



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



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"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)

Dale L. Walker's Gift to the Sherlock Holmes Collections

The March 16, 1969 *El Paso Times* headline reads "Irregulars Keep Memory of Sherlock Holmes Alive." The article contains information about what John Bennett Shaw once described as the cult of Sherlock Holmes and was accompanied by a photograph of Shaw and Texan Dale L. Walker. The caption indicated that Shaw



Photo courtesy of Dale L. Walker

Dale L. Walker and John Bennett Shaw from the March 16, 1969 *El Paso Times*

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100

YEARS AGO

“The Adventure of the Second Stain” appeared in the January 28, 1905 issue of *Collier's: The National Weekly* and was accompanied by several illustrations by Frederic Dorr Steele. (The story appeared first in England in the *Strand Magazine*, December 1904 and made its American appearance the following month.) This was the last in a series of thirteen stories that

appeared in *The Strand Magazine* in England and *Collier's* in America, that were later collected in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. In *Collier's* the title was prefaced with the statement “The Last Sherlock Holmes Story ever to be written by A. Conan Doyle”, which was Conan Doyle's intention, but without the finality of the Reichenbach episode in “The Final Problem.”

Steele (1873–1944) provided the illustration for the magazine cover, one of eleven covers which he provided for *Collier's* in this series of stories. It shows Holmes holding the rug while intently examining the bloodstain. Steele also drew the title heading which incorporated a

silhouette of the Tower of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament and three illustrations dealing with the text of the story. On page three there was a bonus for this issue: an advertisement announcing that the Holmes stories would be succeeded by the “Raffles” series written by E. W. Hornung, Conan Doyle's brother-in-law. The advertisement has a drawing of Holmes tipping his hat and a second drawing of Raffles lighting a cigarette. This image of Holmes, not connected to any of the stories, is rarely reproduced although it can be found in Bill Blackbeard's *Sherlock Holmes in America*.

Even though Conan Doyle had intended “The Second Stain” to be the last Holmes story, he was still to write fully one-third of the Canon. There would be a hiatus of 3 years before Holmes's next appearance in “The Singular Experience of Mr. J. Scott Eccles,” later retitled as part 1 of “The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge,” also illustrated by Steele in *Collier's*. This appearance in 1905 marked the mid point of Conan Doyle's forty years of publishing the Sherlock Holmes stories from 1887 to 1927.

The Sherlock Holmes Collections at the Elmer L. Andersen Library has an extensive collection of Steele related items. In addition to a full run of this series of *Collier's* magazines the Collection has a major archive of Steele's letters, manuscripts, photographs and drawings, much of which was donated by his children in 1986. Looking back 100 years to the 1905 printing of the *Collier's* magazine, donated by Philip S. Hench M.D., we get the opportunity to consider the amazing resources and materials available through the Sherlock Holmes Collections. ♡

Phillip Bergem



Collier's January 28, 1905

50

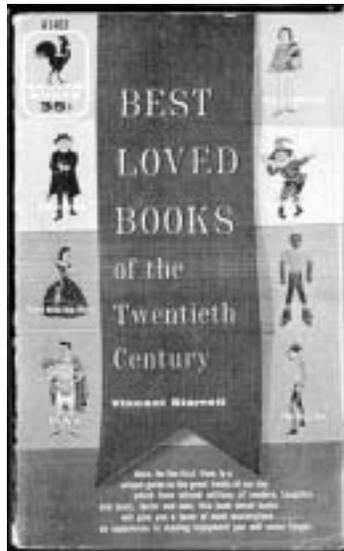
YEARS AGO

Among the treasured correspondence in the Sherlock Holmes Collections are many letters from the files of Vincent Starrett, the Chicago bookman and columnist who published the first major US book of Sherlockiana: *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1933). A recent search through the files uncovered letters to Starrett from Dorothy Gardiner, under the letterhead of the Mystery Writers of America (MWA) in New York, concerning a visit to Chicago by Raymond Chandler in 1955.

