



# Plugs & Dottles

Official Newsletter of the Nashville Scholars  
of the Three Pipe Problem  
3rd Quarter July-August-September 2018  
Jim Hawkins & Dean Richardson, Co-Editors

- Established 1979
- Meetings on third Saturday of every month (except Dec.)
- Website: [nashvillescholars.net](http://nashvillescholars.net)
- [Facebook page](#)
- Send comments:  
[seniorhawk@gmail.com](mailto:seniorhawk@gmail.com) or to  
[dean.h.richardson@gmail.com](mailto:dean.h.richardson@gmail.com)

Our Nashville Scholars scion has been growing recently. In the past year several new members have received their canonical investitures. [See our video](#) with some new faces.



*Mason at St Louis Blues Museum*

Recently Bill Mason and Jim Hawkins attended the “Curious Collection” symposium at the St. Louis Public Library, hosted by The Parallel Case of St. Louis. The scion donated hundreds of Sherlockian books to the library, including a full run of the *Baker Street Journal*, donated by Bill Cochran (BSI), who had been editor of the journal years ago. The energy behind this was Dr. Mary Schroeder and other scion members. See p. 4.

## Nashville Scholars – Part of a Larger Family

The Nashville Scholars are part of a larger community of like-minded literary friends who enjoy reading the Sherlock Holmes stories, researching the story backgrounds, finding misaligned dates and other gaffes that require explanation, and, in Sherlockian phraseology, “playing the game.” This involves a bit of mind-bending, convincing yourself that Dr. John Watson actually wrote the stories, leaving the publishing to Conan Doyle, “the literary agent.” Our British friends find this preposterous, but it’s all in good fun. Having fun is a large part of being Sherlockian, and some seem to know how to really have fun following Sherlock Holmes.

This issue of *Plugs and Dottles* is dedicated to our friend **Joel Senter**, who had more fun than most, and to Carolyn, his beloved wife of 50 years. The Senters occasionally attended Nashville Scholars meetings, adding their special touch to the day. On the website Joel designed to facilitate clients wanting Sherlockian books, apparel, and all kinds of items (<http://www.sherlock-holmes.com/about.htm>), you will find a brief explanation of what they were all about.

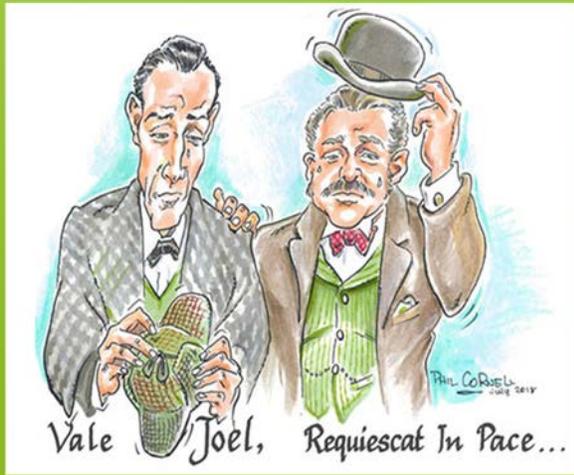
*Since 1988, Classic Specialties has been "those Sherlock Holmes people in Cincinnati." We are not only North America's leading distributors of various and sundry items appertaining to Mr. Sherlock Holmes and his times, but we also like to think of ourselves as being purveyors of literary offerings, information, and general news generated by and for Sherlock Holmes fans everywhere.*



*Joel and Carolyn Senter*

A link below (p. 3) tells their story and speaks to the love and admiration everyone continues to have for them. [I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere](#), produced by Scott Monty, posted a story not long after Joel’s passing. Another good friend and Sherlockian author, Dan Andriacco, is featured in some of this remembrance.

Australian artist Phil Cornell, a friend of the Senters' for years, sent this sweet remembrance of Joel just a day after his passing.



