



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S

"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)



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Meet the new Curator of Special Collections: Timothy Johnson (as told by Timothy Johnson)

It has been an exciting blur of activity during my first months as the new curator of Special Collections. The day after it had been announced to the library staff that I was coming to Minnesota my phone rang. It was Dick Sveum, president of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, calling to congratulate me on the new job and to make sure I had the first weekend of August free on my calendar. I remembered Dick from my interview—he sat towards the back on the right side during my afternoon public presentation and had more than one question for me—and was pleased to hear from him again. That August weekend, he explained, was the 50th anniversary celebration of the Norwegian Explorers and I was being invited to attend the festivities. It was a delightful invitation that I happily accepted.

But it had been some time since I'd read any Holmes stories. I'd seen almost all of the latest adaptations on PBS ("Mystery" is one of the few television shows that I try to work into the weekly schedule), enjoyed Jeremy Brett's interpretation of Holmes, and spent more than a few hours playing "Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective," but I thought—to be on the safe side—that I had better re-read the Canon. So I found *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* with Morley's

introduction and immersed myself in the Sacred Writings. By the time I arrived at Minnesota I felt ready to step into the world of Sherlockian interests.

Those interests, as I was reminded again during the "Founder's Footprints" conference, run wide and deep. The advisory committee meeting prior to the formal beginning of the conference gave me a sense of the passion, and the care, which Sherlockians from around the world have for the collection at Minnesota. The individual sessions displayed a depth of knowledge and expertise that was amazing and pleasant to behold. Here, truly, was a body of believers; I was glad to be a part of the gathering. And what more can be said

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Tim Johnson and Mike Whelan, B.S.I.

photo by Julie McKunas

100

YEARS AGO

"I hear of Sherlock everywhere..." Mycroft Holmes states to Dr. John H. Watson upon their introduction at the Diogenes Club in "The Greek Interpreter." The writings, and the writings on the writings, have been printed in many languages, ranging from Afrikaans to Yiddish, as held in the Sherlock Holmes Collections. While these foreign languages represent the fascination with Holmes in other lands, our 100 year old featured pieces indicate that a "foreign" language may be another method of writing about Holmes in his own native tongue.

Sir Isaac Pitman was born in January, 1813 in Trowbridge, Wiltshire,

England. He was a phonographer, and an advocate of simple spelling. In 1837, he published his first book on stenographic shorthand, in which he classified all sounds in English and arranged his method of writing accordingly. Pitman characters have a simple geometric form. Some letters have a light stroke, some heavy, and single vowels are represented by dashes or dots. Pitman's use of spelling phonetically, with some improvements, is still used in English speaking countries. It has been adapted to more than a dozen languages. Sir Isaac died in Bath, England in January, 1897.

In 1898, "The Sign of the Four" was published in Pitman's shorthand. The Collections have two copies of this book, both from the Hench Collection. The end paper of one copy has a sticker that states "Presented to Robert H. Harkes as Prizewinner in 'Pitman's Shorthand Weekly' Competitions. 24 Dec., 1904." On the facing page is the signature "Thomas Armon, Nov. 1920."