In the first letter, dated March 8, 1955, Gardiner writes that Chandler would be stopping briefly in Chicago en route by train from California to New York, from whence he would sail to England. Chandler had written Gardiner, “can you think of anyone in Chicago who might care to have a leisurely lunch with me and help me pass these empty hours [between trains]?” Gardiner had thought of Starrett, and asked him whether he could meet Chandler. Evidently Starrett quickly agreed, because another letter from Gardiner to Starrett dated only six days later reads, “Bless you! Now I’m just praying that Chandler really arrives – he needs to get away from tragedy desperately [Chandler’s beloved wife of 30 years, Cissy, had just died after having been in poor health for some time] ... and this move of his looks most hopeful. You should be exactly the person for him, and I’m sure you’ll enjoy being with him – if he arrives. Always that IF!”

At first glance, Vincent Starrett and Raymond Chandler may seem like strange bedfellows: Starrett, the sentimental champion of Sherlock Holmes, and Chandler, along with Dashiell Hammett a leading exponent of the Hard-Boiled school of detective fiction, who brooked no nonsense from what he considered the contrived machinations of many mystery

writers – including Conan Doyle. In his essay “The Simple Art of Murder,” Chandler wrote, “Conan Doyle made mistakes which completely invalidated some of his stories, but he was a pioneer, and Sherlock Holmes after all is mostly an attitude and a few dozen lines of unforgettable dialogue.” Starrett certainly would have taken exception to that cavalier dismissal. However, despite their differences the two had much in common. Chandler had been



Best Loved Books

born in Chicago; although born in Toronto, Starrett relished Chicago as his adopted hometown. Both men had strong connections to the Mystery Writers of America, and both were to win Edgar awards from the MWA: Chandler the Best Novel award in 1955 for *The Long Goodbye*, and Starrett the Grand Master award in 1958. Both men also went on to serve as the organization’s president: Chandler in 1959 and Starrett in 1961. On the personal side, Starrett could empathize with Chandler’s grief over his wife. Starrett was as doting and devoted to his wife, Rachel (nicknamed Ray), who suffered from severe mental illness, as Chandler had been to his dear Cissy.

A third letter from Gardiner to Starrett, dated April 12, 1955, verifies that Chandler *did* arrive and that the meeting took place. Gardiner writes, “thank you for being so kind to Raymond Chandler... He apparently had a beautiful time with you [and your wife]... He’s been in hospital here, but seemed to be much better

and in pretty good spirits.” How we would love to know what topics came up at that meeting, but unfortunately no known record exists.

Another letter from 1955 in the Starrett correspondence refers to the publication of Starrett’s *Best Loved Books of the Twentieth Century*. Ellen Kraft, Assistant Promotion Director at Bantam Books in New York, wrote Starrett informing him that a press release announcing his book had been mailed to 850 newspaper and radio book reviewers. The Collections has a copy of *Best Loved Books*, which was published only in paperback. The book presents a selection of Starrett’s book review columns from the Sunday Chicago *Tribune*, in which he gives his impressions of 52 books published between 1900 and 1955 that he considers to have enduring value. Not surprisingly, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* ranked high on the list at number three (only one book per author was included).

In his foreword to his book Starrett lays out his selection criteria, saying that the first criterion was “the simple test of survival... As of this writing [1955], all the titles considered are still (or again) in print and obtainable in the book shops.” In the closing paragraph of the foreword he muses, “One wonders how many of the books discussed will survive when another half century has been ticked off... For myself, an optimist, I should think fully half the present muster. If any of us are around in A.D. 2000, let’s compare notes.” Well, Starrett the optimist grossly underestimated the staying power of his choices. A search of Amazon.com in 2005 shows that an astounding 50 of the 52 titles are still in print! Sherlockians can take comfort in noting that one of the two out-of-print titles is *While Rome Burns*, by Alexander Woollcott, an early member of the Baker Street Irregulars who ruffled the feathers of other members by lampooning the group in a *New Yorker* article. Ironically, *Best Loved Books* itself is no longer in print, but copies can be found on abebooks.com for as little as \$3.50, a mere ten times the original cover price of 35¢. ♡

