



Spring, 2008

REMINISCENCES: David Ansel Weiss, BSI

The 2008 BSI dinner was the occasion to celebrate several Irregulars who have been a part of the organization since the 1950s. One of those celebrated gentlemen was David A. Weiss. (1958, "Crosby the Banker")

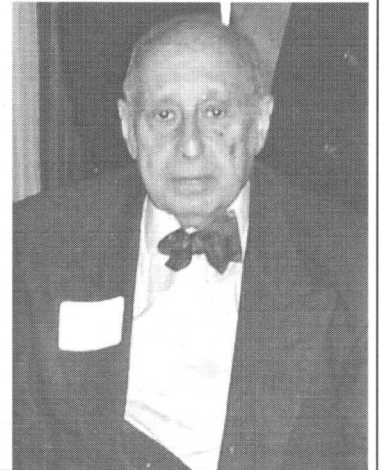
David began working on his reminiscences several years ago. It became clear that his memories, which included his friendships and meetings with Irregulars such as Edgar W. Smith, Julian Wolff, Isaac Asimov, James Montgomery, Reverend Leslie Marshall, and Herbert Breen, to name a few, should be shared with his fellow Sherlockians. David spent a great deal of time in transcribing those memories and generously chose to donate a copy to the BSI Trust Archives. In that same spirit, he agreed to let us reprint portions of those reminiscences.

David's father, Harvey H. Weiss, was the

city health official in Cumberland, Maryland. He was "an inveterate reader and one of his favorite books was the Canon. Unlike most of the other books he read, he continued reading and re-reading the Sherlock Holmes books and stories the rest of his life, and his Christopher Morley edition of the Canon, dog-eared as it was, was on his bed table the night he died....I do remember that my father and I once went to see a Sherlock Holmes movie made in England with Holmes played by Arthur Wontner... The occasion sticks in my mind mostly because my father seldom went to movies and because Cumberland, even with five movie theatres in those days (1930s), seldom showed foreign pictures."

After graduating with a degree in chemistry from Johns Hopkins University, David

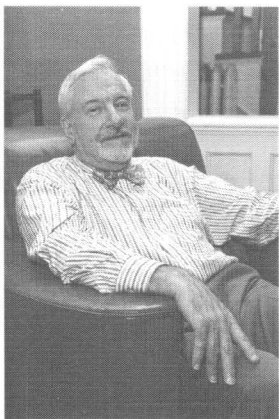
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David A. Weiss, BSI

Photo taken at the 2008 BSI Dinner
by Ben Vizoskie, BSI

FROM THE CHAIR by Thomas J. Francis, BSI



It is always a thrill and a challenge to take on a new job. In my case, life should be better initially, as I am able to take advantage of the groundwork, procedures, guidelines and policies which were developed by the first BSI Trust Co-Chairs, Glen Miranker and Costa Rossakis. Having to build everything from scratch is never easy. Thank you both for a job well done.

The members of the Trust are a hardworking group who have toiled long to make this all come together. They meet regularly,

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“Once when John Dickson Carr came to one of our Six Napoleons meetings, Robertson took us all carrying lanterns to the grave of Edgar Allan Poe in a church graveyard...where waving our lanterns we recited the Musgrave Ritual and almost got arrested. (‘What in the hell are you doing in this graveyard with lanterns and mumbling prayers?’ the police sergeant wanted to know.)”

worked as a chemist before enlisting in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He moved to Baltimore after his discharge from the Navy and took a position with the War Department to edit a volume in a series of books on the history of the Corps of Engineers in the Southwest Pacific in WWII. It was during this period that his interest turned to Sherlock Holmes. “It might have come about from reading Edgar Smith’s book *Profile by Gaslight* or from finding copies of the *Baker Street Journal* at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore....I began to think about writing a story for the *Baker Street Journal* that had been germinating in my mind even when I was in the service, and so I started to write it while working for the War Department. Its title was ‘The Celestial Pastiche’ and it was a story of a Sherlock Holmes pastiche contest held in heaven which was won by one Conan Doyle who was referred to as an author on earth of historical novels like *The White Company* without any mention of Sherlock Holmes. I sent it off to Edgar Smith and received a letter that started my career as a free-lance writer. I didn’t realize until later when I came to NY and struggled to make a living as a freelance writer that the letter from Smith, which was full of fulsome praise, was due more to his enthusiasm for a young Sherlockian than to my talent as a second Hemingway, but it was his letter that encouraged me to resign my job at the War Department and head to New York.”

