

An Interview of Evelyn Herzog Conducted by Susan Rice

March 9, 2015

BSI Oral History Project

This is a transcription of an audio recording of an interview with Evelyn Herzog, which is part of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust Oral History Project. The Baker Street Irregulars™ is the world's oldest Sherlock Holmes literary society. The BSI Trust collects correspondence, photographs, recordings, and other memorabilia for the BSI Archives.

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Interview History

Interviewer:	Susan Rice
Transcriber:	David Richards
Editors:	Marsha Pollak, Evelyn Herzog
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Evelyn Herzog

Interviewed by Susan Rice
March 9, 2015
125 Washington Place
New York City, New York, USA

Introduction: This recording is part of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust Oral History Project. The Baker Street Irregulars is the world's oldest Sherlock Holmes literary society. The BSI Trust collects correspondence, photographs, recordings, and other memorabilia for the BSI Archives, which comprise a special collection at the Houghton Library at Harvard University. In this interview, Susan Rice speaks with Irregular Evelyn Herzog on March 9, 2015. You'll hear about the story behind the picketing of the BSI dinner, the creation of ASH, her correspondence with John Bennett Shaw and Peter Blau, and much more. The copyright for the interview is owned by the Baker Street Irregulars. See bsitrust.org for terms of use.

RICE: Good afternoon, this is Susan Rice. Today is Monday, March 9th, 2015, and I'm sitting in my living room at 125 Washington Place in New York with Evelyn Herzog, whose adventures and Sherlockian life we will discuss. Evelyn, tell us a little bit about your earliest life: your birth, your parents, your growing-up years, and your early education.

HERZOG: I'm from New Haven, Connecticut. I'm an only child. My folks had brothers and sisters, so we had an extended family, but the three of us lived in a small post-war house in Fair Haven, Connecticut, which was a nice neighborhood out at the end of the bus line. So, we had the advantages of being linked to downtown, but also the advantages of having a real backyard and a place you could play. So it was a good place to be a kid. We were just regular people. My Pop worked for Western Union all his life and so telegraphy is in my blood. And when high school summers came around and I was old enough to really need something to fill my time and bring in some money, I worked for two summers at Western Union as a help to the telephone operators' department. So I sat with a headset on and people phoned in telegrams they wanted sent. And because I was the youngest person on the staff and with—I didn't have the ability to boss anyone else around, they made me do the singing telegrams that ever had to be delivered over the phone. So I was the one who sang "Happy Birthday to You" a few times to the denizens of New Haven.

RICE: Don't you think your beautiful soprano voice has something to do with that selection?

HERZOG: I—oh yeah, that must have been it. (laughter)

RICE: And you had a nickname when you were a little child.

HERZOG: Yes. Yes, Happy is my name in the family. There are not too many people now who call me alas, left, who call me Happy, but I guess I was a cheerful baby and that's a good thing.

RICE: You went to an unusual school in your early years too.

HERZOG: Yes, when I went to public school through sixth grade and then I managed to win a half scholarship to a really nice school, Hamden Hall Country Day School. So, from seventh to twelve grades (or Forms one through six, as we said), I got a wonderful education with beloved teachers and nice kids to a quality that I couldn't have received otherwise. I remember my first few months there making the jump from the sixth grade education in public school to being up to speed with them in seventh grade. That was hard; I developed a twitch (laughter) but after a while that went away. I finally got with it and I was really glad to have gone and now we are coming up on the fiftieth anniversary of my graduation from high school there. So, this coming October—I've already heard from one of the fellows in the class and he is trying to get us all together, so I look forward to going back now.

RICE: Oh, that will be fun.

HERZOG: Yeah.

RICE: I want to hold your secondary education for a moment because it really is an involved and important story. But I happen to know that in the way of family, while your parents are gone, you managed to find an awfully nice spouse. Is he connected with Sherlockian things, she says innocently?

HERZOG: Why yes (laughter) Susan. As it happens, I married a Sherlockian and he married me. John Baesch, a railroad man, became a Sherlockian as a grown man, who unlike me who became one as a kid. I'm sure he had read them all his life but he found that there was such a thing as Sherlockians when he was already a grown person. He heard something on the radio; well, he'll tell the story better when he is interviewed by someone else, some other day. But he did follow up with a Philadelphia group, with The Clients of Sherlock Holmes, and was welcomed by Sherry Rose Bond. No better or warmer welcomer could be imagined. And he started attending the Philadelphia group, then Autumn in Baker Street came along and he would go to them. And, in between them physically, was New York City and the ASH Wednesdays, the weekly ASH meetings. (Editor's Note: she meant monthly,) He became a regular there. Unbeknownst to me, he was coming to see me. (laughter) I thought he was just a glutton for Sherlockian companionship. But, in fact as I say, without my realizing it, we were courting. (laughter)

RICE: Until you asked.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: A story which I won't–

HERZOG: And it helped that we were both Catholics, so occasionally we would take in Mass together. It was on one of these Autumn in Baker Street weekends you learned who the Catholics are because they were hanging around the reservation desk trying to figure out where on earth the church might be and what are the hours on any Sherlockian weekend. So, then he got a two-year transfer over to London to do special railroad work and–

RICE: What year was that?

HERZOG: He was there 2000 and 2001.

RICE: Okay.

HERZOG: And so the courtship continued long distance with my visiting over there and his coming back here from time-to-time. So, we should have bought stock in the airlines, (Rice laughs) but we didn't think of that. But that–and so it was very nice rambling London together. That was–to see Sherlock Holmes in the very place he was. So, that was nice and one thing led to another (laughter) and he ended that job and came back to the States, moved back to his hometown of Baltimore, Maryland. And we were married in 2003 and now we live there.

RICE: Lovely, a great story.

HERZOG: Thank you.

RICE: I want to go back a little bit in time and talk about the Tooth Fairy and your connection with that particular figment of someone's imagination.

HERZOG: Ah! I started being a fan of Sherlock Holmes as a young person; I can't say exactly when. I certainly read some of the stories. They come at you piecemeal. And also, when I was kid, in the golden age of early television, the Rathbone-Bruce movies started appearing on TV with fair frequency. And the English half-hour show, with Ronald Howard, showed up on one of our TV stations and they were charming because they are–Holmes and Watson were youngish guys. And they were made-up stories; they weren't particularly Canonical stories, but they were full of action and adventure and also humor. So, I really became quite a fan of them; they didn't dilute my interest in the real stories. And, all this time in my real life as a kid, you know the Tooth Fairy gives you money and so it's magic fairy money so I wasn't inclined to spend it on just any old thing. So I hoarded it until I found the right thing to spend it on and finally I realized a copy of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* was the right thing to spend it on. And I think that I've probably got the rest of the tooth money somewhere. But the Doubleday complete Canon took a good deal of it and that was the best purchase, really, I ever made.

RICE: What a beginning.

HERZOG: Yes. I still have it. The covers came off, but I've got them and the dust wrapper. I've got that somewhere, in much the worst for the wear. But that's—it's a precious volume.

RICE: We come now to you going away to college and this was a momentous thing (Herzog laughs) because when you came to Albertus Magnus in Connecticut something remarkable happened with a group of friends. Tell about it in any way you want.

HERZOG: I'll start back in the end of high school. I discovered to my astonishment that there were other Sherlock Holmes devotees. I was flabbergasted. (Rice laughs) I had—at the New Haven Public Library, I had gotten out a copy of William Baring-Gould's *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*, the biography, so-called, that he wrote. And when I got to the appendices at the back, not only did it list other lit crit books and pastiches, but it listed groups, societies of real people. (Rice laughs) I couldn't believe that there would be other people out there. Holy mackerel! It also listed publications so I started subscribing to *The Baker Street Journal* right away. And I guess I wrote to inquire to the—I know darn well I wrote to inquire to the Baker Street Irregulars what—how one joined. What did one have to do to become a member or what? And got, sadly, a form letter back that said that it was a group that people were invited to join. It wasn't something that you yourself joined, but you were invited to join and furthermore that it was only for guys. So, that was big. That was, that was big. Just learning on the one hand that there were these wonderful, wonderful, wonderful associations and then almost immediately after, learning that I would never be allowed to join.

RICE: Open the door and slam it in your face.