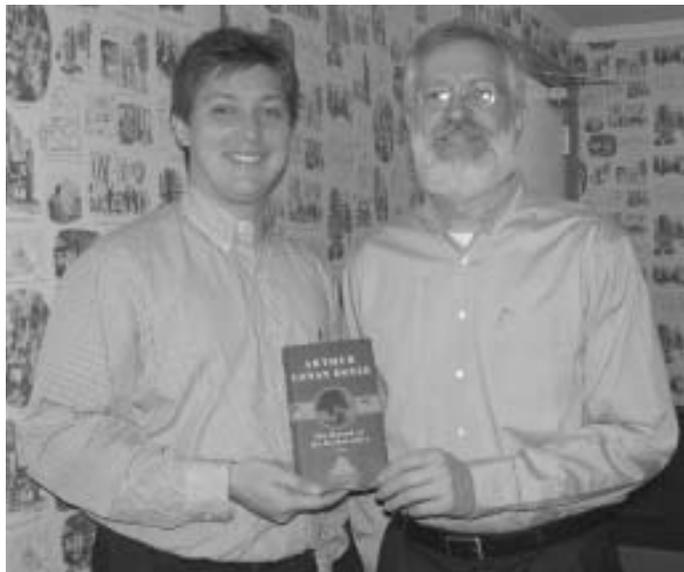
John Bergquist, BSI

Acquisitions

Elliott Black continued with his donations to the Holmes Collections with the most recent addition of periodicals, articles, publications and ephemera.

Mike Eckman, Secretary-Treasurer of The Norwegian Explorers, donated the Winter 2005 edition of *The Key Reporter*, the newsletter of Phi Beta Kappa. Included in the section "From Our Book Critics" is a review of Les Klinger's *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. Reviewer Jay M. Pasachoff writes "Reading the 1,500 pages of these two volumes will put us in hopeful anticipation of the eventual publication of the volume with the novels that is to follow."

Photo by Julie McKuras



John Genova and Richard J. Sveum

John Genova of New York City presented a copy of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* to Richard Sveum. This edition was one of the fifteen classics in the *New York Post's* Family Classics Library series. Readers had a two-week opportunity to use the newspaper's coupon and purchase the book for \$7.

The Norwegian Explorers added their *Christmas Annual 2004* to the Collections. This is a variant edition (only three of the editions with a pale green cover were printed) and is signed by all of the contributors to the booklet.

Steve Rothman, BSI, donated *The Holiday Adventures of Achbar* by Barbara Sofer. Published in 1983, the book details the adventures of Achbar the mouse as he helps Detective Schuster solve "The Rosh Hashanah Riddle," "The Sukkot Search," "Achbar's Chanukah Party," "Pre-Purim Problems," "The Pesach Puzzle," "The Mysterious Oil Crisis," and "The Sivan Solution." ♡

From the President

2005 is off to good start with donations of materials to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. The Dale L. Walker correspondence with John Bennett Shaw is especially rewarding. If you have any letters from John Bennett Shaw we would like you to consider donating the actual letter or a photocopy to the collection. We are trying to keep green the memory of the master and his ardent collector and our patron John Bennett Shaw.

I would like to thank everyone who has renewed their membership in the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes

Collections for 2005. If you haven't made your contribution yet, we hope that you will send in your donation soon so that the Holmes Collections can continue to grow. So far about half of our members have responded to our December appeal with the average donation exceeding the ten-dollar minimum. We have been contacted by a number of our Friends who sent in donations directly to University Library or through the University of Minnesota Friends of the Library, our former parent organization. I want to give a special thank you to our editor Julie McKuras who not only edits this newsletter but also spends countless volunteer hours with the Friends membership database and working with the Friends of the Library in

order to have your contributions transferred to the Holmes Collections.

I look forward to seeing many of our Friends in St. Louis in May for Under the Arch II. Julie McKuras, who is one of the featured speakers, will be displaying a number of items from the Collections. We hope to meet new Friends and see our membership increase.