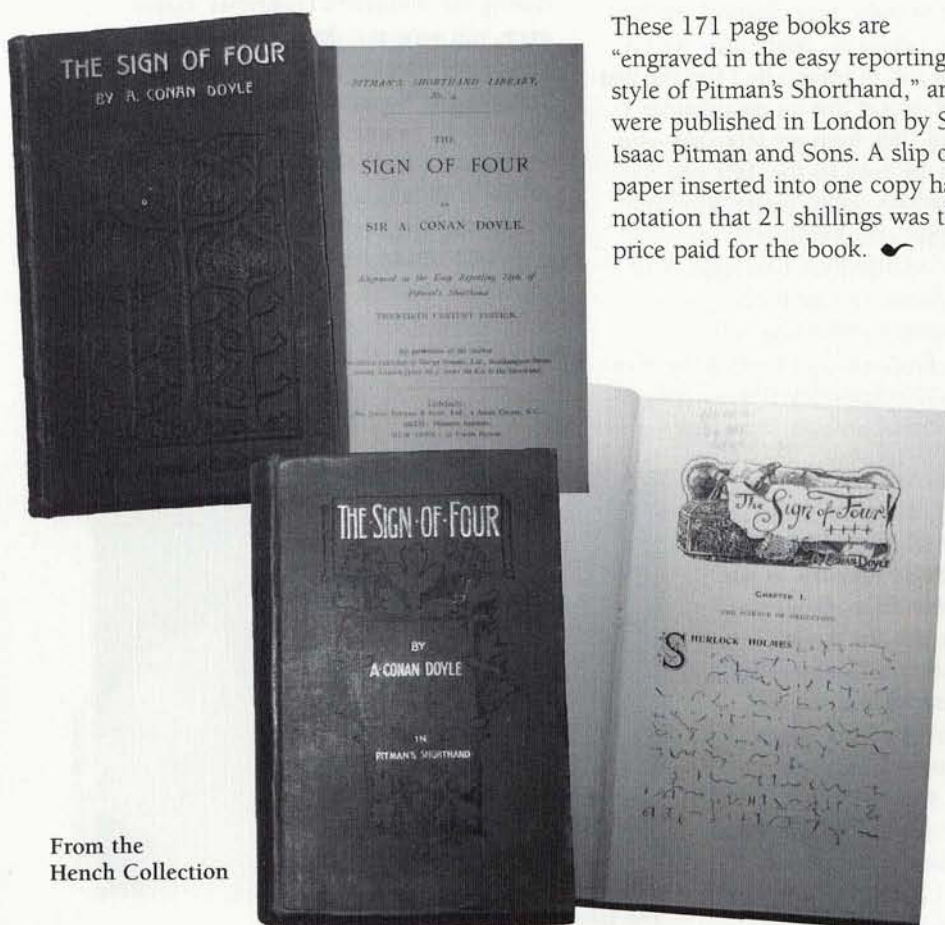
These 171 page books are "engraved in the easy reporting style of Pitman's Shorthand," and were published in London by Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons. A slip of paper inserted into one copy has a notation that 21 shillings was the price paid for the book. ♣

Johnson continued from page 1

about E. W. "Mac" McDiarmid? I first met Mac when I was a graduate student in the library school. We had a chance to renew that acquaintance during my first meeting with the Friends board, shortly after my arrival at the University. And the conversation continued over dinner during the Saturday evening banquet at the conference—one of my most memorable experiences from that wonderful weekend.

It is a conversation that I hope will continue and expand to include many of the readers of this newsletter. There is much to talk about—as Peter Blau, Dan Posnansky, Fred Kittle, and others reminded us during the advisory committee meeting. I was listening (and taking notes). And we've already begun some of the work set out for us.

Prior to the "Founder's Footprints" conference I thought it was important to increase our visibility on the Internet and increase access to our collections. This was confirmed in the advisory committee meeting. To this end we mounted all of our previous Holmes exhibition catalogs on the Special Collections web site and had them available for inspection prior to the conference. Those catalogs may be viewed by anyone with Internet access at <http://www.lib.umn.edu/special/rare/holmes.html#cats>. We also began discussions with George Vanderburgh to use an edited version of *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* on the Internet to list our holdings. We anticipate that this listing will be available to interested researchers before the end of the year. I am extremely grateful to George, and to Ronald De Waal, for allowing us the use of the digital version of *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* as a bridge between scholars and our collections. Our long-term goal is to have the entire collection cataloged and available on the University's LUMINA on-line catalog.



From the
Hench Collection

Another more immediate goal is to have our various manuscript and correspondence collections described, listed, and available on the Internet, again by the end of the year.

During the next year we'll also be preparing to move into our new state-of-the-art facility. This is a very exciting prospect and one that will occupy a great deal of our time. So there is much to do, and I am very excited to be here and to see these and other projects come to fruition. Mac, Bryce Crawford, E. W. Ziebarth and the other founders of the Norwegian Explorers brought enthusiasm and knowledge—and the forging of a strong link to the University—with the founding of the Explorers. It is my hope to continue in those footsteps, and to bring others along with me as I work to keep, share, and expand the wealth of material held at Minnesota.

Now that you have a sense of my initial months on the job, and what is ahead of us for the next year, allow me to give you a bit of background about myself, how I arrived at Minnesota, and my view of the role of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections in relation to the collections themselves.