At the same time, Weiss received a phone call from Six Napoleon Allen Robertson of Baltimore. David passed the Six Napoleons’ strict admittance test and became Napoleon XIV. He admired Robertson’s “creativity and knowledge of the Canon....Once when John Dickson Carr came to one of our Six Napoleons meetings, Robertson took us all carrying lanterns to the grave of Edgar Allan Poe in a church graveyard...where

waving our lanterns we recited the Musgrave Ritual and almost got arrested. (‘What in the hell are you doing in this graveyard with lanterns and mumbling prayers?’ the police sergeant wanted to know.)”

David moved to New York in 1949 and developed a relationship with Edgar W. Smith, but regrets his days with the BSI came after Christopher Morley’s poor-health prevented his attendance. Smith called upon David to do occasional introductions at the BSI Dinners, and he noted of Smith that “when he was in charge of the meetings they were a lot of fun...Edgar Smith ran the meetings and although it would seem that between the drinking and the dining there was free-wheeling, i.e. joking, talking, etc., Edgar always had complete control as he must have had in his meetings at General Motors where he had a high-level job as a vice president involved in economics and finance relating to GM’s business overseas, particularly in Europe.” In his reminiscences, David notes the seating arrangements at the dinners allowed him to meet many noted Sherlockians, including Chris Steinbrunner, Art Levine, Dr. Richard Hoffman, Herbert Brean, Rex Stout, James Iraldi, Basil Davenport, Tom Stix, Jr., Charles Honce, Thomas Marshall, Rev. Leslie Marshall, Julian Wolff, Red Smith, Edward Clark, Isaac George, James Bready, Dr. Charles Goodman, and Isaac Asimov, to name a few. And for a number of these gentlemen, there are accompanying stories included in David’s memoirs.

His memories of those days remain important to him, and the BSI Trust thanks David Weiss for sharing his reminiscences of his earlier Irregular days.

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

THOMAS J. FRANCIS TO ASSUME CHAIR OF THE BSI TRUST

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Thomas J. Francis, BSI, will assume the position of Chairman of The Baker Street Irregulars Trust, effective immediately. Tom's background as a senior financial executive in the retail industry will serve him and the BSI well as we have reached the next stage of creating a societal archive all Irregulars and other Sherlockians can use for pure research and/or simply the pleasure of plumbing the depths of BSI history.

We greatly appreciate the accomplishments and leadership provided to the Trust these past few years by Glen Miranker and Costa Rossakis as the co-Chairmen of the Trust. Fortunately, they will remain on the Trust board, giving us the continuing benefit of their counsel and ex-

perience.

Our objective continues to be to capture our past as completely as possible and to provide a welcome repository for our future.

Our sincere thanks go out again and again to those who have supported the BSI Archives with donations of valued BSI material, correspondence and very welcome monetary gifts. We look forward to, and rely on, your continuing support in the future as we build this important archive.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Whelan
"Wiggins"

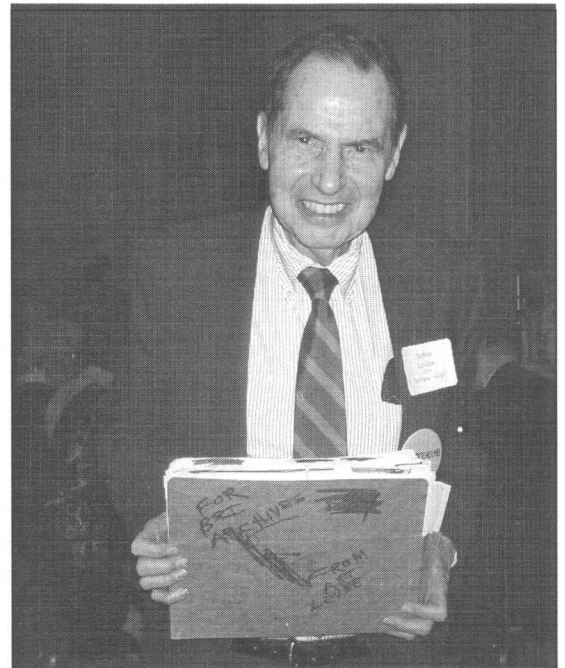
Art Levine's Donation to the BSI Trust

Art Levine was among those honored at the 2008 BSI Dinner for his membership of over 50 years as an Irregular. (In addition to David Weiss, the other Irregulars honored with Art were Peter Blau and George McCormack.) Art received his investiture in 1955 as "The Cutter 'Alicia'."