HERZOG: That was, that was big. Now, unbeknownst to me, some of the—some few of the smaller societies, the scions as I would learned they were called, were coed, the Scowrers and Molly Maguires in California, and no doubt others. And if I try and say which ones, I'm sure to get it wrong. That information wasn't available to me at first and even when it was, I was a penniless kid in one part of the country and they were far away so there was no practical chance that I would see any of them for a decade. So, it was good news when I eventually learned that there were some places that men and women got together sensibly and had fun with Sherlock Holmes. But, it just seemed nuts that the Baker Street Irregulars, the group, the overall group of the country, would not be. Nonetheless, there was fun to be had. There was no problem with subscribing to *The Journal* and later with to other magazines and there was no problem with reading the stories themselves and the growing literary criticism about them. So, I made sure I had my *Complete Sherlock Holmes* tucked under my arm when I went to college and had really excellent good luck with the other freshman who were on the same floor of the dorm as me.

RICE: Tell us a little bit about Albertus Magnus.

HERZOG: Albertus Magnus. Looking back, they really gave me the opportunity for a fine education. I maybe didn't—well I—I worked hard and I was smart and all that stuff. I guess

more could have been achieved there academically, but in a way, the best thing that it did for me was giving me the friends that I met there and the practice even of having friends. I was an only child and that was fine by me, but there are social skills that you don't get when you don't have other kids in the house growing up. And so developing these quasi-sisters was a wonderful thing and just being in the same building, rubbing along with people whom I liked very much and others that I didn't care for so very much and all managing it without coming to blows. That was great; that was really good practice at living, so Albertus was fine that way. But most fortunately, there was a whole bunch of girls that it was just excellent fun to hang around with. I guess our sense-of-humors were the same. I guess our intelligences were the same; though, I don't ever remember anybody dumb around. I—people talk about smart and dumb, but I—everybody seemed smart to me. So we hit it off and everybody had her own stock of special authors and special cultural things, music or plays or art that was just particularly dear to them. And we were longing to share this stuff, one with another, so everybody's horizons got broadened. And Sherlock Holmes, of course, was one of the things that I brought to the party. Now I will say that it was by no means the only one. Star Trek had just started on TV and we became very devoted Trekkies. And to this day, that's an important link between me and the college friends of those days.

RICE: But you still call each other by nicknames from Star Fleet.

HERZOG: That's right. That's right. Not nicknames that anybody in real Paramount Land would understand, but our own versions. And I suppose that I could take this moment to say God bless Leonard Nimoy, who just passed away. He was important in our lives, the poor guy. (laughter)

RICE: He never knew it.

HERZOG: That's right and yes, that was good for him. Yes, so, but Sherlock Holmes, I mean it really is the best because the quality of the stories is so fine and the intricacy of the world Doyle has painted is so great that there really is, as everyone hearing this will know, there's no end to the points of interest, the real historical points or the little details of Holmes' and Watson's life. I'm a great believer in the Game and Holmes and Watson are real to me, but I like—it would be wrong not to credit Dr. Doyle with the wonderful, wonderful job he did, making what a world.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: And what a man he was in so many ways.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: But that's for someone else to talk about, but, yeah, what a fine person.

RICE: You are like so many of us are happy on both sides of that divide.

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: We just straddle it.

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: Which is good. And how did it grow up at Albertus Magnus that you were—would gather and talk of Holmes? What were the meetings like? Were they at night? Were they during the day? How did it work?

HERZOG: Well, as the years slip away, I remember less and less. I know that I would, since I lived in the area, on weekends, my folks would come and trade clean for dirty laundry and they would bring me "Care packages" of treats. And so on a Sunday, I would be likely to have baked goods and a six-pack of Tab and that would be enough to lure some of the gals to my room. I don't know what my poor roommate Julie did at those times, but she got nothing out of the Holmes thing and slipped away. So—

RICE: Tell us about some of the people you were involved with at that time. What friends are you talking about?

HERZOG: Ah. In our year, Linda Patterson and Pat Moran, Mary Kay Mulligan, and Carol Muschler were wonderful people. Mary Kay and Linda had been at—in high school together and later a couple more friends of theirs entered Albertus in later years and became chums as well. They were just all witty and wacky and so reading the stories together and talking over the minutiae, it was just good clean fun. After a little while as we began reading the literary criticism and pastiches and that and the *Baker Street Journal*, I think put people's addresses on the "Who Done It" page and so we ventured; we started writing to people. Oh, I'll—let me just go backwards in time to say the very first Baker Street Irregular I was ever in touch with, this might be from high school time. I mentioned the Basil Rathbone movies and in the fifties and early sixties, they were shown quite regularly on the New York TV station, Channel 9 WOR, and they were—at the beginning, there was always a very handsome profile, a black and white portrait of Rathbone that was thrown up on the screen. And so I wrote the station and said I was a great fan and I was glad they were showing them and I said, Gee, I wish it would be possible for me to get a print of that image. I would like to put it up and I referred to myself, with lower case, as a "baker street irregular", meaning an enthusiast. And I got a nice, in due course, before too long, I got a nice letter back with an eight-by-ten black and white glossy of that very thing, possibly marked up as for use there and a nice letter signed by P. Christian Steinbrunner, BSI, The Tankerville Club Scandal. He was a real, with capital letters, Baker Street Irregular. Years later, not too many years later, I was to meet P. Christian or "Chris" Steinbrunner. A wonderful man, whose spirited, loving nature and goofiness I can't convey and I'm unable to do voices so somebody else must do him for this series 'cause lots of people can and—but I miss him a lot. He was a kind man full of movie lore that he loved sharing. Now that we have the Internet and things, you can look anything up and you can look any two details up and cross-reference them, but he had all the details in his head about old movies and movie series and supporting players. And he loved to share. So he was really the first Irregular I was in touch with and so I guess the first person we wrote to as a group was William S. Baring-Gould. God bless him (laughter) the poor man.

He had written, of course, this bio, *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*. And Pat had discovered in following his chronology that he had—he had proposed that Holmes and Irene Adler had had a tryst in Montenegro and the—she had gotten pregnant and had a baby who later became Nero Wolfe. He subsequently wrote a biography of Nero Wolfe and while this was titillating, that wasn't a problem, but he posited something like a thirteen-month gestation period (Rice laughs) for Wolfe. Now, he was a very big baby but that is asking a lot of Miss Adler. And so we pretended to get huffy about it and wrote him a letter to say how could he say—how could he besmirch womanhood and you know, make her have such—something that ladies do not do.

RICE: Can you say how you started the letter?

HERZOG: That's right. The letter began "Dear Sir, You Cur" (Rice laughs) and went on in a very rude but light-hearted way. And then we mailed it to him, just hoping that he would think it was funny. And by the grace of God, he did think it was funny and he wrote us back a letter that said, that began "Dear Ladies, You seem to have caught me with my dates down," (Rice laughs) and went on from there. And oh my God, his investiture in the BSI was Gloria Scott so soon he was signing his notes "Gloria". (laughter) And we were signing ourselves, we hadn't got a corporate name yet so we were signing with all the last names so we sounded like a truly strange law firm, (Rice laughs) yes, Moran Patterson Mulligan Herzog Mendes and Jones. And I left some out. And so, a number of these letters passed back and forth and then, oh God, we wanted to meet him. And I think—we invited him to dinner if he would find a New York restaurant we could go to, but to my everlasting shame, he ended up paying for dinner. And—

RICE: Explain why; it is so much a story of college girls.

HERZOG: It's because we had no experience dealing with the world and so, when the waitress came, she naturally brought it to him and we hadn't seen how it would be, so we hadn't designated a person to grab the check nor indeed, had we pooled our money. And it was maybe the days before credit cards so I don't know if we even had a plan on paying for it. We just figured we would do it; we would come up with it. But once he had the check, he didn't give it up and we fluttered about and he ended up paying for it. So that was—

RICE: Embarrassing.

HERZOG: That was embarrassing. Afterwards, we sent him a tie and something.

RICE: Tie clip. Cuff links.

HERZOG: Yes, so that he would get something out of it and it was a wonderful place we went to called Asti's, no longer in existence of course. What's still in existence? Asti's in the Village where the waiters sang opera between courses and it was delightful. And the only recollection of the conversation there was that we were discussing Nero Wolfe and who were the ideal people to play him. The volume of the noise around us was very large, but it dropped off silently just as one of us yelled, "Sydney Greenstreet." So that echoed—

RICE: Went out into the silence.

