



# *For the Sake of the Trust*

## The Baker Street Irregulars Trust Newsletter

Spring 2020  
Issue No. 19

## From the Chair

By THOMAS A. HORROCKS, BSI

When Mike Whelan asked me to step in as Acting Chair of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust weeks prior to the 2019 BSI Weekend, I agreed with some trepidation. On the one hand, I was honored to be considered for such a responsible post. On the other hand, I immediately realized that I had big shoes to fill, shoes worn by previous Trust chairs, most recently by Andy Solberg. So I owe heartfelt thanks to Mike for putting his faith in me and to Andy for his generous support and expert advice. I also want to thank the members of the Trust board for their warm welcome.

I was working at Harvard's Houghton Library when the BSI Trust was established, and was privileged to witness its growth and success. I continued to follow the Trust's activities since leaving Houghton in 2012, and have been impressed with all it has achieved in the years since its inception. This is a very exciting time to be associated with the Trust. The BSI Archives now reside in a new home, the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

The Lilly was dedicated in 1960, and its holdings include nearly 400,000 books, 6.5 million manuscripts and 100,000 pieces of sheet music. Considered one of this nation's leading scholarly research centers, the Lilly houses extensive collections in numerous subject areas, including science and medicine, early printings, American history and literature, voyages and exploration, and medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. In addition, the library is strong in collections relating to Abraham Lincoln, James Whitcomb Riley, Upton Sinclair, Ezra Pound and Ian Fleming, to name just a few.

The BSI archives complement the Lilly's extensive Sherlockian collections, which include the papers of David A. Randall, eminent bookman, the Lilly's first librarian, devoted Sherlockian and early BSI member.

To mark the new relationship of the BSI and the Lilly, the two organizations hosted a conference,

held at the Lilly and other venues in Bloomington on November 8-10, 2019. Organized by Ross Davies and Glen Miranker, along with the staff of the library, the conference was a rousing success and a significant event in the history of the BSI Archives. (See Ashley Polasek's article in this issue.)

The Lilly Library is currently undergoing a major renovation, but it is Covid-19, not the renovation, that will have a major effect on those wishing to use the BSI Archives, as Erika Dowell makes clear in an article in this newsletter. I want to thank Erika for providing a brief report on the library's renovation.

The BSI Trust is continuing to move forward on several fronts. Now that the archives are located at the Lilly, the BSI Trust's website is undergoing an update to reflect these recent changes, thanks to the work of our website team, headed by Randall Stock. The BSI Oral History Project, under the able leadership of Marsha Pollak since 2013, has conducted 130 interviews of the 288 living members (45% of living members) and 163 interviews overall. There are 50 more in the "in process" and "pending" stages. The project welcomes volunteers to help with interviewing, so please contact Marsha if you are interested in assisting this worthy endeavor. Dana Cameron oversees the BSI Trust Photograph Initiative Project, which continues apace. As of the end of 2019, the project has added 435 photographs to its Flickr.com group, including 177 individual BSI photographs.

I want to thank all who donated collection material to the BSI archives, as well as funds and books for resale in 2018 and 2019 to support the BSI Trust.

*(Continued)*



Denny Dobry, who sells books on behalf of the Trust, reported that he received more than 125 boxes of books in 2018 and more than 1,000 books in 2019. The proceeds from these sales are added to the Trust treasury. All of us on the Trust warmly appreciate all that Denny does for us. If you have books to contribute for resale,



please contact Denny at [dendobry@ptd.net](mailto:dendobry@ptd.net). In terms of contributions of funds, BSI Trust donations received along with the 2020 BSI Weekend reservations totaled \$9,318. We welcome donations of funds and collections. Financial contributions can be made by check with the donation coupon in this issue, or you can donate online at the Trust website. If you have donations of materials for the BSI archives, contact Dan Polvere at [dpolvere@outlook.com](mailto:dpolvere@outlook.com) if you are shipping from the United States. For those of you sending material from Canada, contact Bob Coghill at [bob\\_world@live.com](mailto:bob_world@live.com).

Finally, I would be woefully remiss not to acknowledge Michael Pollak, the new editor of this newsletter, for all the work he has put into reviving and revamping this newsletter, the first since the autumn 2016 issue.

As I write this column, we as a nation are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. I wish all of you my best wishes for continued strength, safety and good health.