Art took the time to compile a listing of the materials he wanted to donate to the Archives. He organized his correspondence into nine folders.

- 1) Postcards and a letter sent to him by Edgar W. Smith, as well as the signed manuscript of Smith's "The Adventure of the Worst Man in London."
- 2) Copies of his letters to Edgar W. Smith and BSI correspondence from the 1950s.
- 3) A signed letter from Adrian M. Conan Doyle.
- 4) A signed letter from Lord Donegall.
- 5) Postcards and letters from Clifton Andrew, the Gazogene of the Scandalous Bohemians from the 1950s.
- 6) Programs from the BSI Dinners of 1955 and 1957, as well as programs from Musgrave Ritualists dinners.
- 7) Letters from Geoffrey Stephens, the Borough Librarian for the Public Library on Marylebone Rd., London.
- 8) Letters from Sherlockians including Bob Schutz, Nathan Bengis, Robert Patrick, Ruth Buchholtz, Irving Fenton, Jörgen Eigström, and Jon Lellenberg.
- 9) Various letters from scion societies including the Illustrious Clients and the Trained Cormorants.

The 2008 BSI dinner, honoring the esteemed Irregulars, was a good opportunity for Art to make the formal donation of his postcards and letters. They are greatly appreciated.

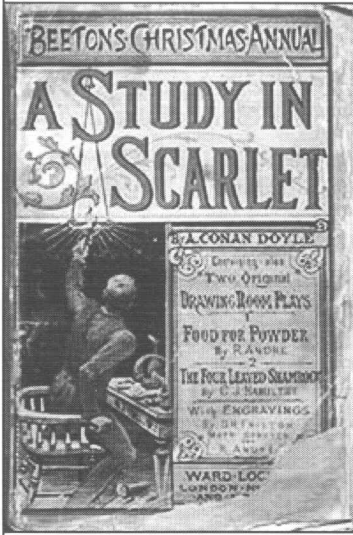


Art Levine, BSI

Photo by Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

Harvard's Houghton Library to Sponsor Symposium and Exhibition to Celebrate Arthur Conan Doyle's Sesquicentennial in 2009

The year 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Arthur Conan Doyle. To celebrate his life and works, Harvard's Houghton Library will host a symposium and mount a major exhibition to honor the man whose enduring contributions to the post-Victorian world include the creation of modern detective fiction and the genre's most famous literary character, Sherlock Holmes.



The symposium will be held on Thursday, May 7, through Saturday, May 9, 2009, and will coincide with the opening of a major exhibition at Houghton Library. The exhibition, which will run from May 4, through August 15, 2009, will feature rare books, manuscripts, and ephemera from Houghton's collections, the archives of the Baker Street Irregulars, and private collections.

Details on the symposium and exhibition will be announced during the next year, so please check this page periodically.

http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/doyle_symposium.html

FROM THE CHAIR by Thomas J. Francis BSI Continued from Page 1

divide the duties and tasks, support the work of the Trust and each other to ensure we are gleaning as much material as possible. And the Trust is not just the Trustees; there are numerous volunteers who are aiding us in capturing old memories, soliciting materials and gathering information. I am grateful for what you have done, and ask you to support me as we go forward.

The mission of the Trust is one that is close to my heart. History, in all of its aspects, is vital to life, society and the successful continuation of both. This is true for a nation and it is true for a literary society. The preservation and availability of the past and its records creates the basis for a solid and viable future.

The relationship of the Trust with The Houghton Library at Harvard University assures that the materials will be well preserved

and documented; that the resources will be readily available for scholars today and in the years to come; that an aggressive program of reaching back will continue to fill in historical gaps and an ongoing process of capturing current data will help prevent gaps in the future.

I see the immediate goals of the Trust as stabilizing the flow of material and the acknowledgment of gifts and developing a solicitation committee. Longer range we want to be certain that we are effectively reaching back into the past, have procedures in place for the ongoing capture of material, make certain that the Trust is remembered in as many Sherlockian settings as possible and develop future trustees.

Thomas J. Francis, BSI

“...the only clubs I have founded...”