HERZOG: Yes. That echoed out across the—but there are worse things.

RICE: I realized we failed to mention one of the participants, because she came later.

HERZOG: Well now.

RICE: She is one of our founding mothers, as well, and deserves some time.

HERZOG: Two years behind us at Albertus came Mary Ellen, Mary Ellen Couchon. Sorry, we had two Mary Ellens, but Mary Ellen Couchon came two years behind us, and she was designated as someone's little sister. I think Mary Kay's, but she soon became everybody's little sister and really soon in many ways, the designated adult for the group because she was so witty and so resourceful and—

RICE: And still is.

HERZOG: And still is. Yes, in helping us get organized and do fun things. Mary, known as M.E. Rich now, her married name. She was just a delightful addition. Ordinarily people do stick with the people of their year; that's just the way it works. But she was too good to let go.

RICE: Right. So, now there is this time when you are going to meet them, Baring-Gould and perhaps some others.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: John Bennett Shaw, you should talk about that.

HERZOG: Yes. Early on—oh, we weren't so dumb; we figured out that if we couldn't go to the Sherlockians, we would try to lure the Sherlockians to us. We had gotten a couple of little articles into the school quarterly literary magazine and we knew the *Baker Street Journal* listed publications received so we sent a copy of each of these to *The Journal*. And, in due course, it was listed and we hoped we would be flooded with—with (Rice laughs) collectors, well, we were not. But we were flooded with John Bennett Shaw in the first place. (Rice laughs).

RICE: A flood by himself.

HERZOG: Yes. Also I think Dean Dickensheet via a man named Frier in California, with whom we corresponded just a tiny bit; later on Peter Blau, but this is before we met Peter. But John Shaw wrote to the college (laughs) trying to get a hold of the literary magazine. And these things are ephemeral; they don't print all that many of them and then they do with whatever they do with them and then—

RICE: There aren't any more.

HERZOG: There aren't any more left. So he wrote, and I guess nobody answered. He wrote to somebody else and they didn't answer and finally he wrote to the President of the school saying—

RICE: On certain letterhead too.

HERZOG: Oh yea, because he was a trustee at Notre Dame University and a member of library board in—I think this was Tulsa.

RICE: This was still Tulsa, yeah.

HERZOG: So his—his literary back—credits were impressive and I believed he said I've written this finky institution four times (Rice laughs), once as a trustee, once as a member of the board, and once, just as a plain, common citizen, won't somebody just answer me, get me one of these things. So I was in—this went to the President, Sister Marie Louise, and I was in philosophy class and someone came to the door and said, "Would I please come out of class and go and see the President." Of course, I thought I was going to be killed, (Rice laughs) but she handed this thing to me and said, "Will you please deal with this." (laughter) So, we must have found one and shipped it off to him, with a, "Tell us all, who are you?" (laughter) "Who are you, strange sir with such an interesting vocabulary and so many credits to your name?" And John Shaw is, as I'm sure everyone who has done any of these talks have said, was a magical correspondent, hilarious, and also dry, just sardonic and generous. And although we were silly bumptious people, we didn't really claim any credits beyond the fact that we loved Holmes. So, he was very kind to us and he sent us printed matter and he told us about things going on and he told us other people whom we might write to. So, we wrote to Ted Schulz; he was over in Vietnam and he wrote back and sent Army forms that he had made up, where the examples used for the people to follow in filling them out were Canonical names. So Colonel Carruthers for example or, you know, Dr. John Watson of the Army Medical Corps would be the example of how you would fill out your form. And, of course, we were dazzled. But John Shaw, what a guy, and long, obviously written spur of the moment, stream-of-consciousness letters.

RICE: And never talked down to anybody. You were an equal from your first letter.

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: Quite a remarkable guy.

HERZOG: Yeah.

RICE: So, in 1967, this group of girls who have been talking Holmes, thought they should meet some of these people. And you had a plan for January of 1968. Will you describe what happened then.

HERZOG: It was the 1960s and revolution in the air. And it just didn't make any sense to us that the BSI would be only for guys because, obviously, we were women and we liked Holmes. And so it seemed likely that there were other women who liked Holmes and there were some women who wrote in the—who were published in *The Journal* and somehow, it seemed like it had escaped their attention. (laughter)

RICE: And if you pointed it out, they would say, "Oh. Yes, you're right, we'll change!" (laughter)

HERZOG: Exactly so. So, picketing seemed like the right way to go. We tried to get a parade permit—

RICE: From the City of New York?

HERZOG: From the City of New York. We wrote, possibly, just to the City of New York (I have no idea) saying that we planned to picket such-and-such place. And we knew that they would be at Cavanagh's Restaurant on 23rd Street and I have a feeling, we got the date wrong. I think we might have thought it was the Saturday night, but it wouldn't have made any difference because we didn't hear back from the City. And so half a dozen of us got on Metro North, or whatever it was in those days.

RICE: Name them again?

HERZOG: Ah! Yes. Pat Moran, Linda Patterson, me, Lisa Jones, Mary Ellen Couchon, Mary Ellen Ebeling.

RICE: Good.

HERZOG: Yes, of whom Pat has passed away. Linda Patterson is fine, but we don't see her much in Sherlockian circles. I'm me. Mary Ellen Couchon, now Rich, is fine. Lisa Jones passed away and Mary Ellen Ebeling—eventually—didn't graduate with us and—so, she might be findable, but we haven't been in touch for many years. So, that's two lost that we badly miss, but we certainly enjoyed them while we had them. And they knew they were loved the whole time, so that's something. So the six of us and I, of course, was nominally the leader because it was my book. I wasn't entirely sure that we should and for years, even after, how stupid were we. (Rice laughs) But, now in retrospect, it was the right thing to do. At the time, I was scared to death we would be arrested and then our parents would kill us 'cause we really were very good girls.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: We really were very good girls and it was—yeah—gently brought up and very Catholic and we were very good. But, nonetheless, we went down to New York and the first thing was that John Shaw had gotten us invitations to attend The William Gillette Memorial Luncheon run by Lisa McGaw at Keens Restaurant, which was wonderful in every possible

way. And only in retrospect, did I realize that in this luncheon, Lisa McGaw had already established the equal men and women Sherlockian world that we were longing to see the BSI do.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: 'Cause she didn't need permission. It was the event that she ran and so she just made it for both men and women or it had become.

RICE: To give honor where it's due, the man who had actually founded that event, Cliff Andrew. It was also coed under him.

HERZOG: That's wonderful.

RICE: And that was mostly because they all loved Edith Meiser and she had to be there.

HERZOG: Ah, yes. Oh, Edith Meiser and, yes, a shout out to Edith Meiser, a wonderful woman. While she never became a member of ASH, she was willing to come to our events and talk with us. An elegant and—yes, a magical person.

RICE: She was indeed.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: And I remember one time when we ran out of wine, she bought another round.

HERZOG: Oh, very fine.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: Very fine. So this first event with Sherlockians that weren't us was wonderful. Peter Blau was there; by this time, we had been corresponding with him. And he was as debonair as we had imagined he would be. And so I said it before, but I'll say it again, we followed him around like ducklings. For one thing, he was the only person we knew by name. I think maybe John Shaw was not at this luncheon.

RICE: I think he was, but he came later.

HERZOG: Oh, okay.

RICE: And then you saw him and circled him.

HERZOG: Okay. Yes.

RICE: And took turns being ducklings behind.

HERZOG: Oh yes. Oh, it was wonderful. And Keens, what a wonderful restaurant and still is. That was one that we didn't manage to close permanently.

RICE: That's right, we had some good ASH meetings there.

HERZOG: Yes indeed. Oh goodness yes.

RICE: Okay. I speak of ASH, which we haven't yet invented.

HERZOG: That's right and we let it drop in conversation with people. We were telling women, with guys in there, that there should be women too. "Then why don't you picket us in some way?" "Well, as a matter of fact, that's what we are planning to do." (Rice laughs) "Well, you know, that will be tonight." "Oh my God, we thought it was going to be tomorrow." So after the luncheon, we went and brought poster board (Rice laughs) and magic markers and we made up our signs, which said, for example, "BSI Unfair to Women" and "Let Us In, Out of the Cold" (which was prescient), and some other darn thing.

RICE: Yeah.