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## An appeal for money NOT! Rather an appeal for history

By Joseph Coppola

I have been privileged to be involved with the preservation of the BSI audio heritage for several years. It has been a thrill to listen to the analog recordings of events and

presentations that were preserved by people with the foresight to have recorded them and the foresight to have kept the recordings. My task has been to digitize these recordings to protect them from the frailties of analog mediums. In digital form they can be processed for clarity and reproduced without degradation. Also, in digital form they could be posted on the Trust website or made accessible to scholars worldwide over the internet.

I have two problems that I need your help with:

First, I am running out of material. I am finally reaching the end of audio collections provided by several collectors, most notably Bill Vande Water and Bob Thormalen. I know there are other audio and video recordings out there and we need them for the Trust. If you have recordings of a Sherlockian event that involved one or more members of the BSI, we want them. Don't be concerned about quality, or think we already have it. Yours may be of better quality or be more complete than what we have. If you wish to keep the recording, I will return it along with a digital copy. If you have damaged tapes, I have become adept at repairing them.

Second, I have a few video tapes that are in a format that I cannot play to convert to DVD. They are in the form of mini-VHS (VHS-C). I am missing the adapter that allows these to be played on a standard VHS deck. I also have some SONY 8mm video tapes that require a different player. At this point I do not know what, if anything, is on these tapes. If anyone out there has recordings or a VHS-C adapter or an 8mm video tape player, please get in touch with me at [coppolja@gmail.com](mailto:coppolja@gmail.com) or call 315-637-0609. Material can be sent to Joseph Coppola, 103 Kenny St., Fayetteville, NY 13006.

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## Reflections on Building An Archive Exhibition and Symposium

by Ashley D. Polasek

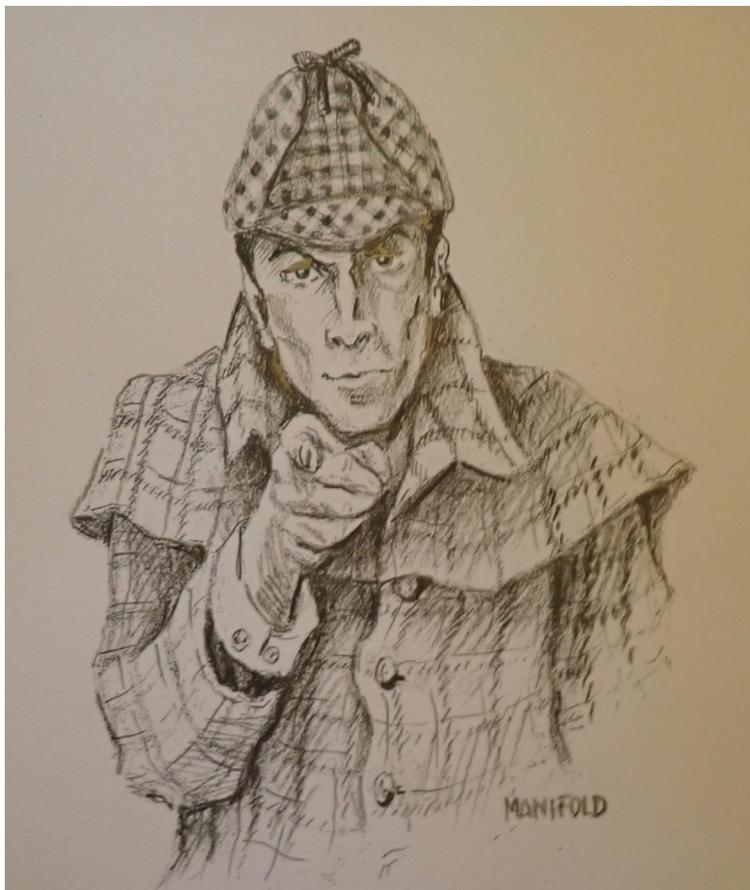
"It's not the history of a club. It's the history of a movement."

—Robert Katz

[*Editor's Note: A longer version of this article appeared in The Baker Street Journal, Vol. 70, No. 1 (Spring 2020) .]*

The Baker Street Irregulars' symposium, "Building an Archive: A Celebration of the Arrival of the BSI Archive at the Lilly Library," on *(Continued)*

# I WANT YOU



## TO HELP THE ARCHIVE!

November 8-10, 2019, was held primarily at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bloomington.

The symposium began with the banner visit to the Lilly Library.