Again, please be generous if you have not sent in your 2005 membership donation. Your financial donations, materials or time are necessary in order for us to become The World Center for the Study and Appreciation of Sherlock Holmes. ♡

Richard J. Sveum, MD, BSI

Musings

We beg to differ with Dale L. Walker's description of his gift. Modest doesn't describe it when we consider the inscribed August Derleth books, Sherlockian books and letters. It is through the efforts of people like Dale L. Walker who sent John Bennett Shaw copies of clippings and articles from periodicals that enabled Shaw's collection to reach a critical mass. Shaw's notebooks of such clippings are one of the most utilized resources in the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

I'd like to welcome Phillip Bergem to our newsletter. Phil is a board member of the Norwegian Explorers as well as

the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and he has a particular interest in the genealogy of the Conan Doyle family and the publication dates and appearances of the Sherlock Holmes stories. Many of our readers had the chance to meet Phil when he spoke at the June 2004 conference in Minneapolis.

Tim Johnson and Dick Sveum have also contributed their quarterly reports on the Collections and the Friends organization.

I've often joked that we should have named this newsletter "Look what I found while I was looking for something else." In the December

2004 issue under the title heading of 100 Years Ago, we featured the Parker Brothers game SHERLOCK HOLMES. While reviewing John Bennett Shaw's notebooks for the year 1982, I found an advertisement from the May/June 1982 issue of *Collectibles Illustrated* for the game SHERLOCK HOLMES. We can only guess that it might have been a friend of Shaw's, someone like Dale L. Walker, who took the time to clip and send the ad to Shaw.

The generosity of our members is greatly appreciated, as Dick Sveum noted in his column. Thank you for your support and encouragement. ♡

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI



Photo from the May/June 1982 issue of *Collectibles Illustrated*

Advertisement for the SHERLOCK HOLMES game

Dale L. Walker... Continued from Page 1

Photo courtesy of Dale L. Walker



Dale L. Walker

“conferred in El Paso last week with Dale Walker, named by Shaw as the most knowledgeable Holmes student in Texas.” That same knowledgeable Holmes student has recently made a contribution to the Sherlock Holmes Collections that highlights his own memories of the late John Bennett Shaw. The large box received, which Walker described as “a modest gift,” contained books, letters and cards from John Bennett Shaw, photos, meeting announcements, programs, catalogues, and articles: nothing modest about this gift.

Dale L. Walker and John Bennett Shaw began their epistolary friendship in 1965. Like many others, Dale sent letters to Shaw which included newspaper clippings and magazine articles. (In his August 6, 1980 article “What sleuth still lurks in readers’ hearts?” in *The El Paso Times*, Walker noted, “John Shaw’s postman observes that the two people in Santa Fe who receive the most daily mail are Bill Mauldin, the editorial cartoonist, and Shaw. ‘Wouldn’t you know it’ he says wryly. ‘They’re both on my route.’”) The two eventually met at Shaw’s Santa Fe home, shortly after Walker’s article about Holmes, Jack London and Conan Doyle appeared in *The Baker Street Journal* in June of 1970. The Shaws later visited the Walkers at their home in El Paso. Shaw was “among the best raconteurs I ever met, a thorough-

ly delightful man,” Walker says. Shaw would feature prominently in the Sherlockian newspaper articles that Walker wrote.

Shaw kept a file folder of Walker’s correspondence to him. In it we see the evolution of the June 1970 *Baker Street Journal* article into the 1974 *Jack London, Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* booklet published by The Private Press of Alvin S. Fick. This edition, bound in dark gold heavy cardstock, was printed in a limited edition of 600 copies. In his acknowledgements Walker thanks, in addition to Dr. Julian Wolff, Judge S. Tupper Bigelow, and Professor H. W. Starr, “investitured BSI member, bookman, gentleman and long-time friend John Bennett Shaw.”

An expanded version of this booklet was published by Gaslight Publications in 1981 under the title *Jack London and Conan Doyle: A Literary Kinship* (“Not a biography, this monograph nonetheless neatly summarizes Jack London’s life and career, stressing his literary debt to, and common interests with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.” [Scheetz, 30]. A review of the book by J. Randolph Cox in *Baker Street Miscellanea* stated, “It is apparent throughout that Walker knows his subject as few others do.” (Cox, 38). Walker noted in this edition’s acknowledgements that “The opportunity to expand this work came about through a suggestion made to Jack Tracy of Gaslight Publications by John Bennett Shaw...” Shaw had copies of the booklet and the book which are now part of The Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Walker’s gift wasn’t limited to the letters and articles. He also contributed books and highlighted the inscribed first editions of *In Re: Sherlock Holmes* (“For Dale L. Walker – Greetings from a latter day Baker Street, Canonically August Derleth”), *the Memoirs of Solar Pons*, *The Return of Solar Pons* and *The Reminiscences of Solar Pons*.