Farewell for Joel by P. Cornell



Izban and Senters at breakfast

*I met Joel and Carolyn for the first time way up in Door County, Wisconsin. Don Izban, the famous scion initiator from Chicago, was holding one of his Canonical Convocation and Caper events. (Remember what we said about Sherlockians having fun?) Joel, of course, attended the fun-filled event, and Izban made him the Master of Ceremonies! If Joel and Carolyn were going to be there, you knew it would be a fun event. And it was! ... Jim Hawkins*



*David Marcum remembers Joel and Carolyn ... Joel and I communicated for years, and he was a wonderful person. My family always knew to get my birthday and Christmas presents from Classic Specialties, and long before the internet I would call him sometimes and ask questions. Later, when I wrote my first book, he helped promote and sell it. He and Carolyn wrote a story for the first set of MX anthologies and were supportive in so many ways over the years. I last emailed him a couple of months ago and wish that I had again.  
(L: Senters and Marcum)*



Carolyn's favorite picture of them together

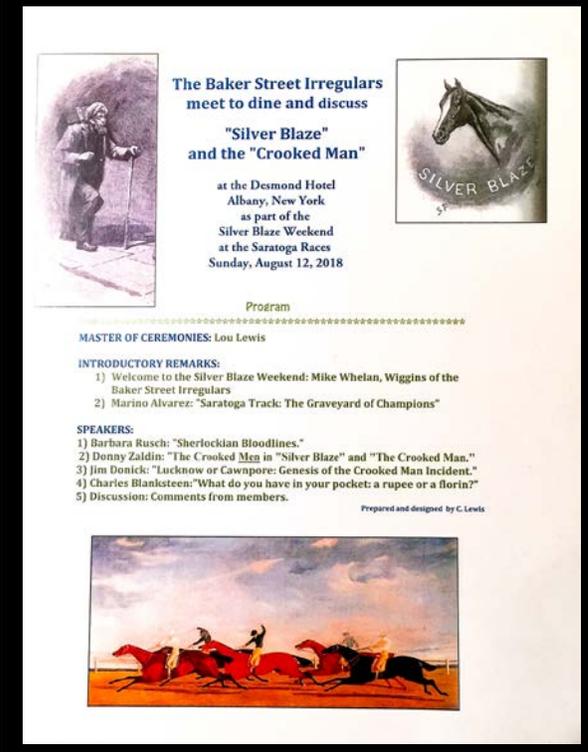
An interview with the Senter's, written and posted on the [Nashville Scholars website](#) in 2000, is probably the most extensive of any online. Here is part of that story:

(Carolyn speaking) "... we don't seem to have enough sense to know that what we are doing can't be done with any reasonable commitment of time and effort, so we just keep doing it anyway. I presume that the most important skills I have brought to **Classic Specialties** boil down to an ability of "making do" with inadequate facilities (and money) and an ability to bring to bear multiple past experiences to confront and solve whatever current problems we might encounter.

(Note from Joel) *Carolyn tends to be overly modest -- she has also been a model, a knitting and fabric arts teacher, a karate and Tai Chi instructor; she holds a master's degree in Special Education, and she is a great life partner for me -- I feel intensely lucky to have her in my life."*

### Silver Blaze and Saratoga at the Rail

A report by Dr. Marino Alvarez, BSI, and Dr. Vicki Risko



**The Baker Street Irregulars meet to dine and discuss "Silver Blaze" and the "Crooked Man"**

at the Desmond Hotel  
Albany, New York  
as part of the  
Silver Blaze Weekend  
at the Saratoga Races  
Sunday, August 12, 2018

Program

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Lou Lewis

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:

- 1) Welcome to the Silver Blaze Weekend: Mike Whelan, Wiggins of the Baker Street Irregulars
- 2) Marino Alvarez: "Saratoga Track: The Graveyard of Champions"

SPEAKERS:

- 1) Barbara Rusch: "Sherlockian Bloodlines."
- 2) Donny Zaldin: "The Crooked Men in "Silver Blaze" and "The Crooked Man."
- 3) Jim Donick: "Lucknow or Cawnpore: Genesis of the Crooked Man Incident."
- 4) Charles Blanksteen: "What do you have in your pocket: a rupee or a florin?"
- 5) Discussion: Comments from members.

Prepared and designed by C. Lewis

On Saturday, August 11, The Baker Street Irregulars and friends gathered at the Pavilion to watch the thoroughbreds at the Saratoga Race Track. A scrumptious buffet with all the trimmings and a convivial atmosphere prevailed as shillings were placed with anticipation on potential winners. The rain didn't dampen our spirits, and at the end of the day, friendships were renewed, and new ones were added. A wonderful time!