HERZOG: Yes and, oh, I forgot to mention that Pat was on crutches because she had a bad ankle, but she came anyway.

RICE: And the weather was awful and there was snow.

HERZOG: The weather was awful, but it was the late sixties and we were wearing very short skirts and we were wearing fishnet stockings and high heels, so we were teetering along. But—

RICE: Marching around.

HERZOG: Marching around in front of Cavanagh's restaurant at 23rd and 8th. And then a cop came, so they pushed me to the front, which was only right and I said to him, "If you want us to leave, we'll leave." But he was nice and he said, "You can't obstruct people from going into or out of this place of business." And we said, "No, we wouldn't do that." And we hadn't done that—so he went away. And then a fellow from *The Times* came, whose name I used to know and he chatted Lisa up for a while 'cause she was the most pretty.

RICE: Isikoff?

HERZOG: No.

RICE: Okay.

HERZOG: Van something, Van Gelder.

RICE: Van Gelder. Yes.

HERZOG: Lawrence Van Gelder, now a distinguished person. He chatted Lisa up. Lisa was the cutest, but I don't know that he got anywhere with her. (Rice laughs) And then we realized that we didn't actually know when to stop. (Rice laughs) But, unbeknownst to us, word had reached the room up there, that this was going on.

RICE: BSI had to come through you to get there.

HERZOG: Yes. And so someone told—we were informed, Julian Wolff, who, of course, was running that dinner and someone else told him that Shaw, John Shaw, knew us and maybe that Peter Blau did. So he yelled at them and sent them down to make us stop.

RICE: "Get your damn girls out of here!" Which is what I think he was quoted as saying.

HERZOG: Yes. Oh the poor guys. And so they came out to chat with us and they very sensibly said we could go into the downstairs bar and they would listen to what we had to say.

RICE: Buy you drinks.

HERZOG: And buy us a drink. So, that was an honorable retreat, so we honorably retreated to the bar and, I believe, on a cocktail napkin set down this—not our demands, but our statement, that it was not for ourselves, oh no, but that it was foolish for the BSI to be guys-only and they should reconsider letting the fair sex in. And of course that had—

RICE: Was carried up to Julian, and what did he do?

HERZOG: I believe he tore it up and threw it away.

RICE: He read it and threw it over his shoulder.

HERZOG: Yes. And—but it certainly had its effect because it took a mere twenty-three more years (Rice laughs) before the BSI went coed. But I guess this is a good time for me to say something about Julian Wolff.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: Because, here he is, and out of the blue these women who he has never heard of are picketing his dinner. And he was pissed and well he might have been, or if I'm supposed to speak more nicely, he was irate and not without reason. That said, he treated the group and the individuals in it in later years with great gentlemanliness. He was in a position to make life harder for us as Sherlockians and he never took any revenge. He was the editor of *The Baker Street Journal*; he published things that we wrote.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: He didn't have to do that, goodness knows. And even more astonishingly, after only a couple few years, he sidled up to me one Friday evening, I guess, and placed into my hand a little slip of paper and then sidled away. What was it, but an invitation to the Saturday cocktail party, which in those days was held by him and his wife in their very apartment. That was phenomenal.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: What kindness.

RICE: Generosity.

HERZOG: Generosity. And we in turn didn't really give him much further guff. We had made our point. So, I really honor the name of Julian Wolff and I don't know that I would be as kind to people, who appeared out of nowhere, giving me a hard time out on the streets. So, yes in some ways, he seemed like a very formal, precise, button-down guy.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: But when you read his funny ripostes to Rex Stout's "Watson was a Woman", where his ended with an anagram that spelled out "Nuts to Rex Stout". (Rice laughs) He clearly had that humor in there. So, yes, so good for him.

RICE: Absolutely true. And from the picket, something happened, an organization was born.

HERZOG: Ah!

RICE: That took some more time, but I suppose this is a good place to continue that piece of the story.

HERZOG: Okay. Yes, the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes. In a way, we had willy-nilly formed a scion at Albertus. In retrospect, from the time we sat down and penned the first group letter.

RICE: Before you knew what a scion was.

HERZOG: That's right. That's right. But it was in effect that it was a true Sherlockian society and coming up with a name, really first it was a name to sign letters with. You couldn't sign all the members names in row and so we were The Shrieking Violets at one letter and The Vinyl Problem in another because it was wet weather and we all had vinyl raincoats, it was again the sixties. And a few names were suggested, but eventually—and somehow, I think it was Julian Wolff who said it but I can't—haven't found any—

RICE: Piece of paper.

HERZOG: Yes. But the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes seemed like a very good one and ASH; as what do you call the first letters of the name?

RICE: The initials, the acronym.

HERZOG: That's the word, was a nice one. So adventure—and it's fun, particularly because we were such good little, such good little Catholic college girls. Oh, and here I must tell Shaw's inimitable line. He observed that Albertus Magnus was so Catholic a college that, if a girl wasn't a virgin when she matriculated, she was by the time she graduated. (laughter) So playing at adventuresses was fun and appearing to be naughty.

RICE: Shaw often made kind of devilish remarks in his letters, which I read because I wrote the history of ASH for a Christmas annual some years ago. And, I always thought he was especially amused to be addressing these remarks to some very innocent Catholic college girls. Your view of the BSI, indeed of all women's, but I put you at the apex of that group, is different from everybody else's because we observed BSI at a distance for decades (Herzog laughs) before we ever got in the door. So, try to think of those years and talk about your first ideas about the BSI as you continued to attend January dinners or meetings and got to know them. The twenty years in the desert, let's say.

HERZOG: Yeah. They varied so. I got in at the end of one era of great Sherlockians. Never met Rex Stout, though he was alive when I was around and I always felt too sad and happy. Sad not to have been in his presence, but happy because he had such a mordant wit, because if he hadn't—if he had chanced to be displeased with us; it would have been a terribly, cutting thing.

RICE: You were very young and vulnerable then—

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: And one cut could have done it.

HERZOG: That's right and I guess that's true. I have to give thanks to all the people we corresponded with in college, particularly Shaw and Blau, Ted Schulz and a few other folks. Everybody was uniformly encouraging and had information to share about this wonderful, goofy world that we were learning about. Yeah, nobody was mean.

RICE: That's a good thing. No mean people. This is kind of jumping ahead, but talk about your investiture in ASH and your investiture in BSI, which came sometime later, because they are interesting points.

HERZOG: Yes. ASH when we—at college we kind of took investitures willy-nilly, boys names or girls names, particularly because Pat Moran so naturally she became Sebastian Moran. And Linda Patterson was our Irene Adler because she was the most elegant of us and that was right. And I wanted a woman's name and not too silly a woman. Finding a

Canonical character whom Holmes respected, men or women, there are not so terribly many of those.

RICE: That's right.

HERZOG: So I settled on Violet Hunter. She's a little on the bossy side, but Holmes so much respected her and she was a young woman finding her way in the world and I was on the verge of going off to New York to make my fortune. So that was a good match and in later years, I stayed with it. When ASH re-formed with the addition, in the mid-seventies, with the addition of Sherlockian women from everywhere, we rethought investitures and decided that there should not be anybody who would have Irene Adler's name 'cause she would be—

RICE: The Adventuress.

HERZOG: Yes. The Adventuress. And so, But I was all set with Violet Hunter and the other Violets, in due course, have been taken and the other clients that Holmes thought well of. But I'm really happy about her; she has good and bad faults that I can see myself in. And I have written more than a few little articles or bits of verse about her. I don't have a book in me, but some day, I'll go through the files and see exactly how much I've got and maybe there is a chap book in it.

RICE: And tip-toe through time to 1991, when you received your BSI investiture.

HERZOG: Oh yes. Now, of course in ASH, we chose our own investitures within—and now I run ASH so I let people chose their own investitures within reason. They have to run it past me but the end—what variety people come up with! But the Baker Street Irregulars' way is different, the person in charge bestows the name. And I was flabbergasted to get The Daintiest Thing Under a Bonnet, which of course amounts to Irene Adler. So that is just the best possible accolade.

RICE: And I'm sure there was a reason for it. Tom was tipping his hat to you as the lead Adventuress.