Walker has been a freelance writer for forty-five years. In addition to the above noted works, Walker is also author of *The Fiction of Jack London*, published in 1972, and has edited three London anthologies — *Curious Fragments: Jack London’s Tales of Fantasy Fiction* (1975), *No Mentor But Myself: Jack London, The Writer’s Writer* (1979), and *In a Far Country: Jack London’s Tales of the West* (1987). He is the author of twenty books, and his 400 magazine articles, 700 book reviews, short stories and literary criticism (see <http://www.jack-londons.net/writings/shortFiction/dale-walker-bio.html>) have been published in 130 publications such as *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*, *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*, *The Bloomsbury Review*, *American Cowboy* and *Newsweek*. His specialties, he says, include “Western American History, military history, 19th and early 20th century journalism and war correspondence.” He served as director of the Texas Western Press of the University of Texas at El Paso and as book editor for *The El Paso Times*. He is a four-time recipient of the Spur Award from the Western Writers of America (WWA), an organization of 600 writers. He served as president of the WWA from 1992-94, and in 2000 he received the organization’s Owen Wister Award for Lifetime Achievement in Western Literature.

We are proud to count Dale L. Walker as a friend of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. His efforts in keeping the memory of Sherlock Holmes alive will also serve to remind those who knew, or knew of, John Bennett Shaw of what a special friend he was to many. ♡

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

References:

Cox, J. Randolph. “Jack London and Conan Doyle: A Literary Kinship” review. *Baker Street Miscellanea*, Summer 1981. 37 – 38.

<http://www.jacklondons.net/writings/shortFiction/dalewalker-bio.html>

Scheetz, George H. “Jack London and Conan Doyle: A Review”. *Wheelwrightings*, September 1981, 30-31.

An Update from the Collections

Today dawned cold and cloudy, with a chance of snow—a typical winter's day in Minnesota. On a day like today one might think of warmer climes and wish for the coming of Spring. But I find myself thinking of New York and the Birthday weekend. I've now had at least a half dozen opportunities to visit Manhattan during that very special celebration of the Master's birthday and each time I come back to the Twin Cities feeling as if I've gained something new, something special. In a crass sort of way I could chalk this up as a productive business trip. In the course of the weekend I've made new contacts, renewed acquaintances, inched toward the acquisition of new collections, possibly exhibited some pieces from the Collections, probed new projects, or planted a seed for future development. But along the way, and maybe not surprisingly, these contacts have developed into friendships. Maybe that is some of the magic of the Sherlockian world and the work of the Baker Street Irregulars. Maybe it is partly a function of my own poor memory of names and faces, and the fact that it takes me three or four times before the name and face make a connection in my own being. In any event, as I prepared to fly out East for this year's gathering of the faithful, I found myself looking forward to seeing friends. Whether it was at Thursday's lecture, or Friday's dinner, or Saturday's reception, or any point in between, it felt good to sit and talk and meet and greet so many of you. It was a wonderful time of deepening relationships. Thank you for those personal moments and for your continued interest in and support of the Collections at the University of Minnesota.