I was born in a small, rural town in central Minnesota and have lived in Florida, Wisconsin, Colorado, Michigan, and Illinois. I learned to swim in the Atlantic, fish on the Mississippi, and ski in the Rockies. I graduated from high school in Denver, did my undergraduate work in Chicago, and finished with graduate work in Minneapolis (library science) and Chicago (theology). Although surrounded by books at a young age, I was drawn to athletics and had little time for reading. Organized baseball, basketball, and football consumed most of my spare time; I played basketball into my second collegiate year and saw a few teammates go on to the professional level. In college, however, I caught the book bug.

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50

YEARS AGO

1948 is a special year for the Norwegian Explorers of the Minneapolis - St. Paul area. After meeting for lunch at the Campus Club in the Coffman Memorial Union at The University of Minnesota, five faculty members decided to begin a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars. In the December, 1997 issue of this newsletter, the "50 Years Ago" article featured the 1947 correspondence between E. W. "Mac" McDiarmid, University Librarian, and Edgar W. Smith, editor of "The Baker Street Journal." This article outlined the naming of the new scion society, as well as Mr. Smith's suggestion of the title of Sigerson for McDiarmid instead of the oft-used Gasogene. With the name and title selected, the time had come for their first meeting.

January 15, 1948 is the date of the notice that Mac McDiarmid sent to the individuals he knew to be interested in Sherlock Holmes. It states;

Dear Fellow Sherlockians,
The Norwegian Explorers, Twin City scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, will hold its first formal meeting Friday, January 23, at 8:00 p.m. at the Covered Wagon Cafe, 114 South Fourth, Minneapolis. Such refreshments as those present desire will be available. I hope you can be present and will return the enclosed card. If you know of other Sherlockians in the Twin Cities who would like to attend, I will be glad to send them an invitation upon receipt of their names and addresses.

Sincerely yours,
E.W. McDiarmid
Sigerson

The card enclosed offered two options for the recipient to acknowledge either their plans to attend, or their inability to be present that evening:

"You know that I cannot possibly leave London while old Abrahams is in such mortal terror or his life"

"I will come with pleasure; I do not know how I could employ my time better."

The Baker Street Journal, Volume 3, Number 2, dated 1948, had a notice of this first meeting. On pages 255-6, McDiarmid's submitted article reads "On a bitter cold evening, January 23rd, (21degrees below zero), seven loyal Sherlockians foregathered at the Covered Wagon (in memory of John Ferrier) to drink the canonical toasts and discuss appropriate topics from the Master's life and work." The Norwegian Explorers present were Mac McDiarmid, Bryce Crawford, Wallace Armstrong, Ray Shove, T. C. Blegen, O. T. Blackburn, and Jack Cohen.

Armstrong, Blegen, Blackburn and Cohen have since passed away, and the Covered Wagon Cafe has closed its doors, but the scion society begun with such enthusiasm 50 years ago remains strong and active. The Norwegian Explorers celebrated this special anniversary last month with its Founders' Footprints Conference. Sigerson Mac McDiarmid attended, presiding over the activities honoring the Founders.

The invitation and acknowledgment card are held in Mac McDiarmid's Norwegian Explorers Archives in the Collections. ♣

At first I read books to survive my classes. In a short course of time I came to enjoy reading and books, to the point of being teased by other family members that I could not be seen without a book in my hand. I am an eclectic reader with no set personal collecting pattern. If forced, I might admit to being a bit of an Anglophile. I have a special interest in the Inklings, British espionage (Len Deighton, John Le Carre), and anything to do with Oxford (including Colin Dexter). One of my joys was a trip to Oxford with a side trip to Hay-on-Wye. But I'm also interested in Great Lakes maritime history (my great-grandfather worked in the shipyards of Duluth), railroads (my grandfather worked for the Northern Pacific), Swedish-Americana, and any other number of things, including Sherlock Holmes.