HERZOG: Oh, I'm just overwhelmed.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: Yes. What an accolade. I'm so—I'm as happy as I could be. Oh my goodness. And then there is the story about it. The—Tom or the Wiggins, the person in charge, cannot be the only person who knows because the certificates have to be made up to be delivered. And in those days, Terry Thomalen, with her beautiful calligraphic skills was making up the forms. So I am told, Tom Stix phoned Bob Thomalen to give him the list of names and investitures to then hand over to Terry to produce. And when Terry looked at the list, she said to Bob, "Are you sure that you got this right? It says Daintiest Thing Under a Blanket." (laughter) Which in its way, is also a wonderful, wonderful accolade. (laughter)

RICE: Delicious. Delicious. Well, you talked a little about Julian Wolff, but not about Tom Stix, who actually invested you and me.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: He's a more complicated character. You want to take him on?

HERZOG: Oh Tom. I never understood Tom, he was always like a hand grenade that I never knew what would set him off. Not that he ever went off at me, but he could be tricky. But I had the virtue of ignorance and so if I could see we were having a conversation and his steam was beginning to get up, I would say, "Listen, I don't even understand what we are talking about. Can we go back a step and let me know what's on your mind?" And then things would be okay. Smart man, very humorous man, eccentric. You know while being a businessman and all, not eccentric in the world but in our group, a character. But I just can't do him justice. But he and his wife, Dorothy, were certainly very nice—became real friends of us principal ASH people though or New York young women, well not so young anymore. (laughter) But we were a little younger than them.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: Women Sherlockians and more easily so once we were invested and it couldn't seem as though we were trying to become friends with them. They did all the being friends part I think at the beginning because you have to avoid sucking up.

RICE: That's right.

HERZOG: But then afterwards, we could be nice.

RICE: In my memory in the way that it happened is that we were thrown in with them in at things like Autumn in Baker Street and Shaw conventions all over the place. And slowly we began finding each other enjoyable and humorous. So the ice was broken but I agree, they did all the inviting at that time because we were not eager to appear sycophantic.

HERZOG: And they were very nice with Pat. With her medical adventures, they really helped her recuperate from things and—yeah, formed a family when she didn't have too much family around.

RICE: That's right; they really did. They were superb people. Do you have any other people that you met through Sherlock Holmes that you would like to talk about? Any other Irregulars or others? We mentioned Baring-Gould and John Shaw and Peter Blau who were all very important to the beginning of ASH and went on being friends. Not Baring-Gould who died, but the others. Who else had you had particularly good friendships with among the Irregulars?

HERZOG: Yeah. Um. Of course many of the ASH now are Irregulars as well. So that if I name you and Mickey for example and sometimes it's hard to remember which ASH really are.

RICE: I know.

HERZOG: Yes. Yes. So those friendships came mostly from ASH, but seeing us take our place in the, in the Sherlock—in the Irregulars group has been wonderful. One person of our age group, but from farther away, who played a strange role in Sherlockian history, but we were friends, Jack Tracy. He kind of came out of nowhere in the Sherlockian scene having put together *The Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana*, which immediately became the without-which-not book on every Sherlockian's reference shelf because of the insights into just the everyday Victorian life and all the Canonical terms. And then he started coming to events. He was a guy of about our age and had a lot of humor, a huge amount of information. And it was fun hanging with him. He was quirky, heaven knows. And sometimes he would be full of energy and other times, less so. So that could be a little unnerving. Now, I'm speaking of when I talked to him between times. I liked him and I hung out with him some. The first Shaw conference in Kansas City, I flew out to—he lived in Bloomington, Illinois and I flew out there and then we drove the rest of the way together and that was good clean fun. He had an apartment that had a guest suite so I'm not suggesting any either hanky or panky. But, I don't know, we had fun. But he was—but sad things happened. His mom got killed in what was apparently a hold-up. And it was felt that he might have done it. He was certainly a guy with mood swings. In business, there were people who felt that he had done them wrong financially and I don't know about that. So I just don't know what the answer is. Could he have been a doer of ill deeds? I hope not. The human heart is just too hard to understand. So he is gone now. He moved to—

RICE: Las Vegas.

HERZOG: Las Vegas and crashed his car and hard to know whether it was on purpose or whether it was a true accident. So, it's just, a little cloud hangs over his name and yet, people have both good and bad in them I guess is all I can say with Jack. Yeah.

RICE: And he left us the *Encyclopaedia*, which is invaluable.

HERZOG: Yeah.

RICE: I know you have gone to other things besides BSI events. We have mentioned a few of them, cocktail parties at his home that you were invited to, the Silver Blazes.

HERZOG: Yes. Those are good fun and in those days, they started out at The Players Club for a stirrup cup down, so that was an entrée into that wonderful, fine old institution, The Players was the actors' special club, which is still hanging on though it has troubles and we don't know whether it will still survive.

RICE: Are you concerned about it?

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: It was also the site of something I didn't think about until this moment and that was a very important dinner that you and I and four other people were at that started a lot of things rolling.

HERZOG: That's right, when Tom Stix was new as Wiggins. He and Bob Thomalen?

RICE: Bob Thomalen and Bill Jenkins.

HERZOG: Ah!

RICE: And then he called you and invited you to invite two seconds, since he was having two seconds. And you chose Susan Dahlinger and me. And so the six of us dined. And now go ahead.

HERZOG: Well no, I can't because it's all a blur. We were talking about, clearly it was an idea of how the men and women could get on in the Sherlockian world in the future but not a matter of him making any promises or our making any demands.

RICE: He did make a request as I remember. He wondered if we would like to make a big contribution by taking over the cocktail reception.

HERZOG: Ah!

RICE: And you and Dahlinger and I talked about it and it sounded like he was giving us scut work and it raised our feminist whatever and so we said no. But he did talk for the first time about the possibility of about women in BSI. He did tell us that it wouldn't happen while Julian was still on this earth and I remembered he asked you whether you thought ASH would survive if women could be in the BSI. And you hesitated and I said, "It will and if it doesn't, it doesn't deserve to." And I remember him kind of nodding. And yes, ASH has thrived since there are women in BSI. You can have two places for your heart.

HERZOG: That's right. And most fortunately, the alternate dinner to the BSI Friday dinner has continued on, not under ASH's egis because, now—I still refer to it as the boys, even though the BSI is coed but there will always be people, both men and women, who are not yet members of the BSI but are true Sherlockians and they need an event to go to and luckily, at first, we pulled together local people from the different scions who would run it. And they have handed it on to groups over these, how ever—from 1991 to 2015. Several different groups of people have come together to hand it on and keep it going because everybody's got to eat.

RICE: I think we put our end before our beginning there. I don't think we ever mentioned that starting in 1975, there's been an ASH dinner opposite the BSI dinner. The choice for women who could come to the weekend and still have a place to go. The first one in '75 was

casual and then they became more formal. And then they became bigger, and bigger, and bigger. (Herzog laughs) And so it has gone for quite a number of years that ASH has provided this space and so Evelyn had made it a point of setting up some people to take over that slot. And that group passed it on to another group and it changed names a couple of times, but there has always been a dinner, with lots of entertainment, opposite the BSI dinner.

HERZOG: And over the years, many people who attended and who ran it, have themselves then joined the Baker Street Irregulars and have been invited in, but others step up. For the first couple of years, two or three, it was just for women because we were the obvious people left out. But eventually, I was brought around to see that there were fellows who also deserved to eat and weren't making the cut for the BSI yet and they should be allowed. And so then it became truly coed and that was the right thing to do.

RICE: Right. Right. At first, the dinners were all women and the membership was all women. And then the dinners opened to men and then a lot of time went on and the membership was opened to men after a couple decades, early in the 2000s.

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: So now, it is like BSI, equal.

HERZOG: That's right and for a while I wondered would ASH go on with each of these changes. Really, the first change, of whether it should go on, after it was no longer a college group anymore, would it be a good idea to open it up to other people? And heavens yes, that was the best thing that ever happened to us. Kate Karlson particularly was the person, a former "young Sherlockian" so-called, so she, likewise, had been a Sherlockian all her life.

RICE: You have to tell that scene that I get you mad by calling the epiphany, (Herzog laughs) where the women found each other. This is 1975; it is in the Algonquin lobby.

HERZOG: Yes, where Sherlockians gathered and mingled and drank overpriced liquor in this very historic and wonderful lobby. And it became time to go to the BSI dinner, time to head out, and with a whoosh, every man in the room stood up and went out the revolving door, went out the door. And then we looked around and the place was empty, except for six or eight women of whom two or three already had plans to go to the opera or theater or something. And so five, six, I used to know?—

RICE: Something like that; I can look it up in the book.