On Sunday, we met again for a brunch and to discuss "Silver Blaze" and "the Crooked Man" at the Desmond Hotel, Albany, New York, as part of the Silver Blaze Weekend at the Saratoga Races. The organizers were Lou and Candice Lewis, and the speakers were Michael Whelan, Marino Alvarez, Barbara Rusch, Donny Zaldin, Candice Lewis, and Charles Blanksteen. A discussion followed and then the Silver Blaze event was adjourned.

And now a brief report on a most enjoyable Sherlockian meeting in St. Louis, the first annual “Curious Collection” convocation of the [Parallel Case of St. Louis](#), hosted at the St. Louis Public Library (Aug. 10-12) by Rob Nunn and others on the occasion of the opening of the Sherlock Holmes Research Collection founded by Mary Schroeder (ASH), longtime St. Louis Sherlockian.



#### The Program (08/13/2018)

Tim Johnson, Keynote Speaker, curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota

A link to Tim’s very moving presentation: [A Spark in the Dark Hollow of My Hand](#) (see extract below)

Mary Schroeder, ASH, founder of the St. Louis Sherlockian Research Collection and longtime St. Louis Sherlockian

Bill Cochran, BSI, donor of a complete run of the *Baker Street Journal* to the Sherlockian Research Collection

Bill Mason, BSI, author of *Pursuing Sherlock Holmes* and former Head Light of The Beacon Society

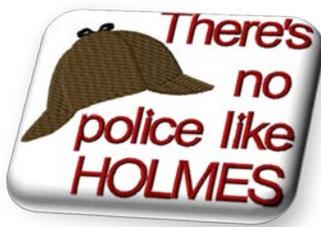
Tassy Hayden, fan fiction writer and former co-host of the wildly popular *The Three Patch Podcast*

Brad Keefauver, BSI, ASH, blogger at Sherlock Peoria and author of *The Elementary Methods of Sherlock Holmes*

Don Hobbs, BSI, ASH, owner of the largest foreign-language Sherlockian book collection

Plus, a surprise guest speaker (Sam Clemens/Mark Twain) linking Sherlock Holmes to Missouri!

Nashville Scholar Bill Mason presented his essay,  
“A Pun for All Seasons: A History of ‘No Police Like Holmes.’”



---

#### **The Adventure of a Profound Encounter**

(extracted from “A Spark in the Dark Hollow of my Hand”)

So, a university vice president walks into a bar. This particular vice president—we’ll call him Bob—was acquainted, for whatever reason, with a bartender by the name of Jim at one of our campus hotels. (Actually, the site of our last triennial conferences.) Over the course of conversation, no doubt aided by drink, vice president Bob learned from bartender Jim of Jim’s granddaughter’s interest in Sherlock Holmes. Her name is Haley and at the time of this story she was fifteen years old. Bob, being the good administrator he was, knew about the Sherlock Holmes Collections in the University Libraries and, before too long, put me in contact with Grandpa Jim to arrange a tour of the Collections for his granddaughter, Haley. (continued on p. 5)

(continued from p. 4)

I discovered that Jim cared deeply for his granddaughter and her education, and that Haley lived and breathed Sherlock Holmes. We set a Saturday in May as our date for the tour. Because Jim cared so deeply for his granddaughter, I wanted to make this a special day for both of them. Little did I know, or could imagine, how special the day would become.

All was ready on that Saturday afternoon when Jim, Haley, and her two friends, Rebecca and Danielle, arrived in the midst of a rain shower. I hadn't anticipated Haley's two friends, so their appearance threw me off a bit. As we introduced ourselves, I found out that all three girls were in the ninth grade. A little voice whispered, as if in warning, inside my head: "Remember what you were like in ninth grade." It was clear that these girls were good friends and enjoyed each other's company, although, to my mind, Rebecca and Danielle were a bit merciless in their teasing Haley. They kept on and on about how much Haley was "in" to Sherlock, mocking her while at the same time expressing their own disinterest and bewilderment. They didn't know, and were mystified, why someone could get so excited about a literary character.

I took them first to our suite and then to the reading room, where we had Dorothy Rowe Shaw's miniature replica of the 221B London flat on display, along with some Sherlockian figurines, artwork, and reference books. Haley immediately gravitated to the figurines and, camera in hand (having first asked permission) began to take pictures. Rebecca and Danielle continued their playful banter, but their kidding didn't seem to matter too much to Haley. In her gracefulness, she wanted her friends to share in the excitement. Haley then discovered some of the Holmes reference and coffee table books and, paging through them, told her friends about the significance of this or that item as seen on each page.