Glen Miranker, the outgoing co-chair of the BSI Trust, recently purchased and donated a letter to the BSI Trust which was written by Christopher Morley. It is addressed to “L. L.” While those may be Laura Lyons’s initials, it most certainly was written to someone in response to a question about the Wednesday Morning Culture Club. He writes:

May 11 - '37

Dear L.L.,

You have been misinformed. I did not found the ‘Wednesday Morning Culture Club’ nor am I a member. Its only begetter is George T. Bye. Mrs. Freedman must have made those remarks to Christopher Cella, the restaurateur, not to me.

The only clubs I have founded are the Three Hours for Lunch Club, the Grillparzer Club, and the Baker Street Irregulars – which are all phases of the same great idea: to avoid publicity! Good Luck!

Christopher Morley

The Saturday Review

OF LITERATURE

25 West 45th Street, New York City

THOMAS EDYON, Editor

AVY LOWMAN, Associate Editor



NOLAN A. CHASEMAN, Publisher

GEORGE BYRON LEE, Managing Editor

HARRY BRUCE CARY, WILLIAM FOM BEAT, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, Contributing Editors

May 11 - '37

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A DONATION FROM THE FAMILY OF WILLIAM CHESLEY WORTHINGTON

William Chesley “Chet” Worthington (1903–2002) was a long-time member of The Dancing Men of Providence RI, and a frequent attendee at a number of Sherlockian events. His family recently donated his collection of Sherlockian clippings, articles and correspondence from the 1950s and 1960s to the BSI Trust Archives.

Worthington graduated from Brown University in 1923. While a student at Brown, he served as editor of the *Brown Daily Herald* and co-founded the *Brown Jug*. He was the class president and a member of Delta Upsilon. After graduating, he earned a master’s degree from Columbia University’s School of Journalism, and in 1926 he was hired by the *Providence Journal* where he served as “a reporter, critic, city editor, and Sunday Magazine editor.” (*Brown Alumni Magazine*)

He went on to serve as an editor of the *Brown Alumni Monthly* from 1931 to 1968. Active in a number of alumni affairs and committees, *Brown Alumni Magazine* noted in his obituary that “His great cause was the importance of alumni to the university, not just as a source of dollars, but as a part of the school’s living history, as an essential element of its character and direction.”

When he passed away on July 22, 2002, in Pawtucket RI, he was the oldest active alumnus of Brown University, and was considered one of the most renowned. He was remembered by the *Brown Alumni Monthly* as “The Gentleman Optimist,” a “dignified, well-dressed man who wore a variety of hats near the head of the commencement procession year after year – eighty years in a row, to be exact.”

Recently, Connie Worthington, the daughter of William Chesley Worthington, donated his collection to the BSI Trust Archives. Connie related that her father was “an active member of the Dancing Men with (our neighbor and my godfather) Roger Tillinghast Clapp.” Clapp received his investiture in 1951 as “Wilson, the Notorious Canary Trainer.” Among the materials donated to the Archives are items written by Mr. Clapp.

With this donation, the Worthington family helps to ensure that the importance of Sherlockians to the BSI, and the Archives, remains an essential element of its character and direction.

References: *Brown Alumni Magazine*, <http://www.brownalumnimagazine.com/september/october-2002/the-gentleman-optimist.html>

"The Contents of the Bag..."

ADDED TO THE ARCHIVES

Ray Betzner's toast to "Vincent Starrett, The Oldest Irregular" given at the 2008 BSI Dinner.

Catherine Cooke's toast to an Old Irregular, Lord Donegall, given at the 2002 BSI Dinner.

Joe Coppola's typed manuscripts of his Sherlock Holmes' papers "Optics and Sherlock Holmes: A Detective's Tool," "Protecting the Evidence: Collecting and Preserving Sherlock Holmes Books from Around the World," and "Submarine Technology and the Bruce-Partington Adventure."

Tom Cynkin's donation of the entire run of the new series of *The Baker Street Journal*. Tom is the 2001 Morley-Montgomery Award winner for his *Baker Street Journal* article "James Watson, M.D." An anonymous donor has contributed the old series.

Tom Francis' toast to Mycroft, given at the 1999 BSI Dinner.

Sir Christopher Frayling's text of the lecture he presented in New York for the BSI Distinguished Lecturer Series on January 10, 2008.