HERZOG: —of us were left. Some of us had come in together, the Albertus girls, but a couple of other Sherlockian women.

RICE: Katie and Angela.

HERZOG: Katie and Angela and Nancy Maczulak. So Angela Mitchell, Kate Karlson, and Nancy Maczulak together with Mary Ellen Couchon, Pat Moran, me, maybe Linda Patterson. That would be seven.

RICE: I think so. And you went to a restaurant that Kate knew from a trip from her French club.

HERZOG: And which happened to be downstairs from where M.E. lived.

RICE: Making it perfect.

HERZOG: So yes, Larre's. So we had a wonderful French meal and then we went upstairs, impromptu, to Mary Ellen's and drank her dry; I'm sure. (Rice laughs) We all inscribed our names and the date in her copy of the complete Canon, which of course was there, and had an impromptu revivification session of the Adventuresses. And because Kate wasn't at all snooty about her equal or perfectly greater credentials as a Sherlockian and Nancy and Angela, likewise—

RICE: All fell in with you.

HERZOG: Yes. And so they were willing to make it a new, old scion and it began to double in membership every few months. So—such wonderful women. Of course, this is BSI, I should stop talking about ASH but—

RICE: It's both.

HERZOG: But yes, many of us have duly become Baker Street Irregulars because they were just such enthusiastic, wonderful women. And now from all over the States because the January birthday weekend would bring people in and often times, there were multiple couples of people who were both Sherlockians. And, so, what luck.

RICE: Yes. What luck we all have had. I agree. I agree. Do you have a funny moment you want to talk to us about? Something you remember that was particularly amusing.

HERZOG: I remember. I can't—

RICE: David Stuart Davies.

HERZOG: Yes. One thing at a Baker Street Irregulars event, which was one of the cocktail parties at the National Arts Club; David Stuart Davies, from Britain, did his, either his one-minute or five-minute *Hound of the Baskervilles* playing all the parts, acting them all out at breakneck speed, yet perfectly.

RICE: Different voices.

HERZOG: Oh yes. Different voices and facial expressions and his whole body acting out each person, rushing through it and yet hitting every salient point. It was magnificent and just sidesplitting. And just sidesplitting. And one thing from it. At an ASH dinner, M.E. Rich who is BSI, taught us how to do a stage faint.

RICE: It was my first ASH dinner. It was great.

HERZOG: Yes. You clasp your hand to your brow to show how upset you are. You point your finger accusingly at the person who has caused you. And then starting with the ankles—

RICE: You put your hand on your heart.

HERZOG: Oh yes, hand on the heart, and then you collapse from the knee and then the ankle and down you go. So you don't totter over like a ladder falling, but you sink down and then fall. And the wait staff (Rice laughs) at the restaurant who did not know this was about to happen looked on aghast as the woman up at the front of the room suddenly fell to the floor. (laughter)

RICE: And then her audience stood and tried the same thing. (laughter)

HERZOG: Yes, that went well. (laughs)

RICE: We have talked about so many things and yet we haven't talked about your writing because you have done a lot of writing, various kinds. I knew your writing before I knew you.

HERZOG: Oh, that's sweet. Oh, that's sweet. Well, because I have been at it for so very long so people need a toast or people need a talk or people need something either big or little to fill in things. One thing that I wrote that everybody, not everybody, that some people liked, while I thought in some ways that it was dry— it was called *The Cento of the Baskervilles*. I had been looking at *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and in some part, I found a rhyme. And when I read it out loud, I found that it was also in, what is it, iambic pentameter. And of course which really is the rhythm of what?

RICE: Spoken word.

HERZOG: Yes, of spoken word. And so I then found something else and something else. So I thought, oh well, this is worth doing so I sat and went through the whole *Hound*, which is a fair amount, reading things out loud and looking for poetic bits. And there are huge numbers of things that are in lovely, Shakespearian-like, iambic pentameter and I could get—find rhymes here and there. And by cutting and pasting, I managed to put essentially the whole story together. I posited that Watson had originally planned to do it in rhyme and only, with difficulty, had been dissuaded and turned it into a prose story. And here I was discovering the original (Rice laughs), the original *Hound* and it went on and on of course. I bundled it off to the *Journal* and my goodness, they printed it and actually, learned people have complimented

me on it, which I think is hilarious. (laughter) An entirely different thing that the two of us were half responsible for is “U is for Uffa”. The Scowrers and Molly Maguires and–

RICE: And John Ruyle.

HERZOG: Yes. John Ruyle, the pamphleteer, the small printer, producer of wonderful little books, some of them very charming and some of them kind of naughty, but all beautifully put together. The San Francisco society, I think it was a fund-raiser, issued a challenge for people to write limericks, an alphabet of limericks with Canonical themes.

RICE: I think they were quatrains, but other than that, I’m agreeing with you.

HERZOG: Yes. You are right. They were indeed four line poems. Limericks would have gotten a little old.

RICE: And in an alphabet.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: And they would choose the best on each letter and they would print the best that were submitted.

HERZOG: Yes. And so they are a Sherlockian group and it was the Isle of Uffa Chowder and Marching Society. Oh, we skipped over what groups I belonged to, there are so many, but one of the goofier is The Isle of Uffa Chowder and Marching Society, which started off as a four woman group and was at the time we were doing this and three of the four of us are now BSI. And Roberta would be, if she would have stayed in this town and came around.

RICE: Stayed in this town.

HERZOG: Yes. So we thought we would see if we could write a whole alphabet’s worth. We could do it–

RICE: Together.

HERZOG: Together and so we each wrote whatever we could and then we would jointly meet and try them out.

RICE: And choose the best.

HERZOG: That’s right. And tinker if needed be, but that would hardly happen. And we came up with–

RICE: A whole alphabet.

HERZOG: Yes, and sent it in and won the contest.

RICE: They decided to print our alphabet as a whole. I don't know whether they ever printed the book of different people's quatrains. But they liked ours so much that they printed it as a whole and named it after our group, U is for Uffa, and we were very proud of that.

HERZOG: And we were very proud and it was good fun. I feared they asked too much in price for it. It was supposed to be a fundraiser so I'm not certain whether how many Sherlockians actually have copies of it.

RICE: That's probably true.

HERZOG: But anyway, we have ours.

RICE: Yes. Yes.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: That was great. And you have given a lot of talks too.

HERZOG: Yes, it's true. And one kind that I did a version of, at least three times, probably all for Autumn in Baker Street, was to take a given year and look up what happened in the real world, so Autumn 1888 in Baker Street and Autumn 1895 in Baker Street, because the fact is we are so far from the Victorian times. We just don't know everything that Holmes and Watson knew and so the more we can learn, the more we can appreciate the stories, what the background was.

RICE: And even if we know a lot, we are kind of vague about when it was.

HERZOG: Yes.

RICE: Yes, that was sometime during those years that the Suez Canal controversy or the annexation of Burma or whatever it was but—

HERZOG: That's right.

RICE: You managed to put it in a package.

HERZOG: So that was good fun. Oh, and let me mention the relics, just because they were—

RICE: Oh, that was—I forgot the relics.

HERZOG: In—it turned out in 1977, I did them in three groups of four. People—Sherlockians like collecting things as everyone hearing this knows.

RICE: Now, we already had *The Muse* then so you had a way to announce what you were doing.

HERZOG: That's right. That's right, ASH's quarterly publication, *The Serpentine Muse*. So I decided it would be fun if we could own genuine faux as–

RICE: Catalogs of gifts.

HERZOG: Yes. As Paul Churchill put it, “genuine faux” relics from the Canon, and so I issued sequences of twelve different relics. One was a bit of bicycle tire tube from “The Solitary Cyclist”. One was black Formosa corruption germs.

RICE: There was a bit of the mask they used in “Charles Augustus Milverton”.

HERZOG: That's right, the little oval piece cut out of the eyehole.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: And somehow there were several dozens of those little eye-pieces cut out from the two masks. (Rice laughs) Bits of string that Holmes had measured with in “The Musgrave Ritual”.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: So things of that sort. And it was—oh, oh, a lock of hair from the reddish hair from Violet Hunter.

RICE: Yes and how did you supply that?