It was a love of books, the desire to remain in academia, and the joy of working with interesting people that brought me into the profession and, ultimately, to the University of Minnesota. Along the way I have been a reference librarian, college professor, library director, medical librarian, and archivist. Most people would say I'm not a Sherlockian. . . yet. But my interest is keen. And I'm glad the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections are close at hand. Together, I see a productive partnership that combines Holmesian expertise and knowledgeable librarianship in a collaborative effort to publicize the collections; acquire, house, and catalog additional materials; promote scholarship and publication; and forge new links with Sherlockians around the world. There are other roles that will become apparent to me and to the Friends as we work together on our various programs and projects. It is a companionship that I hope and trust will be long and fruitful. ♡

Acquisitions

Beginning with this issue we will note new acquisitions to the Collections since the previous issue. On occasion we will highlight one or two recent acquisitions. One recent donation was made by Lynnette and Michael Yencho, residents of St. Paul, MN. Lynette, a sculptor, created a bronze figure of Sherlock Holmes crossing the great Grimpen Mire. Only 50 will be cast and #3 was delivered to the Collections in late August. ♡



photo by Michael Yencho

On Grimpen Mire

Advisory Committee Meeting

by Richard Sveum, M.D.

The third meeting of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Advisory Committee took place on August 7, 1998.

Attending the meeting were: Peter Blau, Catherine Cooke, Pj Doyle, Jamie Hubbs, Timothy Johnson, Tom Joyce, C. Frederick Kittle, Allen Mackler, C. Paul Martin, Julie McKuras, Joe Moran, Nils Nordberg, Jennie Paton, Roy Pilot, Dan Posnansky, Julia Rosenblatt, Tom Shaughnessy, Bruce Southworth, Richard Sveum and George Vanderburgh.

The meeting opened with a history of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries. The first Advisory Committee meeting in 1993 planned the transfer and dedication of the John Bennett Shaw collection. The second Advisory Committee meeting in 1997 recommended improved communications which resulted in this newsletter and the Sherlock Holmes Collections website, (<http://www.lib.umn.edu/special/rare/holmes.html>).

Personnel at the Collections include Curator Tim Johnson, Acting Assistant Curator Carol Johnson and part time

Collection Specialist Jamie Hubbs. The new Minnesota Library Archives and Access Center building is under construction and the move will take place in late 1999. Tom Shaughnessy, University Librarian, discussed the digital library projects at the University.

The majority of the Sherlock Holmes Collections are not cataloged on LUMINA, the University's on-line system. The Advisory Committee discussed this problem and made several suggestions. George Vanderburgh and Ron DeWaal have agreed to let the University of Minnesota use an electronic version of the *Universal Sherlock Holmes* on the website as an interim measure. The University of Minnesota will help update the *Universal Sherlock Holmes*, which fits nicely with its mission as the central repository of all things Sherlockian. Special thanks go to George Vanderburgh for working out the agreement. We expect web access to this resource in a few months. I believe the *Universal Sherlock Holmes* will allow remote access to the Collections' holdings during the move and also result in an improved bibliography in the process. Thanks to all the Advisory Committee. ♡

Musings

Founders' Footprints, the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Norwegian Explorers has come and gone. The celebration reinforced the strong relationship that has existed between the Explorers and the Collections at the University of Minnesota since the group's first general meeting in 1948. The conference was a great success and generated many new memberships for both the Norwegian Explorers and the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Two meetings adjunct to the conference took place. The third Advisory Group met to discuss the current state of the Collections as well as next steps including cataloguing, preservation and enabling access. Also, the first general meeting of the membership of the Friends gave everyone a chance to view exhibits of material from the Collections and to bid on books and artwork to benefit the Collections. For details on both of these meetings see the Advisory Committee and President's report by Richard Sveum.

In this issue, we shine a bit more light on the founding of the Explorers, but perhaps more importantly we look ahead to the future with an introduction to Timothy J. Johnson, the new Curator of Special Collections and Rare Books. We're very pleased to welcome Tim to the Collections and look forward to continuing the close working relationship that began literally before he arrived. Tim has agreed to periodically contribute to this newsletter, apprising Friends members of changes and developments at the Collections from his perspective.

Over the next few issues some new features will appear regularly. Highlights of recent acquisitions will be noted, as will items being specifically sought by the Collections. In addition, we hope to note what research is being conducted using the material here.