The beautifully curated special exhibition hosted by the Lilly, “The History of the BSI through 221 Objects,” was a highlight of the symposium, with photographs, letters, books and artifacts charting the long history of the BSI.

For my part, the letters charting the BSI’s journey with respect to women spoke to me most, not just because they were fascinating missives in themselves — they were — ‘but because their presence in the exhibition showed an admirable willingness to engage openly with the BSI’s whole story.

The symposium hosted panels with moderated conversations and directed questions from the audience. It was a pleasant change as Sherlockians in general, and the Sherlockians at this conference in particular, are lively raconteurs. Because the conference shone through the wit and spontaneity of its speakers, I want to let their words frame my sundry and scattered reflections.

“Whatever it is, I’ve got some” was Peter Blau’s response to the question, “Do you collect books or stuff?” It neatly introduced the attendees to the conference’s guiding truism that collecting is a broader and more varied avocation than it may seem at a glance.

The central theme emerged at the end of the first panel: Our collections and our experiences are part of a lasting legacy, and the choices we make in acquisition and preservation are central to the work of the BSI Trust. When asked what ultimately would become of their extraordinary collections, Blau said he would opt for selling his — “I want as many people to enjoy these things as possible” — while Glen Miranker declared that his would be placed in an institution as “this constellation of books has more to say than individual books. They tell a story, so they will remain together.”

Bob Katz, co-publisher of the BSI Press, promoted publication as one mode in which Sherlockians contribute to that legacy.

Linda and Terry Hunt exemplified this as they introduced their new book, *Aboriginals*, which offers an encyclopedic account of the earliest Irregulars, and, in both content and process, illustrates the value of the Archives as a resource.

“The goal is to have all living irregulars involved in the Oral Histories Project,” said Michael Whelan.

The aim is to develop a record of the lives and remembrances of Irregulars in their own words, and Jenn Eaker and Marsha Pollak, the organizing forces behind the initiative, delighted the assembled with lively clips from Blau, Evy Herzog, Art Levine discussing Edgar W. Smith, and Bob Thomalen discussing Tom Stix.

“The future is good, and it relies on us: on booksellers,” said Lew Buckingham, in describing book collecting as another means of contributing to the Sherlockian legacy. “Find people who are interested in reading and get them to do it.”

Noted Otto Penzler, “As Amazon became very successful, brick and mortar stores lost customers. But in the last five years, people have come back. They say they miss them: they miss books. Young people, especially, are coming back.”

In the face of new technologies and generational change, there was always optimism for what the Archives had to offer and for how we might contribute to them in the future.

“Our tin box is the BSI Trust Archives. Watson had Cox & Company. The BSI Trust has the Lilly Library.” These were the parting words of Michael Kean, and he spoke them as an invitation to view the Archives and the larger work of the Trust as a living resource. The aims of the Trust, according to its chair, Tom Horrocks, are “building, supporting, and promoting,” and all of the symposium’s speakers made it clear *(Continued)*



Josiah K. Lilly Jr.

that we should all feel called to contribute to that work. After all, as Steven Doyle says, “The archives are waiting for you.”

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## From the Editor

By Michael Pollak, BSI

As the new editor of the BSI Trust newsletter, I’m focusing my comments this issue on the collecting impulse. It’s something most Sherlockians understand – supplementing their joy of reading, socializing and discussing the Canon with visible souvenirs of their affection. And the whole purpose of the BSI Trust is to get the members of the BSI to part with some of their treasured possessions for the sake of a greater collection – the Archive.

By now, you are probably aware that the Archive has moved to the Lilly Library, located on the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. There was no greater exemplar of the collecting spirit than the library’s founder, Josiah K. Lilly Jr.

A truly great collector doesn’t just amass; he works his collection with patience, savors it, learns from it, strives

not just for completion but for perfection. And if finances permit, he may leave an irreplaceable collection with an institution where the public, and researchers, can also learn from it.

Mr. Lilly (1893-1966) was president and board chairman of the Eli Lilly Company, the family pharmaceutical business. But money alone does not explain the quality and depth of his collections. Besides his formidable library of rare books and manuscripts, he was a preeminent collector of gold coins, including almost every American gold coin and a stunning collection of international coins. His collection of mint United States postage stamps was virtually unrivaled. (Are you familiar with the Inverted Jenny, the most famous U.S. philatelic error, of which only 100 were found? He had five of them.)