Michael A. Harrell's donation of items which include a typed signed letter to Jerry Williamson from Edgar W. Smith, a typed signed letter to Williamson from John Bennett Shaw and a number of other papers primarily relating to Williamson. In the accompanying letter, Mr. Harrell noted "Enclosed you will find all the items I listed. It was great fun gathering these items 25 or 30 years ago. Before eBay and well publicized auctions all you had to do was find book stores."

Mitch Higurashi's paper "Sherlock Holmes in Japan" presented at the 2002 BSI Dinner.

Bob Katz's notations of his part on the panel "Canonical Maladies" presented at the 2000 BSI Dinner.

Les Klinger's CD-ROM of the manuscript materials for



Michael Dirda, BSI and Sir Christopher Frayling

the BSI Manuscript facsimile series of *The Napoleon Bust Business Again* and *Angels of Darkness*. He also contributed material, including a proof and related correspondence for *Japan and Sherlock Holmes*.

Ken Lanza's boxed set of 4 LP records, "Voices from Baker Street", Sounds to Deduce By: Four twelve-inch records published by the Old Soldiers of Baker Street."

Tyke Niver's toast to Dr. Watson's Second Wife given at the 1978 BSI Dinner as well as his toast to Mrs. Hudson given at the 1999 BSI Dinner.

Robert Robinson's toast to Mycroft, given at the 1984 BSI Dinner.

Jean Upton's toast to Watson's Second Wife given at the 2002 BSI Dinner.

Nick Utechin forwarded "the original certificate of Investment of Colin Prestige into the Baker Street Irregulars as a presentation to the Harvard University Archive of the Irregulars. It comes in its original envelope as sent by Julian Wolff, together with a covering letter from Dr. Wolff dated 1st April 1961, and a copy of Colin Prestige's reply, dated 15th April."

If you have a copy of a toast or presentation given at the BSI Dinner or other BSI event, please contact:

Julie McKuras, BSI
13512 Granada Ave.
Apple Valley, MN 55124
Or email at mike9750@aol.com

THE TRAINED CORMORANTS

The following letter to the BSI Trust was received from Vincent Brosnan, on behalf of the Trained Cormorants.

Please find enclosed 130 letters plus a smattering of post cards all written to BSI Bob Pattrick during the decade of its 1950s. Many are from well-known Irregulars and illustrate the encouragement they gave to each other and the enthusiasm they bestowed on their then fledgling scions.

As custodian of the Cormorant Collection, I believe it is only right that Bob Pattrick be represented in the Baker Street Irregulars Trust. In this I have the unanimous agreement of my fellow Cormorants, and it is our wish that these letters be given in Bob's memory. It is also fitting because this year happens to be the 60th anniversary of the Trained Cormorants.

Attached is a listing of the letters.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Brosnan

Robert Pattrick and Don Hardenbrook were the co-founders of the Trained Cormorants in 1947, which has been located in Glendale, Los Angeles, and now Long Beach, California. Jon Lellenberg's *Irregular Crises of the Late 'Forties* carries "A Brief History of the Trained Cormorants" written by Hardenbrook. In this history, Hardenbrook notes that he "met Bob Pattrick on October 13, 1947....(He had) a shock of hair and a trim mustache, both of so flaming a red that thoughts of cobbler's wax flitted through my head. When he rose to greet me I could see that he was not tall, but of average height, the illusion of tallness being produced by his exceeding thinness....We had planned our meeting for a Sunday so that at seven o'clock we could turn on the radio and listen to the weekly episode of 'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,' no longer with Rathbone and Bruce, but with John Stanley and Alfred Shirley now....It was one of Edith Meiser's scripts, 'The Affair of the Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant.' We decided that night after hearing that fine program that we must The Trained Cormorants of Glendale, California."

Robert Riley Pattrick was born on November 21, 1926 in Macon, Missouri, and his family moved to Glendale when he was in his teens. His heart was weakened by a child-hood illness, but his interests were wide-ranging, including the Oz books, Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian

works, and book hunting. The 1961 *S'ian Who's Who and What's What* lists him as a free-lance writer.

He was active with the Cormorants, citing Don Hardenbrook as the person who drew him into the Sherlockian world, as they increased their membership in the 1950s, adding new members such as Dean and Shirley Dickensheet, Stuart Palmer and John Ball, author of the "Virgil Tibbs" mystery series.

