

Keeping the Memory Green

by

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Why are the SOBs such a successful scion society of the BSI? Because they are cohesive, creative and energetic in their pursuit of keeping the memory of Sherlock Holmes ever-green.

The Sound of the Baskervilles currently has 80 Members. We added 10 new Members last year, and another 6 already this year. The SOBs have been a Western Washington, USA fixture for 31 years now for two very good reasons.

Consistency. *We've provide our Members with consistency through regular Club events and the long-term tenure of our dedicated officers and editorial staff.*

Over the years the Club has had numerous meeting locations. Restaurants would drive us away by raising prices, changing their menus, or closing. At times, Members had the space and time to host our Meetings, most notably Paul Williams, who is now our Picnic Chair. But we have alighted at T. S. McHugh's in the area of the Seattle Center for more than 10 years now.

Meetings have been held, with very little exception, each and every month since our birth on March 31, 1980. For a mere matter of months many years ago, we did switch our meeting date to the 1st Monday of the month, but for the most part we've met on the 2nd Monday.

We hold a Master's Dinner every year in January, a Wreath Throw every year in May, our Dr. John H. Watson

Picnic every year in July and our Will Crakes Memorial Jollification every year in December. And, we have published our monthly newsletter consistently for 30 years now, with only three editors in all that time.

Even our dues have been consistent...consistently low. For years we charged only \$10 per year. We operate at a loss right now, but we've held our dues at a constant \$20 for ages, and that includes receipt of our monthly newsletter and our Christmas Annual, which retails to non-members for \$10. And, we offer a "family rate" of \$30 per household, of which many of our Members take advantage.

When our founder Jan Bailey demurred, Becky Schlilaty-Geis was elected our first President in September 1980. Since then, we've had only three Presidents (including founding-Members Bill Seil and David Haugen), four Treasurers (three are still dues-paying Members) and three Secretaries/Editors (again, including Bill Seil).

Our meetings and events are not optional. You can always count on finding PFL David there. In fact, he'll celebrate his 28th anniversary as our very democratic President in September 2011, so "politics" are not an issue for us. But he's a big element of our "consistency", bringing news of the Sherlockian world to every meeting, leading knowledgeable discussions of the "story of the month", and putting his heart and good humor into every gathering.

He's always been there for us, and that's a big part of our ability to provide consistency! (On the very few occasions when PFL David has been indisposed, someone has always been willing to step in-with little advance notice-to take his place! Like Members John Nelson, Jean Macdonald and Margie Deck.) **Comradery.** *It's the Members that make this Club what it is.*

Most SOBs are friends on a personal level, with me and David and with each other. Most have been to our home and other Members' homes for non-Sherlockian events, because life-long friendships are being built throughout the Club. There's a subgroup that belongs to the local Richard III Club, others belong to the local costuming group (Somewhere in Time), and there's crossover to local sci-fi and fantasy events.

Most are avid Anglophiles, who seek out British books, movies, TV shows and events. Some of the fellows in the Club have a common interest in antique guns, and others share an interest in sports, including rabid fans of British soccer teams. Most love every sort of movie produced, and many frequent the annual Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon. We've got voracious readers, amateur photographers and birders, avid collectors-Sherlockian and non-and world travelers. Our Members' contributions to the Club's efforts are never overlooked. Our President-for-Life David makes certain that all are recognized, either through his periodic "President's Award" or our

annual "Footprints of a Gigantic Hound Award".

SOBs come from all walks of life; these are not snobs or elitists. Just good folks who love to have fun and who believe in two English gentlemen "who never lived and so can never die". At any Club event, there's always something interesting to discuss with each other and with the group. Whatever the topic, someone else will be able to add to the discussion.

Chances are if you're thinking of trying something different or going some place new, there's an SOB who's "been there / done that" and is willing to give you advice and

direction!! But traits our Members have in common above all else are quick wit, enormous intelligence, and a wicked sense of humor. Every SOB event includes riotous segments of self-deprecating jokes and laughter.

We have no bylaws, no rules, no committees, and few officers. If someone makes a suggestions and it sounds like a good idea, we let them run with it. Like Lloyd Hedberg did with our website, Verne Johnson did with our Club Lending Library, or everybody did-at one time or another-when a book crawl, an antique crawl, a movie date or an afternoon outing sounded like fun.

For many of our Members, it just would not be a normal month if it didn't include something Sherlockian to do...something you can count on, where you know you'll have a good time.

There's not much to being an SOB. Just show up when you can, because David & Terri will be there, or Barbara & John, or Al & Margaret, or Margie & Hank, or Stephen, or Luran, or Becky, or Sheila, or Ed & Joyce, or Jean, or Peter & Kay, or Ann & Michael and Kat, or Sheila, or...you get the idea!! Because whenever 2 SOBs show up anywhere, you know there's fun in store.