Thank you to everyone who attended Founder's Footprints

and the Friends membership meeting and to those who have made monetary and material donations. It is through your efforts that the Collections will continue to grow. ♥

Bruce E. Southworth, B.S.I.
Editor



photo by Bruce Southworth

Handwritten notes on personal stationery by Dr. Gray Chandler Briggs on location of Sherlock Holmes's rooms in Baker Street. Also photograph of same, initialed by Briggs. Crotty Papers

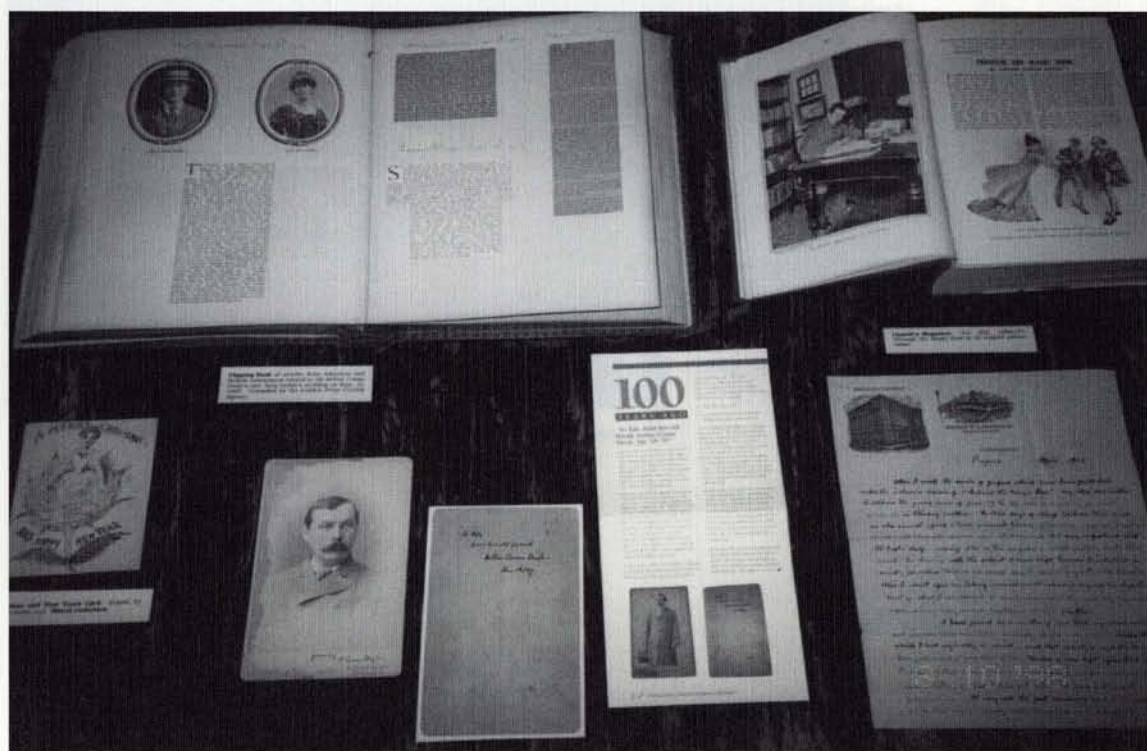


photo by Bruce Southworth

Displays from Founders' Footprints Conference

Meet the Editorial Board

Some time ago, we received a request to include a bit of biographical information on the Editorial Board. It took us awhile to decide to come out of hiding, but here we are.

Julie McKuras began her fascination with Sherlock Holmes as a child, while watching the Basil Rathbone series of films on late Saturday night television. It wasn't until 1993, after moving to the Twin Cities area, that she discovered the Norwegian Explorers and learned the world was full of Holmes enthusiasts. She joined the Board of the Norwegian Explorers in 1995, and was elected president in 1997. Julie was a member of the Conference Committee for the Norwegian Explorers Founders' Footprints in August, 1998, and is a member of STUD. She has been on the Board of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections since 1995, and shares the writing responsibilities for the Newsletter, along with Bruce and Dick.

Julie is a graduate of Purdue University, and was an Intensive Care Unit and Coronary Care Unit Registered Nurse. She has spent the past fifteen years working in volunteer roles for childrens' academic and sports activities. She recently decided to return to the college setting, and is majoring in Film Studies at the University of Minnesota. Julie and her husband Mike have two children, Sean, 21, and Megan, 18. They reside at 13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124.