HERZOG: Yes, with a wig that I had formerly worn in the sixties. Why were we wearing wigs? (Rice laughs) We had good hair, but it was kind of an auburn wig and so a lock each of that came out. So it's good I didn't use my own hair because now I wouldn't be able to do it because my hair now is entirely gray but the wig stays the same forever.

RICE: That's right, but you did have beautiful, curly chestnut hair.

HERZOG: Yes and I numbered each—oh, and each one came with a numbered card. The—and all the numbers were in different sequences. (Rice laughs) So nobody has number one and they were all in different sequences so it wouldn't make any sense to later collectors who came upon them. But I kept a record of who I sent things too. (Rice laughs) It was a nicely printed up card that said this relic is certified by me as being as fully authentic as all of the other relics of this type, which I have distributed. (Rice laughs) And then I signed each one. (Rice laughs)

RICE: I love it.

HERZOG: It was fun. (Rice laughs)

RICE: I'm so glad you mentioned that, so it is not lost. You are a natural accumulator, but you are also a collector. You have taste. So do you want to talk a little bit about your collection and the attempt to merge it with John's collection, when that time came?

HERZOG: Well, yes. I'm not up to the level of John Shaw.

RICE: But who is?

HERZOG: But who is. But nor am I—I am an accumulator on the whole, rather than a collector because collectors discriminate and I hate owning books that I can't eat pizza while I'm reading them. You know, we have a few of those and they sit nicely on the shelf but I really like books I can cram in my handbag and enjoy as I go. I do like Sherlockian art and 3D art and funny little thingies and so we are overwhelmed with funny little thingies. And I guess we do differ on bookshelves, where the books are masked by collections of funny little thingies that you have to move aside to get to the books. I'm in favor of it, John not so much, which means that we've got a lot of them, but sometimes they disappear. (laughter) Trying to merge the collections just means that we had to do it on an ad hoc basis and so cartons and cartons are in storage. We haven't seen our way to distributing much, much less selling. And who our heirs may be, I cannot imagine; that will be a curse for someone. Thanks to your doing, the book about the Adventuresses, the history, that takes a lot of pressure off about the huge amount of papers floating around. You know, the main ASH's archives may, or may not live, but the book is there and so that's about the people and so that's the important thing.

RICE: That was good. That was fun to do.

HERZOG: Yes. John as a former railroader has—so we have a whole shelf of books about—with old Baedekers and timetables, books about Sherlockian travel and that's a very fine thing both from their day and books about Sherlockian traveling from now. So, that's fine stuff to have; that will never go into storage 'cause you will never know when you might want to know the next train from Marylebone leaves for, you know, Geneva. (Rice laughs)

RICE: In 1895. Yes, rush back in time and space. Do you think of any other stories that we haven't touched on through this little jibber-jabber.

HERZOG: Well, I could say what wonderful, varied events I've gotten to attend with Baker Street Irregulars and sometimes under the guise of them, ah—the thing in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania.

RICE: Right, the “Valley of Fear”.

HERZOG: That was good fun. That was lovely. The Sherlockian cruises, particularly the ones that you arranged. Later on, I'll mention the London Society. But the cruises that you and Dorothy Stix and M.E. Rich invented and ran, they were heaven.

RICE: They were great.

HERZOG: And they were quasi-BSI, or least if they weren't BSI sponsored, there were a lot of Irregulars with them.

RICE: Yes. They were sort of BSI sponsored because Tom Stix's name was on it too, which helped. But it was actually invented by John Bennett Shaw.

HERZOG: Ah. Yes, that is where I should go back to, the Shaw weekends, heavenly days.

RICE: They were.

HERZOG: The first one at Notre Dame—

RICE: Which is where we met.

HERZOG: Which is where we met. We never thought that there would be another.

RICE: Exactly.

HERZOG: And so it was like a weekend in heaven and you—

RICE: Nobody went to bed. You just had to be a Sherlockian—

HERZOG: And all you had to do was to get to Notre Dame and it was as good as we imagined. We got to meet Ted Schulz there, whom we had corresponded with all those years before, or a dozen years before because this was the late 70s I recall.

RICE: Yes. I think '77, I want to say.

HERZOG: I think so too. And Sherry and Rivkah— Sherry Rose and Rivkah Peller then— and, oh, Ann Byerly. Oh, she was—

RICE: Byerly wearing T-shirts, "Mr. Holmes, they were the footprints of a gigantic hound." And things like that.

HERZOG: That's right, a different Sherlockian T-shirt everyday.

RICE: And Sherry and Rivkah who brought a bottle of some liquor. Now, I'm trying to figure which one it was.

HERZOG: It was an anisette kind of a thing. And they sat in the back.

RICE: They sat there and put it on the desks (Herzog laughs) where they were sitting at and sipped at will.

HERZOG: Yes, and many other people, but it was heaven and Shaw's talks. But you'll get it from other people than me.

RICE: It's hard to profile.

HERZOG: Yes. But there were more. We thought that would be the only one and we were right not to let it get past, but there were more. I wonder whether anybody got to all of them besides him.

RICE: I think that Ed Van der Flaes and Maureen got to all of them.

HERZOG: Maureen Green. Oh, that's wonderful. Well, that's wonderful.

RICE: You visited Shaw at home too.

HERZOG: I did. Wow! A couple of times and I got to walk around the library room and I guess I got to sleep in the library one time on the pullout bed. That was delightful. And, yes, they were very kind hosts and seeing Santa Fe was delightful. I didn't come to do research; I just ogled, ogled, and the curtains that she had embroidered for him with Canonical stuff and—yeah, yeah. Wonderful people.

RICE: They were indeed.

HERZOG: Yes and, oh, Dick Miller, Dick and Faye Miller out there. Yes. Oh, there were a couple of BSI I got to meet through the office, oddly. I was a legal secretary for thirty-plus years and originally our office was at 1230 6th Avenue, part of the Rockefeller Center complex. And at that time, the downstairs tenant was The New York Bank for Savings (the "Beehive Bank"), one of the— So, I'm skipping away from Dick Miller but I will come back. One of the mucky-mucks there was William Schweickert, William Schweickert of The Three Garridebs and a Baker Street Irregular. And somehow the word—he was on the ground floor and I was on the seventeenth floor, somehow the word passed through the elevator system that there was another Sherlockian in the building.

RICE: Wow!

HERZOG: And I was summoned down to meet him and he was a charming man.

RICE: He was.

HERZOG: And in an office surrounded by—filled with beehives. You know, great and small and metal and plastic and all that because that, with of course, fit in with the Sherlockian connection as well. So I'm sure he kept them all, even when retired. A wonderful man and with the Baker Street Irregulars and with The Three Garridebs and who's now best remembered for the poem "A Long Evening with Holmes", which is such a sweet evocation of the way we love the stories. The best of all the things, except the other people in this special craziness.

RICE: It's odd that you should say this. I work in a building with Bill Jenkins.

HERZOG: Oh!

RICE: But we don't have the poetry. We just saw each other by the elevators and he said, "What are you doing here?" (Herzog laughs)

HERZOG: Oh, that's nice. And, so now going back upstairs to my office. Everybody in the office came to know that I was a Sherlock Holmes crazy person and so one day, I was summoned to one of the partner's office to meet a friend who was visiting and that was Richard Miller, Dick Miller of the, ah, Three Moriarty.

RICE: The Brothers Three of Moriarty.

HERZOG: The Brothers Three of Moriarty and other places who was a patent attorney as well as being a military guy. And so I was working for patent attorneys and so was introduced and he was a jovial and—

RICE: He was.

HERZOG: And came then for many January weekends, so we got to spend time with him.

RICE: He's a great supporter of ASH.

HERZOG: Yes indeed. Yes indeed. So there was a small but fervent group in Santa Fe. I met Saul Cohen but can't say I really, I really knew him but another distinguished person thereabouts. So visiting Shaw was wonderful. Yeah. Yeah.

RICE: I have another thing you must talk about. You were one of the few that were in Chris Steinbrunner's early radio plays—

HERZOG: Oh heavens.

RICE: And the Priory Scholars of Fordham was in existence. Tell us what you can remember from then.

HERZOG: Yes, we were still at college so maybe our last year, and the Priory Scholars of Fordham, which I guess Chris had invented and Peter Blau had been brought in on. I'm not sure—

RICE: They were really good friends. I didn't know this until I began doing research. In the fifties they were best friends.

