



The Adventure of the Cardboard Box(es)

By Bob Coghill, BSI

Editor's Note: Although he never found severed ears in salt, Coghill's adventures through cardboard boxes on behalf of the Trust has been fun.

"I want to be an archivist when I grow up." Said no one. Ever. Occasionally, someone says librarian. Writer. Bookseller. But archivist? Just no. And yet, there are archivists. Plenty of them. Thousands. And there are likely thousands of journeys to the archives. Each of them is a story. This is mine. Or part of it, in any case.



Bob Coghill with the late Mike Whelan.

I got my degree in archival studies in order to be the summer archivist for The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, and once my degree was in hand, I mentioned it to Mike Whelan and said, "if there is anything I can do?" There was. Unbeknownst to me, Mike had been developing the BSI Trust and figuring out what to do with our historic material.

In July of 2005, what should have been a simple (I thought) shipment of six boxes of materials were sent to me by George McCormack ("Hosmer Angel"). The hiccup came because of timing and a border crossing. My shipping address was my office, and as it was in a school, it was closed for the summer. The shipment was held at Fort Erie, and I drove down to explain what was in the boxes and brought them home to Toronto.

But that wasn't the first accession. Accession number one was Edgar W. Smith's BSI certificate and some other papers, the first of several generous donations from Glen Miranker ("The Origin of Tree Worship"), who served as the first chairman of the BSI Trust.

Working at the Toronto Reference Library gave me opportunities to both give material to the library that wasn't needed for the BSI Trust and to give to the Trust items (duplicates) from the library's collections. We have had good relationships with both the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at Toronto and with the Sherlock Holmes Collections in Minnesota.



Sorting through the donated treasures.

Retiring put a bit of a twist into how we dealt with the BSI Trust. Instead of working at home once a week or so, I took a month off from my retirement travels in 2014 and 2015 to spend the month of April preparing materials before the annual Trust Meeting in Cambridge.

Once my travels were over, I settled in the Vancouver area. That presented a challenge in getting the material to me, but with the help of Dan Polvere ("Holloway and Steele") who lives in Washington state and had both an accommodating wife and room for temporary storage, we established a way for material to be mailed or couriered to Dan. He then took the boxes to our storage unit near Blaine, Washington, about half-way between Bellingham and Vancouver. It was a plan that worked well. I would pick up a couple of boxes in Blaine, bring them home and then, it was like Christmas, opening boxes of treasures, never quite knowing what to expect.

Once I opened the boxes, I organized the material (if it needed it) and made assessments of what was BSI-related. Some Conan Doyle, non-BSI material went to Toronto, and some Sherlock, non-BSI material went to Minnesota. Some things were returned or became part of the materials we

were able to sell. (Thanks, Denny Dobry (“A Single Large Airy Sitting-Room”).)

Once I had a box completed, I would send it to the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington.

Construction and COVID



The whole process had to slow down while the Lilly was under renovations, and then, everything stopped when the border between Canada and the USA was closed due to COVID. Then, because of changes in how material was to be processed and because of the problems at the border, we had to make some changes. As soon as the border was open, I made a trip to our storage unit, packed up some of our smaller packages and then drove everything to UPS where it all got shipped to

Bloomington, Indiana.

On November 10, 2021, all the BSI Trust materials left their temporary storage and were sent to their final home at the Lilly into the care and keeping of Erika Dowell, Associate Director and Curator of Modern Books and Manuscripts for the Lilly Library, and her staff. My part of the project had come to an end.

Since the first boxes arrived in 2005, until the last boxes left in 2021, it has been an honour to work with such a fine team of knowledgeable, congenial, and flexible people along the way. It has been quite a ride at times, and not without its bumps, but I appreciate the help and support of the members of the Trust.

Being connected to the BSI and to the BSI Trust has been quite an honour over the years. Now that the archive has moved to the Lilly Library, our “stuff” continues to be cared for and is in good hands for the future.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Trust.