He collected Kentucky rifles, ship models, nautical paintings and 5,000 lead soldiers, hand-molded and hand-painted to represent every regiment that had ever served in the United States armed forces up to 1900. To store the collections, he built a studio he named Twin Oaks. “There he would retreat and spend time with the collections he loved,” according to *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.)

I was acquainted with some of Mr. Lilly’s hobbies long before I became a Sherlockian. As a stamp and coin collector, I read with awe the auction catalogues of his stamp collection when it was sold after his death. On a trip to the Smithsonian in 1969, the two places I visited were the air and space museum and the display of the Lilly collection’s more than 6,000 gold coins, which Congress had accepted for the Smithsonian in return for a tax credit.

While most of the military collection and the nautical models are now in other institutions, his more than 20,000 books and 17,000 manuscripts, along with paintings and prints, were given by Mr. Lilly to Indiana University. They now form the core of the rare book and manuscript collections of the Lilly Library, according to Joel Silver, director of the library since 2013, in a 1993 exhibition catalogue, *“J.K. Lilly Jr.; Bibliophile”* (The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington).

“Lilly followed no path in his collecting but his own,” Mr. Silver wrote. “He sought advice when he chose to, followed trends when he pleased, and turned down far more than he purchased, even from his favorite dealers. He bought a book or manuscript only when he found pleasure in it, and rejected anything about which he could not muster ‘enthusiasm.’ Illuminated manuscripts did not appeal to him, nor did most illustrated books, and he acquired incunabula only when the book fit into one of his subject fields. He was patient in his collecting, and if he did accept a book in less than ideal condition, it was usually with the proviso that it could be returned (*Continued*)

if a better copy appeared.”

Frederick B. Adams Jr., at the dedication of the Lilly Library in 1960, said: “Mr. Lilly’s books cover so many fields that it is difficult to believe that any one man’s enthusiasm could encompass them all. It is equally astounding that he was able to acquire so many books of such scarcity and quality in the short space of 30 years. Money alone isn’t the answer; diligence, courage and imagination were also essential.”

There is an unconfirmed story about Mr. Lilly that rings true. He was once reportedly offered a complete set of first editions of every author who had won the Nobel Prize for Literature. The condition was excellent and the price was fair, but Mr. Lilly turned the offer down. He said, goes the story, that he would rather do it himself.

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## Collecting and the Canon

By Barbara Rusch, BSI

“Well, my boy, what do you make of this lot?”

“It is a curious collection.”

– “The Musgrave Ritual”

Perhaps not surprisingly, Sherlockian collectors are legion, no doubt a reflection of the plethora of them strewn throughout the Canon. What links them all, aside from their disparate obsessions, is misery and misfortune. From Nathan Garrideb and the Duke of Holderness to Baron Gruner, Jack Stapleton and Grimesby Roylott, all receive an appropriate form of retributive justice. Only Sherlock Holmes, boasting “a collection of strange episodes,” escapes the fate of the other canonical collectors.

The list of criminals he hunted down, brought to heel and added to his metaphorical trophy case was assembled in part with the assistance of the well-documented newspaper clippings which fill his numerous commonplace books. And had not Watson collected the records of his friend’s cases crammed into the battered dispatch-box housed at Cox & Co., awaiting publication, we should never have learned of his many exploits.

My own peculiar obsessions are the transient documents of everyday life intended for short term or specific use and disposal, known as ephemera. Specifically, I collect the papers of the Victorian age, everything from the vibrant advertising, calendars and greeting cards which were mass-produced through the process of lithography, allowing for a new definition of material culture, to the letters and journals of those whose narratives would other-

wise be forgotten. But above all, I am a collector of the very human stories which I consider it a privilege to preserve, and as such consider myself a custodian of memory, a channeler resurrecting the voices of the past. Much like the contents of Holmes’s mysterious wooden box in “The Musgrave Ritual,” “These relics have a history, so much so that they *are* history.”

How well I can relate to a number of canonical characters, including Horace Harker of “The Six Napoleons”: “It’s an extraordinary thing that all my life I have been collecting other people’s news.” As with Holmes

himself, the documents in my collection “provide a perfect quarry for the student of the social scandals of the late Victorian era ... One day a profession might be made out of what up to this time has been the merest hobby.”

In the spirit of Nathan Garrideb, “I am the student of many subjects, and you may be surprised at the universality of my interests,” and like him, I’ve been informed that “the general effect is amiable though eccentric.”