HERZOG: That's right. And they were seated next to one another; they had joined The Baker Street Irregulars one after the other or I guess their initial invitations. So they were seated—in those days you were seated by—

RICE: By how your seniority went.

HERZOG: Yes. So they were always side-by-side and they hit it off. As well I can imagine because what two conversationalists and yes, lovers of Sherlockian stuff in so many ways. Chris wrote up radio plays based on some of the Canonical stories and he was a long-timer at W-F-U-V, the university radio station. So periodically, under the guise of The Priory Scholars of Fordham, they would do live and I guess taped broadcasts. And on one occasion, they let us know in advance that if we could get ourselves—we girls could get ourselves down from Albertus to the Bronx, which I have no idea how we did that, we could be part of the event and so they did. I even got to be Cadogan West's Violet Westbury.

RICE: Violet Westbury.

HERZOG: Yes. "If only you could save his honor, Mr. Holmes, it was everything to him." (Rice laughs) And somebody doing the sound of gravel, the footsteps on the gravel. The sound effects guy. It was all seemingly impromptu but really kind of nicely done, so it was a thrill to be behind the scenes on—back stage on radio, old time, new time radio there in the late sixties.

RICE: Did you ever work on them with Peter, Peter Blau, or George Fletcher? Both of who did some of them.

HERZOG: Peter was playing, maybe, The Duke of Holderness in—so it must have been—so "The Priory School" was one and "The Bruce Partington Plans" was the other, possibly both the same evening or else I'm conflating two events.

RICE: It's easy to do; we are talking back a long time.

HERZOG: Yes. Now, George Fletcher and I took at least one class together. He was already at Fordham and in the Classics Department in grad school and he was already established there and ahead of me in many ways. I just see that there's a show at The Grolier, I think, on "Aldus Manutius". And as soon as I saw that name on the front page of *The Times*, I thought George Fletcher is involved here and indeed he is.

RICE: Ah ha! Even though he is no longer there.

HERZOG: Yes, putting it on a very scholarly person and with humor. So we were both students of an extremely erudite Father, Edwin Quain, S.J., God be good to him. So I got out with my Master's and my ABD (Editor's Note: Master's in Classics and "ABD" is "All But the Dissertation" for her doctorate) and lived to tell the story. (Rice laughs) So that was perhaps for the best.

RICE: Before I turn off this machine, I keep thinking there are more stories that we are not thinking of.

HERZOG: Well, Pshaw Bowl.

RICE: Yes.

HERZOG: Yes. That was–

RICE: And we got the award too.

HERZOG: We got the award because that was before the BSI had gone coed and so this would be the second Kansas City Shaw Weekend.

RICE: Late eighties, I can't get much closer than that.

HERZOG: Right.

RICE: Maybe eighty-nine maybe?

HERZOG: I don't know. I don't know. But they announced that there would be a special award for two people and we were thinking that it would be—it must be a couple. Maureen and Ed came immediately to mind as a pair of distinguished Sherlockians and then they read out our each names and I literally felt my jaw drop. (Rice laughs) I had never experienced that before and you were so surprised, Mickey had to push you get you up to—Yes.

RICE: That was quite a thing.

HERZOG: But it was a wonderful award—

RICE: It was.

HERZOG: For us as distinguished people before the BSI could so recognize us at all. Yes, so that was wonderful. On that occasion, John Shaw—I don't know if it was BSI, if anything they were all BSI. They decided to have a quiz-off - Pshaw Bowl - and teams of—

RICE: Scions of three people.

HERZOG: Yes. We were invited to field a team.

RICE: And we didn't. And didn't think—we didn't sign up until we got there.

HERZOG: Oh really!

RICE: Yes. We decided no no no, we weren't going to do that, that was silly. That was not anything we wanted to do. And then we got there and people were saying, "Who are you all playing for?" We said, "Oh, all right. We'll sign up."

HERZOG: I remember it differently.

RICE: We couldn't sign up as ASH as I remember.

HERZOG: I think maybe we didn't want to. Maybe we felt that was too pointed, but The Strangers' Room, another scion—

RICE: Of the dozens.

HERZOG: Yes, which was both men and women, but it was only women who were attending this thing, and so—

RICE: The women from the group; there weren't any men from the group there.

HERZOG: Yea, so—

RICE: You and I and M.E.—

HERZOG: Yes. And some alternatives waiting in the wings.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: Right and the glass—the bottle of Welsh whisky on the table.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: Which, [Jon] Lellenberg was the quizmaster and the judge I guess or I suppose he and John [Shaw] but John had made up the questions.

RICE: Right. John had made up the questions.

HERZOG: And he confiscated the bottle, but we had another, a back-up bottle. (laughter)

RICE: So it reappeared on the table to Jon's dismay. And as I remember, the quiz-off was originally on specific stories that had been assigned, which kind of gives everybody a way in because if you just study those stories, you are going to be good. We, I am afraid, had studied nothing but we had age on our side. And so many teams ended up competing that the quiz went on longer than the questions that had been devised and so the last round or two had to be general Canon. And there of course our old age helped because we had been reading it longer than any of these younger people. So, yes, we ended up the champion of that and we were given a certificate that had a toilet seat drawn on it.

HERZOG: That's right because it was Pshaw Bowl. Ba-doom-boom! Oh, other stuff, so much stuff. Oh, I know one line and I'm sorry, this is ASH rather than BSI, but the Shaw Pittsburgh thing I was at, I was on a panel group of, kind of the care and feeding of scions.

RICE: This was an early Shaw thing so I'm saying around eighty or so.

HERZOG: It was May of 1980; that I found a date for. Very nice and scions do vary so much in style even when one, as in New York here, they have often a lot of the same people go to a number of scions. But they are –

RICE: They are all really different.

HERZOG: They are all really different. It's hard to put your finger on it. So there are the scholarly ones and there are silly ones. All have a mixture of things and, anyway, when it got time for ASH, I allowed as how ASH was born to boogie. And I–

RICE: Brought down the house.

HERZOG: And I think it's still true.

RICE: Yes. I think it's still true too. And now we have a song by that name. (Editor's Note: composed by Mickey Fromkin.)

HERZOG: That's right. Maybe the BSI boogies more, certainly more than it did in the 1970s.

RICE: Yes, I agree.

HERZOG: And that was during the end of Julian's tenure and I can understand this because I'm getting tired too. As he got tired, I think the reports on the dinners got less good. So the fact is that while ASH was starting to have its January's dinners, we were young and full of beans, phenomenally full of energy. So ours were wonderful at a time when theirs were less good so that certainly gave us a leg up. But ultimately it was good for the BSI as well, if you really take the long view because eventually we became them.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: And the energy got shared around.

RICE: If it hadn't been for ASH, we may not have lasted.

HERZOG: That's so.

RICE: So we wouldn't lose focus.

HERZOG: That's right. If they were trailing off and there wasn't another group of people available.

RICE: And they already had so many things that they had to do, probably the most difficult of which was the reports from all the scions, which I remember hearing lots of complaints about in those days.

HERZOG: Ah!

RICE: And we had no things at all that were our traditions. We could just make it up. Or I should say, you could just make it up and you did. And so it was fun from the beginning. We didn't have to have any boring things.

HERZOG: That's right. That's right. And while we are now down to a set form, still, the people are really good about volunteering and I think that's true now of the BSI. I don't know how much they get volunteered but they are really working with an enormous group of really clever people.

RICE: Right.

HERZOG: Some of whom are also us. (Rice laughs) So I still say they, because it's too long not to—but I am a BSI member.

RICE: That's true.

HERZOG: And I like it.

RICE: We should sometime get together all of the old ASH; the ones that went through all the "you are not wanted" years, just to see how we felt in those days and how we reacted to it and what kept us coming because that would be an interesting report too. Anything else? Now we are allowed to add if we can close this off and open it up again. But does anything else occur to you that we haven't covered?

HERZOG: Yeah. My brain evidently shuts down while I'm talking, interestingly enough (Rice laughs) and nor can I even read the notes on the thing in front of me; I just see ink there. (Rice laughs).

RICE: Yes. Well, we will end now.

HERZOG: Okay.

RICE: But we can bring it up again if something else pops into Evy's mind. Thank you for your attention.

HERZOG: Thank you Susan.

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