Bruce E. Southworth, B.S.I. (Victor Hatherley), has been a Holmes and Doyle enthusiast since age 8 (a long time ago) and a member of the Norwegian Explorers since 1970. He served as the Explorers Vice President and President and editor of "Explorations." He received his B.S.I. investiture in 1992. He served as Advertising and Circulation Manager of the Baker Street Journal, has developed and taught classes on Sherlock Holmes for local Community Education and co-founded the Wigmore Street Post Office, Prodigy's online scion of the BSI.

Bruce was Chair, *Rogues, Rascals and Ruffians* conference (1993), *Founders' Footprints* conference (1998), and Co-chair, *Bouchercon* (1996). A freelance writer/critic, Bruce has been published in St. Paul Pioneer Press, Publishers Weekly, Bookpage, Baker Street Journal and others. He is a member of various Sherlockian and literary societies including the National Book Critics Circle and Mystery Writers of America. He is married to Gayolen Southworth, and has one daughter, Caitlin. Their residence is 1621 Lafond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104-2212. On the side Bruce is a Senior Systems Analyst for a small software company based in La Crosse, WI.

Richard J. Sveum, M.D. is President of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, University of Minnesota and Board Member of the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota. Richard is a Clinical Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics, University of Minnesota Medical School and Consultant, Asthma and Allergic Diseases, Park Nicollet Clinic. He is a graduate of St. Olaf College and the University of Minnesota Medical School. Richard is a member of the ACD Society, Bootmakers of Toronto, and STUD, as well as numerous medical, literary and Norwegian-American societies. He is married to Jennifer M. Olson, M.D., and they have four children, Mara, Kari, Eric and Adam. He is an avid runner and book collector with particular emphasis in Vincent Starrett, "books on books," Gore Vidal and bibliomysteries. Their residence is 2700 Sylvan Road, Minnetonka, MN 55305. ♡



Richard Sveum, Julie McKuras, and Bruce Southworth

photo by Mike McKuras

From the President

On August 7th the first Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Membership meeting was held at Wilson Library. Those attending were able to view two exhibits, of Treasures from the Collections in the Reading Room, and Art, Architecture and Illustration in the World of Sherlock Holmes in the Gallery. University Librarian Tom Shaughnessy gave a construction update on the new building. Tim Johnson, Curator of Special Collections, was introduced. Elected to office were President Richard Sveum, VP Ruth Berman, Secretary Julie McKuras and Treasurer Jamie Hubbs. The Friends Board were introduced including: Inez Bergquist, Judy Hedin, Tim Johnson, Allen Mackler, E.W. McDiarmid and Bruce

Southworth. The highlight of the meeting was a Fund Raising Auction conducted by Peter Blau. The Founders' Footprints Conference was a great success and I am glad that the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections could play a part. The real founder of both the Norwegian Explorers and the Sherlock Holmes Collections, E.W. McDiarmid, was the guest of honor at the Saturday Banquet.

Thanks to everyone that attended especially those new members. To everybody else, see you next year and keep in touch. ♥

Richard J. Sveum, M.D.
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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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photo by Bruce Southworth

E.W. "Mac" McDiarmid, B.S.I. and Peter Blau, B.S.I. – Founders' Footprints Conference



photo by Gayolen Southworth

Sigerson E.W. "Mac" McDiarmid, B.S.I., with plaque honoring him

Remembrances

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

IN HONOR OF

Sherlock Holmes
Dr. Benton Wood
Bruce Southworth

FROM

Fred and Kathy Anderson
Caroline W. Everett
Showsaku Mashimo

IN MEMORY OF

John Bennett Shaw
Philip S. Hench, M. D.
Dame Jean Conan Doyle
Eileen Hartsoe-Katz
Eileen Hartsoe
Charles Vincent Emerson Starrett

FROM

Fred and Kathy Anderson
Susan Hench Bowis
Clifford S. Goldfarb
Alexian A. Gregory
Evelyn Herzog
Showsaku Mashimo

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Mailing list corrections requested—

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

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