Shortly after our return from the delights of the East, we readied ourselves for what turned out to be a very agreeable evening at the Campus Club (site of a 1947 faculty lunch that

resulted in the formation of the Norwegian Explorers). The University Libraries and the Campus Club cordially invited us to a "Baker Street Buffet," featuring recipes from the world of Sherlock Holmes (taken from Julia Rosenblatt and Fritz Sonnenschmidt's delightful *Dining with Sherlock Holmes*). Held on the evening of January 27th, and promising an opportunity to enjoy great food and a chance to mingle with Libraries friends, donors and staff, the event—which was sold out—began with a social hour. Attendees nibbled on appetizers of bacon chestnuts and liver pate enroute while Sherlockian toasts were offered by Paul Nagel and our own "King of Scandinavia," John Bergquist. Julie McKuras followed in the tradition of the annual Baker Street Irregulars dinner and offered a toast "To an Old Irregular, E. W. 'Mac' McDiarmid." Various menus, teapots, cups, and other food-related items from the Collections were on display during the course of the evening. Posters and our 1999 Holmesian video clip from "NewsNight Minnesota" were on view as well. The entourage moved from hall and bar into the dining area, where they enjoyed the Minneapolis skyline and a dinner featuring honey-cured duck, crabmeat cakes Stoke Moran and other delectable items. Midway through the evening, diners were entertained with a brief excerpt from one of the Edith Meiser radio scripts, admirably performed by Bob and Lucy Brusich of "The Red-Throated League" with assistance from yours truly. Finally, as the evening moved through a dessert course of bread pudding and peaches Cartwright, John Bergquist read William Schweickert's "A Long Evening with Holmes" and I concluded with Vincent Starrett's "221B." Campus Club members had the opportunity to interact with members of the Libraries' community and catch a glimpse of an active Sherlockian world. Library Friends experienced the gracious hospitality



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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An Update from the Collections... Continued from Page 7

and ambience of the Campus Club. It was a winning evening for everyone. One other glimpse of our active world can now be found on the Internet. If you point your browser to <http://special.lib.umn.edu/findaid/xml/scr0002.xml> you will find the first of what we hope will be many finding aids to the manuscript material held by the Collections. A finding aid is to archives as a catalog card is to libraries, i.e., a description and listing of

material from a specific collection. In this case, the finding aid is for the Howard Haycraft papers and provides content description at the file folder level for fifteen boxes of material. The Haycraft finding aid is part of a larger project of the Archives and Special Collections units of the University Libraries, using the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) standard for describing these types of collections. Both technical and general information

about EAD may be found at the Library of Congress web site, <http://www.loc.gov/ead/>. A number of other Sherlockian-related finding aids are in preparation and will be posted on our web site at <http://special.lib.umn.edu/rare/OtherCollections> and from our Holmes Collections web site. We trust that these will be both useful and welcome additions to the world of Holmes and his admirers. ♣

Tim Johnson

Remembrances

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

In Honor of

John Bergquist's BSI Investiture
Madison Claire Hamill
Fred Kittle, MD
Dr. Ely Liebow
Julie McKuras
Julie McKuras
Ben Perlman's 75th birthday
Brian Pugh
John Reyle and Family
Richard J. Sveum
Richard J. Sveum
Michael Whelan

In Memory of

Ben Abramson
Elmer L. Andersen
Susan J. Beasley
Bob Brodie
Steve Clarkson
Jim Cleary
Syd Goldberg
Richard Lancelyn Green
Don Hardenbrook
John Henry Cardinal Newman
Carole Oredson
Alvin E. Rodin
George Schenk Sr.
Dr. George M. Schuster, P.E.
Charles Sherlock
Eric Silk
Dr. Richard M. Sturtz

From

Michael Kean
Don Hobbs
Larry Koppers, MD
Elliott M. Black
Phillip Bergem
Thomas Gottwalt
Edgar K. Simon Jr.
David Rush
Peter Scalise
Phillip Bergem
Showsaku Mashimo
Robert S. Katz

From

Vincent Brosnan
Phil Swiggum
Margie Austry
Warren Randall
Robert C. Burr
Paul G. Churchill
Wanda and Jeff Dow
Thomas Drucker
Sandy Kozinn
Karen Murdock
Randall Stock
Lynn E. Walker
Warren Randall
Robert Hess
Clifford Goldfarb
Robert Hess
Geoffrey L. Jeffery
Jerry Margolin
Bill Mason
Paul Singleton
Richard Wein
Doug Wrigglesworth
James A. Coffin
Gerald Michael Schnabel
Stephen E. Spielberg
Jack Key
Dr. George Schenk Jr.
Carol Schuster
Samuel Fry
Clifford Goldfarb
William R. Sturtz

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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.