From there we moved to the 221B miniature, studying the intricacies of its design and creation, while Haley drew links between items in each room and their Canonical appearance. Her depth of knowledge—the imprint that Doyle's sixty stories made on her own being—deeply impressed me. More books and artwork followed, and with each one, a little more conversation and observation. Some Frederic Dorr Steele drawings momentarily stunned Haley. But she quickly rebounded and spoke of both him and his *Collier's* covers in a knowledgeable fashion.

From there we moved into a more rarified atmosphere. While Haley sat down at a nearby table, I snatched an item from the nearby cart and placed it in front of her: one of our four copies of the *Beeton's Christmas Annual* from 1887, the first time a Holmes story appeared in print. Haley knew about the *Beeton's*, but she'd never seen one before. She was nearly overwhelmed but recovered enough to take a few pictures and make a few comments. By this time, Rebecca and Danielle, subdued by all they'd seen and yet not totally comprehending what they'd seen, sat quietly to the side. Grandpa Jim took it all in without comment.

And then it happened. I asked: "What is your favorite Holmes story?" Haley replied, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Quietly, without notice or fanfare, I took one of our manuscript leaves from *The Hound* and put it in front of her on the table. All of a sudden, here she was, face-to-face with a page—a manuscript page—from her favorite—and Doyle's best-known—Sherlock Holmes adventure, written in Doyle's own hand. She started to cry. I got choked up, too, but in my Scandinavian way kept it inside. Grandpa Jim, somewhat concerned, silently moved toward his granddaughter. Rebecca and Danielle, their teasing now a thing of the past, grew exceedingly still and in a nearly silent whisper asked: "Why are you crying?"

In that moment—that oh so brief but memorable moment—something seismic and sincere happened. We were all "in" to Sherlock Holmes, even Grandpa Jim. (Timothy J. Johnson, Curator, Sherlock Holmes Collections, UMN)

-----

*We note here the passing of Paul D. Herbert, BSI ("Mr. Leverton")*

*(July 13, 1938 – February 16, 2018)*

*Founder of The Tankerville Club (Cincinnati, OH) scion in 1977,*

*Paul and Joel Senter were long-time friends. Plugs & Dottles is in collaboration with his widow, Barbara Herbert, and will have more on Paul in the next issue.*

## Holmes in the “Fake News”

*The Tennessean* (Nashville) 03 May 1984 “Arts and Leisure”

### COLLECTION A CLUE SHERLOCK WAS HERE

Was Sherlock Holmes a country music freak? We'll probably never know, but he was in Nashville recently. (There were rumors on Music Row that he might have been here to "cut a record with Willie Nelson." Seems he never can pass up an outlaw.)

ANYHOW, Holmes left several clues in his wake. We discovered his luggage and personal possessions. Anyway, Sher's hip-hip pal Charles Simmons, the operator of the **Tinder Box** pipe and tobacco shop in Rivergate Mall, retrieved Holmes' kit and caboodle. Simmons, knowing full well that old Sherly wouldn't mind, decided to put the items on display in his store. The collection includes more than 25 items of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia. The display includes his Stradivarius violin (maybe that was Holmes playing second fiddle on the Grand Ole Opry the other night), his Persian slipper (where he kept his 'baccy), his Victoria medal, his silver cigarette case, copies of *Strand* magazine (where Holmes' exploits were first published), and a couple of his pipes.

THE DISPLAY even includes a Holmes family album with a picture of Sherlock, and brother Mycroft when they were babies (maybe on the proverbial bearskin rug). There will also be a letter from the Baskerville family (of hound dog fame). And perhaps his report card from his school days--elementary, of course. Simmons says the exhibit will be on display through next Wednesday unless Sherlock shows up before then. Hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Cherrio!

---

(3PP -- Not Fake News...)

Drew Thomas earlier in 2018 at a Saturday meeting in Brentwood, TN.



The Nashville Scholars, a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, was founded by John Shanks on February 19, 1979. Twenty-six Sherlockians gathered at the Cumberland Club downtown, with its Old London atmosphere, signed the register, noted their preferred nom (canonical name), gave their addresses, and paid their dues.

*The Nashville Scholars was born.*

**In 2019 the Nashville Scholars will celebrate its 40th anniversary.**

---