From the Chair

By Thomas A. Horrocks, BSI

The BSI Trust has been quite busy during the first half of 2022.

First, the BSI Trust board welcomed two new members, Mary Ann Bradley (“Mary Morstan”), and Denny Dobry (“A Single Large Airy Sitting-Room”), both of whom bring years of dedicated service to the Trust and its activities.

They are joining the board at a time when the Trust has launched several new initiatives. These new initiatives will be partly funded by an infusion of funds resulting from the sale of the generous donation to the Trust of Sherlockian publications by Constantine Rossakis (“St. Bartholomew’s Hospital”). The Trust sold the books through Heritage Auctions in December 2021, which generated more than \$38,000. Costa deserves our profound gratitude!



I am also pleased to announce that September 17, 2022, is the date of the [second annual BSI Trust Lecture](#), which will be presented by our newsletter editor, Ray Betzner (“The Agony Column”), who will speak on “‘221B’: The Story of a Sherlockian Sonnet.” The lecture will be presented via Zoom at 2 p.m. Eastern. While the lecture is free, registration will

be required. Sign up for [News from the BSI email alerts](#) to get notified when registration opens, or watch the BSI Trust website at www.bsitrust.org for further details. The video of last year’s lecture, featuring Roberta Pearson, will soon appear on the BSI Trust website.

In August 2021, the Lilly Library, home of the BSI Archive, reopened after an extensive renovation. As a result, our Archive is now again available to researchers. Anyone wishing to consult the Archive should contact Erika Dowell, Associate Director, at edowell@indiana.edu.

Now that the Lilly is open for business, the Trust is developing programs to promote and support the use of the BSI Archive. Among them is a Research Fellowship program which will fund up to two research fellows with grants up to \$2,500. Applications for the first year are due by September 15, 2022 and the program will commence in 2023. The BSI Trust website has more information on the [Research Fellowships](#). In

addition, the Trust will support a student intern at the Lilly to assist library staff in digitizing and cataloging BSI Archival material and performing public service activities relating to the Archive.

Your Donations Make it Possible

The BSI Trust is able to carry out activities like these due to the financial support it receives from BSI members and others. Gifts-in-kind in the form of books, periodicals and ephemera also generate much needed funding through the tireless salesmanship of Denny Dobry. Contact Denny if you have items to donate for resale. He can be reached at <dendobry@ptd.net>.

In addition, the BSI Trust always seeks donations of material for the BSI Archive. The Trust recently revised its Collection Guidelines for archival material to aid those who are considering donating their correspondence and other material relating to the BSI. Anyone considering a donation of material should consult the BSI Trust website for the revised [Collection Guidelines](#) (PDF) and contact me at: <TrustChair@bakerstreetirregulars.com>.

In the Fall 2021 issue of the newsletter, I mentioned that the BSI Trust instituted new procedures for sending materials to the BSI Archive. After confirming with me that a donation adheres to the revised Collection Guidelines, material will now be sent directly to the Lilly Library. In the Fall newsletter I expressed my profound gratitude to Bob Coghill and Dan Polvere for their years of service to the BSI Trust. Bob's pre-cataloging of archival materials has been a tremendous help to librarians at Harvard and at the Lilly who were and are responsible for these important records. We are pleased to publish Bob's article on his experience working with BSI archival material.

I wish everyone a pleasant and restful summer and hope to see many of you at Bear Mountain in July.



From the Editor

By Ray Betzner, BSI

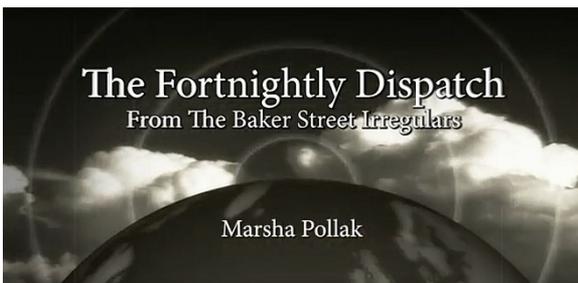
It's a pleasure to be the new editor of the BSI Trust newsletter. I want to thank my predecessor, Michael Pollak ("The Blue Carbuncle"), for his dedication to this newsletter and to Randall Stock ("South African Securities") for his help in getting me up and running.