Pattrick's correspondence includes letters from Clifton Andrews, Jay Finley Christ, August Derleth, Lord Donegall, Nancy Dorian, W. S. Hall, James Montgomery, Colin Prestige, A. Carson Simpson, Vincent Starrett, Julian Wolff, Ernest B. Zeisler, as well as scion correspondence. He corresponded with Martin Gardner regarding Oz. Vincent Brosnan noted that in the 1940s and 1950s, there were less traveling and phone calls and more letters. These letters often were non-Sherlockian in nature and focused on shared interests, such as letters exchanged with James Montgomery about Gilbert and Sullivan. Pattrick's letters with August Derleth often focused on American Comic Art.

Pattrick was the first person to receive the investiture of "The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant." That honor was bestowed in 1954. In the late 1950s, his attendance at the Cormorants' meetings lessened. He died on August 17, 1960.

The BSI Trust would like to thank the Trained Cormorants of Long Beach California for contributing the correspondence sent to Irregular Robert Pattrick. Congratulations on reaching the 60th anniversary of the Trained Cormorants; Mr. Pattrick and Mr. Hardenbrook would be proud that their scion society is well represented in the BSI Archives.

The BSI Trust welcomes all monetary gifts as well as material contributions to the archives.

Monetary donations should be sent to:

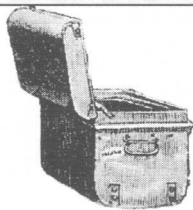
Constantine Rossakis, MD, BSI
162 Chestnut Ridge Rd.
Saddle River, NJ 07458-2804

If the financial donation is in honor or memory of someone, please indicate the appropriate name.

If you are passing on a contribution from a third party, please include the name and address of the donor so that we can acknowledge the donation with a thank you letter from the BSI Trust.

Questions regarding material contributions to the archives should be directed to:

Thomas J. Francis, BSI
43 Mann Hill Road
Scituate, MA 02066—2110



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You received this copy of *The Baker Street Irregulars* Trust newsletter because you are on the mailing list of *The Baker Street Journal* or are a member of the Baker Street Irregulars. If you are not interested in receiving further issues, or have comments and/or suggestions, please contact

Julie McKuras
13512 Granada Ave.
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Or, send email to:
Mike9750@aol.com

The Trust is a special part of the Baker Street Irregulars, the literary society dedicated to the study of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. The Trust is designed to collect, archive and preserve historical documents for the study of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, the Victorian world and the individuals and organizations like the BSI that have devoted themselves to such studies. The Trust has a special interest in preserving materials relating to the history of the BSI, its members and friends.

The Trust archive is located in the Houghton Library at Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The archival material may be used by any qualified Sherlockian, subject to the normal rules and regulations of the library.

The Cardinal Points

This issue of the newsletter finds us welcoming a new chairperson, thanking the outgoing co-chairs, and featuring recent donations to the BSI Trust. The donations are as diverse and interesting as the donors. We would like to thank David Weiss, Art Levine, the family of W. Chesley Worthington, Glen Miranker and the Trained Cormorants of Long Beach for their generous donations. The reminiscences and correspondence provide a glimpse into the earlier days of the BSI. And we would also like to thank all of those who have provided the Trust with copies of toasts and papers, as well as financial contributions.

Please visit the website http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/doyle_symposium.html for new information throughout the year for the Harvard Houghton Library's Symposium and Exhibition to Celebrate Arthur Conan Doyle's Sesquicentennial in 2009. It promises to be a very special event.

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

About Donations to the Trust

The Trust seeks primary materials about the history of the BSI and the Irregulars. These may consist of correspondence, photographic and audio materials, manuscripts of historical documents, biographical material, newspaper clippings and magazine articles. It can also accept valuable Sherlockian books that may be sold to raise funds for the Trust.

The Trust does not intend to create a collection that duplicates the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota or the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Metropolitan Reference Library and so does not actively seek editions of the Canon or scholarly works *unless the material has a direct bearing on the history of the BSI or the Irregulars*. The Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax-deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Service Code. To deduct a non-cash donation of \$5,000 or more, the donor must arrange and pay for a qualified appraisal. Contributions of \$250 or more will be publicly acknowledged; for non-cash items, however, tax regulations prohibit the Trust from acknowledging the dollar value of the donation in this newsletter or *The Baker Street Journal*.

The initial step in making a donation is to contact one of the trustees. You can find contact information on the Baker Street Irregulars Trust web site, <http://www.bsit.org>.