However base or avaricious the motives of the canonical collectors, I can identify with their passions. If they teach us anything, it’s that we all share common traits – and flaws. I must reluctantly confess that my collecting habits resemble less the meticulous cataloguing of Jack Stapleton and Baron Gruner than the disordered and haphazard methods of Nathan Garrideb and Sherlock Holmes himself, which Watson describes in hilarious detail:

“He had a horror of destroying documents ... and yet it was only once in every year or two when he would muster enough energy to docket and arrange them, [suffering from] reactions of lethargy during which he would lie about ... hardly moving save from the sofa to the table ... Thus month after month his papers accumulated until every corner of the room was stacked with bundles of manuscript which were on no account to be burned, and could not be put away except by their owner.”

Despite the chaos, I am proud of my collection and the research and scholarship that have emerged from it. Perhaps not coincidentally, it shares certain salient features with that of with that of Nathan (*Continued*)



Garrideb. “It is a good collection, but not a very valuable one, consisting of reat rolls of paper, a litter of bottles and a number of neat little bundles.”

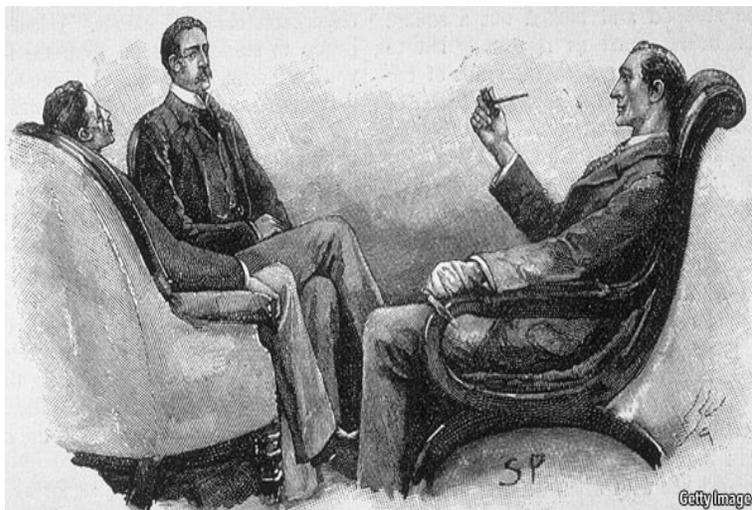
Amongst the treasures is an advertising card promoting a clothier in Troy, New York. The colorful image features a rather droopy hound, whose shadow cast upon the wall forms the distinctive silhouette of Sherlock Holmes with deerstalker and pipe.

One of the most cherished items in the collection is a letter penned to William Gillette, who portrayed Sherlock Holmes on the stage for over thirty years. Dated November 14, 1901, it reads:

“Dear Mr. Gillette, Would you be very kind & sign this photograph for me. I am simply longing to have your autograph ... I went to see Sherlock Holmes the other day & loved it and hope to go again soon. I enclose an autograph of my grandfather’s which I thought you would care to have. They are getting very rare and will soon be hard to get ... Yours truly, Olive Dickens.”

Accompanying the note is a cancelled cheque in the amount of £22, 14 shillings and sixpence, signed by Charles Dickens and bearing the date May 23, 1870, just a little over two weeks before his sudden passing. I would venture that along with the unfinished draft of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, it was one of the last documents to which he put his hand. What a fascinating and unexpected connection between these three gargantuan personalities – Dickens, Gillette and Holmes – and a wonderful example of the magic of ephemera.

And to what end all this relentless accumulation? Once again I defer to Nathan Garrideb: “There are a dozen specimens in the market at the present moment which fill gaps in my collection, and which I am unable to purchase for want of a few hundred pounds. Just think what I could do with five million dollars. Why, I have the nucleus of a national collection. I shall be the Hans Sloane of my age and perhaps live to see my name in the honours



list.”

In fact, I would settle for my Holy Grail: a piece of cake from the wedding of “a certain gracious lady.” In the meantime, I console myself with a pair of her knickers and a cardboard box containing – no, not a pair of severed ears – but the contents of Lady Conan Doyle’s underwear drawer from their home in Crowborough, including her frilly camisoles and silken bed jackets.

I am happy to report that I am using my time in self-isolation along with my husband, Donny Zaldin, on account of the COVID-19 virus profitably to create order out of the chaos. Like the hapless Nathan Garrideb, “I can assure you that the cataloguing of one of those cabinets would take me three good months.” In the process, I have been rediscovering the pleasure of some wonderful artifacts I had nearly forgotten.