It's truly an honor to be working on behalf of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust. The Trust and our archive at the Lilly are unique in the Sherlockian space. While there are great reserves of Sherlockian and Doylean treasures at many locations around the world, only the Trust focuses its efforts on the activities of the Baker Street Irregulars.

And it's important to note that the archive is not just the lumber-room for dusty old papers. The archive is a living, growing repository for the Irregulars and their lives. It's a place to explore, conduct research and to both marvel at what has happened in the past, and consider what could be possible in the future of our shared passion.

As you can see in this issue, COVID has not slowed Trust activities. Here are a few quick notes we hope you'll enjoy about recent activities:

Trust board member Marsha Pollak was the guest of Steven Doyle on his weekly video blog, *The Fortnightly Dispatch*, in May. Among other topics, Marsha discussed the BSI's Oral History Project and her plans for the future. You can watch the entire [Marsha Pollak interview](#) on YouTube.



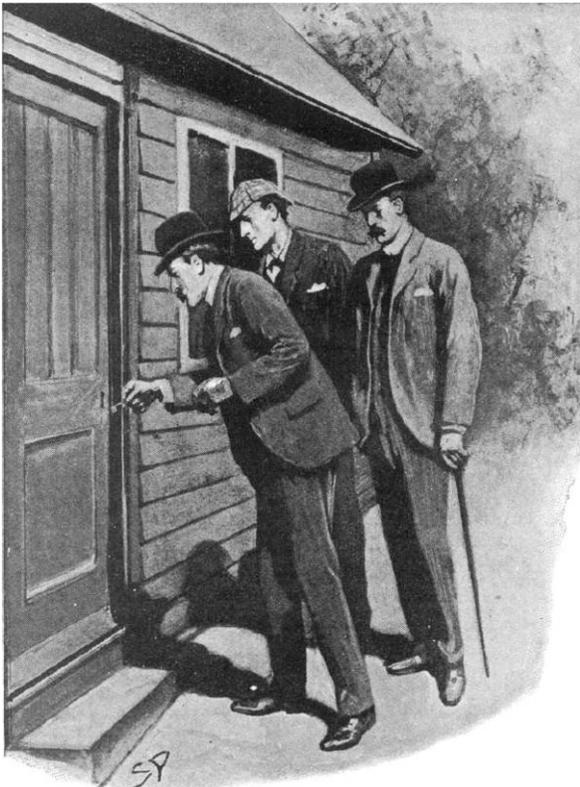
Marsha's dedication to the Oral History Project was cited by Michael Kean in January when he awarded her the prized Two-Shilling Award. The Trust plans to make more of these interviews available in coming years. One of my favorites so far is the interview with Mickey Fromkin and the late Susan Rice. Their shared joy in the Sherlockian experience—and one another—is a delight. I encourage you to take a little time and enjoy [their interview at the BSI Trust website](#).



Mickey Fromkin and Susan Rice

Speaking of the *Fortnightly Dispatch*, it occurs to me that many members of the BSI Trust Board, past and present, have been guests of Steve's show. [Glen Miranker](#), [Bob Katz](#), [Tamar Zeffren](#), [Les Klinger](#), [Peter Blau](#), [Steve Rothman](#), and [Michael Kean](#) have talked about their experiences as both Sherlockians and Irregulars.

Until next time, stay well.



Support the BSI Trust!

Thank you for donating to 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 using a credit card or PayPal via the BSI Trust website at <<http://www.bsitrust.org/2015/01/donations.html>>.

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