adventuresses – her arrival marked a new era in the group's story. She easily understood the hopes and efforts of the collegiate ASH and now, as an inextricable part of ASH's activities and friendships, recognized how many people had contributed to each aspect of the club and to its overall style. She traced the haphazard path of the Adventuresses: the original college girls with their protest against male-centered status; the encouragement from their BSI correspondents; the energy unleashed by the mid-'70s membership; the discussions and occasional disagreements about the group's direction; the talent and grind of the editors and artists of *The Serpentine Muse*; the scores of both old-timers and newbies who volunteered (or agreed to be volunteered) to deliver toasts; talks, and songs at ASH meetings: all these women (and men, too) get their due from Susan. The history ends with confident hopes for the Adventuresses (not yet co-ed), as "we boogie into the future." ✔

Susan Rice: An Appreciation

By Ray Betzner

PHOTOS - (http://www.vincentstarrett.com/blog/2020/10/6/off-topic-susan-rice)

Susan Rice knew that words matter. As a former schoolteacher she knew that when used well, words don't simply transmit information but offer a sense of wonder and joy. Most important, Susan appreciated good writing because she was herself a very good writer.

When she died in late September, we lost a thoughtful and caring contributor to our world. Fortunately, she left behind a little library of work dedicated to both Holmes and the Sherlockians who idolize him.

Many of Susan's writings are scattered in various volumes and are worth tracking down. But if you want to read Susan at her best, you should track down the following three slim, rare volumes. They will help you appreciate the grace, humor and generous nature of this certain gracious lady. All three are among the holdings of the University of Minnesota libraries.

Let's take them chronologically:

A Compound of Excelsior published in Dubuque, Iowa by the Gasogene Press in 1991. Few Sherlockians have taken their ASH and BSI investitures as seriously as Susan Rice. She had been designated the "Practical Handbook of Bee Culture with Some Observations Upon the Segregation of the Queen" in ASH in 1981, a full decade before the BSI woke up and did the right thing. Indeed, Susan was among the first women to be given full membership by the late Thomas L. Stix Jr. Tom gave her the name "Beeswing" in 1991.

You have heard of people who wear their hearts on their sleeves? Susan literally wore her investitures on her sleeves. And her ears. Even on her head. She was rarely seen in public without some bee-related paraphernalia, from brooches and other jewelry to a bee-hive headpiece that always elicited equal parts smiles and amazement.

Her apiary interest certainly pre-dated the BSI investiture. She was well acquainted with the topic when in 1990 she presented at a Holmes conference. There she explained why Holmes took up beekeeping in his retirement. David Hammer, then owner of the Gasogene Press, encouraged her to take the talk and expand it into a little booklet. *A Compound of Excelsior* is the result.

It is worth noting that she begins her acknowledgements with this: "There are so many joys in being part of a community of Sherlockians that we sometimes forget that it is also a community of scholars." She then takes the next 90 pages or so to show us how it should be done. Susan brings a deep appreciation for the Canon to her work but extends her research well beyond the original 60 stories and into the Victorian-era literature on beekeeping.

From Pliny and Shakespeare to the leading Victorian beecranks (who are as obsessed about bees as we are about Holmes) Susan builds a clear case: Beekeeping was not simply a hobby for Holmes, but a way to keep his racing engine of a brain occupied in retirement. The complex social interactions of the bee, like the complex structure of life in London, offered Holmes constant food for thought. He was the right man to see and observe the inner workings of the hive and to appreciate its unquestioned devotion to the queen.

A Compound of Excelsior is Susan at her scholarly best. If we can't have her offering a paper at a Holmes event, let us have her here in *A Compound of Excelsior*.

The Somnambulist and the Detective: Vincent Starrett and Sherlock Holmes, published in 2000 by The Northern Musgraves Sherlock Holmes Society. A former resident of Chicago, Susan was as much a Starrettian as she was a Sherlockian. She loved Starrett for the foundation he built for Sherlockian studies, a foundation we all stand on today. She knew many Sherlockians who had known Starrett and realized that as that generation faded, their appreciation for his contributions could well also fade away.

"Every book should have a purpose, and the purpose of this one is to cause you to turn to the works of Vincent Starrett," Susan writes in her introduction to this book. And that's exactly what she did. In 60 pages, she sketches Starrett's life, his career and his considerable contributions to our shared hobby. The title comes from an answer Starrett once gave when asked his profession, "Call me a somnambulist," or a sleepwalker. Starrett was often described as having his nose in a book and his head in the clouds.

Susan makes a point of showing Starrett's breadth as a writer, from poetry to bibliographies, mystery and detective novels to short stories, books about books, and tales of the outré. His weekly "Books Alive" column was a popular feature of the *Chicago Tribune* for a quarter century, and his passionate advocacy for the works of Stephen Crane, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Welsh writer Arthur Machen showed his ability to influence those who appreciate good books.

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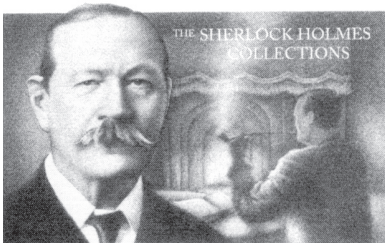

The *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections* is a quarterly newsletter published by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections which seek to promote the activities, interests and needs of the Special Collections and Rare Books Department, University of Minnesota Libraries.

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Susan Rice: An Appreciation… *Continued from Page 7*

As Susan points out, Starrett in later life feared he would be forgotten. Her booklet is a reminder that Starrett's contributions remain relevant to our lives today and deserve to be read time and again, if only for the sheer joy of seeing a first-generation Sherlockian master at work.

The Sage of Santa Fe: Adventures and Public Life of John Bennett Shaw, written and compiled by Susan Rice and Vinnie Brosnan, Sherlock in L.A. Press, 2013. If Vincent Starrett was a founder of our feast, John Bennett Shaw was our movement's Johnny Appleseed.

Like Starrett, Shaw was an omnivorous collector. But Shaw went further and spread the gospel of Sherlockian fellowship around the United States.

He was also an early and continued advocate for the entry of women into the Baker Street Irregulars. As such, he came to know the early ASH members well, Susan included. Their fellowship went back to the early '70s, when Susan was in Greece and spotted a magazine that was serializing the Holmes stories. She sent word back to Julian Wolff, he told Shaw, and soon the Sage of Santa Fe and Susan were corresponding friends.

Several years later, she attended the evening portions of his first workshop, held at Notre Dame. Susan had just started a new job in Chicago and could not go for the day sessions, but no matter. The two were soon great friends.

Not long afterwards, John asked Susan to present at a Holmes workshop. Delighted with her presentation at the workshop, Shaw wrote a note to a friend afterwards: "Susan Rice gave a fine presentation—isn't she a dandy!"

That is a sentiment upon which we would all agree.

Remembrances

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

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