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## BSI Archives During the Lilly Library Renovation

By Erika Dowell

Associate Director and Curator of Modern Books & Manuscripts

The seven floors of the Lilly Library now stand empty. All the books and manuscripts are out, and shelving disassembled. Lilly Library employees have settled into their temporary office homes.

On March 2, our public services team opened our temporary Reading Room on the 10th floor of the Wells Library. The temporary Reading Room is a bit smaller and much less grand, but it is functional. Considering it was formerly an unadorned section of the stacks, it has come a long way!

Sadly, our Reading Room was open for only a few weeks before the COVID-19 crisis disrupted all our lives. At this writing, all Indiana University libraries are closed, all IU courses have moved online for the spring semester and summer sessions, and Bloomington citizens are under a stay at home order through May 15.

What does all this mean to researchers and to those involved with adding materials to the Baker Street Irregulars archive?

We have a new address: Wells Library, 1320 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, IN 47405. The Wells Library is the campus’s main library, which holds more than 4.6 million volumes, not counting the *(Continued)*

thousands of Lilly Library books that we brought along for the next year or two.

A skeleton crew is staffing this building, and the mail room is still receiving shipments, but it is probably best to postpone sending additional materials to the archives until the building re-opens.

The Lilly Library is closed until further notice. Digitization services are also suspended due to the COVID-19 closure.

When we are cleared to reopen, access to the Reading Room will be by appointment only. Once you have an appointment, using the BSI archive is simple. The BSI archives are among the collections we brought with us to the Wells Library, so access to these materials should be very smooth for researchers. A majority of our

The primary source for all matters related to the BSI, the BSI Trust, donations to the Trust and the BSI Trust newsletter is the main BSI website, <https://bakerstreetirregulars.com>.

For general BSI Trust matters and donations: [TrustChair@bakerstreetjournal.com](mailto:TrustChair@bakerstreetjournal.com).

collections, both books and manuscripts, are shelved in the IU Library Auxiliary Library Facility. We get deliveries from this facility several times a week.

When we ramp back up, we expect both the Reading Room and digitization services to be very busy from pent-up demand. One thing that has not been disrupted (yet) is the Lilly Library renovation. It is on schedule, with construction due to wrap up in early 2021.

Special collections libraries like ours are all about using the real thing: books printed on paper and unique archival materials. Working from home separates us from all our materials, meaning that there are many reference questions that we cannot answer and many digitization requests that we cannot fulfill.

Lilly Library staff are building our work-from-home skills and trying to keep ourselves and our many student employees busy with online work. We are attending Zoom meetings and online happy hours and discussion groups to maintain our connections to friends and colleagues.

We will try to stay healthy and sane as the pandemic separates us from our families, and from all the restaurants, libraries, bookstores and other gathering places that bring us together. We hope all Sherlockians are doing what they can to halt the spread of the virus and keep themselves healthy in body and spirit during this difficult time.

We all hope for a return to something resembling normal life later in 2020, and we look forward to the opening of our renovated building, scheduled for June 2021.

## 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 can be sold to raise funds for the Trust.

The Trust does not intend to create a collection that duplicates the Sherlock Holmes Collection at the University of Minnesota or the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at 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 an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 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 owner must arrange and pay for a qualified appraisal. Contributions 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*.

Those interested in donating archive material to the BSI Archives, should send the material to:

From the US:

Dan Polvere  
828 Racine Street  
Bellingham, WA 98229

Outside the US:

Bob Coghill  
310-200 Nelson's Crescent  
New Westminster, BC  
V3L 0H4  
CANADA

*As curator of modern collections, Erika Dowell is the principal point of contact for the administration of the BSI archive, as well as for many other collections of manuscripts and archives. She supervises the staff members who organize and describe archives and who run the library's digitization services.*

# Thank you for donating to the BSI Trust!

Thank you for your support of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust. Every tax-deductible dollar helps to collect, maintain and disseminate our Irregular history. By making a tax-deductible contribution, you can help ensure that BSI history will be available to our historians, researchers and the Sherlockian community. Please donate now by filling out the form below and mailing it to:

Leslie S. Klinger, BSI, c/o Kopple, Klinger & Elbaz LLP, 10866 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1500, Los Angeles, CA 90024-4357

You may also donate via the BSI Trust website at <http://www.bsitrust.org/2015/01/donations.html>.

## Please select your gift.

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