



# Pink 'Un



Editor, Program Cochair, Webmaster: **Phil Dematteis**, 1817 Belmont Drive, Columbia SC 29206-2813; [hansomwheels@aol.com](mailto:hansomwheels@aol.com)

Program Cochair: **Diane Bodie**; [dwbodie@gmail.com](mailto:dwbodie@gmail.com)

Secretary (for change of address or phone number): **Myrtle Robinson**; [mtr@lindau.net](mailto:mtr@lindau.net)

Spokesman Emeritus: **Cap'n Billy Rawl**; (803) 739-8951

Follow us on **Tom Elmore's** Hansom Wheels Facebook Page

**The Hansom Wheels Website** (which includes *The Pink 'Un*) is at [www.hansomwheels.com](http://www.hansomwheels.com)

---

Volume 42, No. 2, April 2018

---

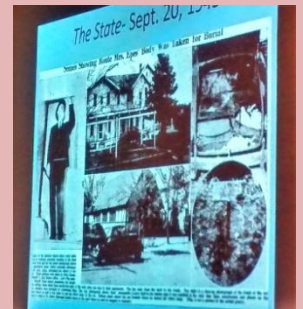
## I Find It Recorded in My Notebook . . .

We had a good turnout for the February meeting of the Hansom Wheels: twenty-five people! After dinner, I blew the Blue Kazoo to get everybody's attention and announced that the game was afoot; we toasted *the* woman, Irene Adler; and **Tim Robinson** led us in the Musgrave Ritual.

Next up were the Happy Hour Posers, in which the task is to dope out the titles of adventures from a set of clues. They were pretty straightforward this time, and I think most people got them: 1. Evel Knievel = "The Solitary Cyclist." 2. Martin Shkreli = "The Crooked Man," the Assigned Story of the evening (Shkreli was convicted of running a Ponzi scheme with some hedge funds he owned; he also started a pharmaceutical company, bought the drug Daraprim—used to treat toxoplasmosis, HIV, some cancers, and malaria—that another company had invented, and jacked up the price 5,000 percent). 3. Mr. Scratch's 30.48 centimeters = "The Devil's Foot." 4. Groucho, Harpo, Chico, and Zeppo say "Good night!" and go off the air = the sign-off of the four = *The Sign of the Four* (the four Marx Brothers never really had a radio or television show, although all of them but Zeppo appeared on both radio and TV, and, of course, Groucho was the host of *You Bet Your Life* for many years in both media).

The Featured Presentation was a fascinating talk by **Dr. Fritz Hamer**, curator of the Published Materials Division (Books) at the South Caroliniana Library, on a sensational murder case that took place in Columbia in 1945. I had billed it as "Murder at Fort Jackson" in the February issue of *The Pink 'Un* and had very cleverly assigned "The Crooked Man," which concerns a (supposed) murder at an army base as the story for the meeting, but we learned that the crime actually took place in a private home off the

base. Lt. Samuel C. Epes, heir to a Richmond, Virginia, industrial fortune, was convicted of killing his bride of a few months, Mary Lee, by feeding her painkillers and then burying her in a shallow grave near the fort. Epes was supposedly having an affair with another woman. He claimed that his wife had accidentally overdosed, and that he buried her in a panic because he was afraid that he would be accused of her murder. Turns out he was right! State Senator Edgar A. Brown, a member of the notorious "Barnwell Ring," was involved in the case, and Epes was eventually released. One thing that impressed me was that in a list of statistics about Columbia in 1945, Dr. **Hamer** mentioned that there were a certain number (I thought he said "1,000," but that must be wishful thinking on my part) of "registered prostitutes" in the city. Sounds like Nevada with the Mustang Ranch and all!



**Dr. Fritz Hamer and one of his slides**

**Krys Elmore** concluded the meeting by reading the Sacred Sonnet, "221B," and we all hugged each other goodbye.

Not really.

## For April: Horrors and Comics!

The Hansom Wheels will meet at **7:00 P.M. Thursday, April 19**, at **The Palmetto Club, 1231 Sumter Street**. The price for dinner will be **\$27.00** per person. The Featured Presentation will be a talk by **Myrtle Robinson**, "The Conan Doyle Horrors," which was written and originally delivered in February 2003 by our former program director, the late **Bob Robinson**, who argued that many horror movies, and one comic strip, were inspired by stories written by Dr. Watson's literary agent, Arthur Conan Doyle. Unlike the first time it was delivered, the talk will be illustrated with PowerPoint slides (prepared

by **your Editor**), because . . . well, because we *can*. The Assigned Story will be the only Sherlock Holmes adventure mentioned in the talk: "The Creeping Man," which we last read for that selfsame February 2003 meeting. Please make **reservations** with **your Editor** by phone at **(803) 787-2219** (leave a message if I don't answer, which I probably won't); by email at [hansomwheels@aol.com](mailto:hansomwheels@aol.com); or just **click "Reply"** on the email to which this newsletter is attached **as soon as possible**, but **no later than Thursday, April 12**, so we can give the Palmetto Club an accurate count by the 13th. See you there!

## Happy Hour Posers (Name the Adventures)!

1. How did the “Born to Run” singer come into possession of a hair-care device that once belonged to the one who sang through a megaphone?
2. Sam Spade told his secretary, “Effie, I’ll be out of the office tomorrow because I have to decorate Easter eggs for my nephews and nieces.”
3. Popeye ran aground on some rocks and smashed in the front of his boat again. He declared, “That does it! I yam what I yam, and I isn’t havin’ that thing fixed anymore!”
4. Gregor Samsa.

Note: The article below is not related to “The Creeping Man.” I just felt like running it.—Editor

### Taking the Heat in Victorian England

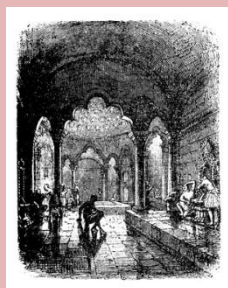


By Liese Sherwood-Fabre, Ph.D.

In the “Adventure of the Illustrious Client,” Watson notes that he and Holmes both enjoyed Turkish baths, and the relaxation Holmes found in the routine made him more open than in other environments. Holmes’s affection for the bath, however, seems to have developed later than Watson’s because Holmes had questioned the need for such a bath (over one at home) at the beginning of “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.” Watson’s defense of his preference was that the bath’s dry heat offered an “alternative in medicine” to treat his rheumatic feelings.

By 1902 (when Sir James Damery had arranged for a meeting with the great detective) Watson reported the bath on Northumberland Avenue was their favorite. Interestingly, the Charing Cross Turkish Baths did truly exist on Northumberland Avenue, just minutes away from 221B.<sup>1</sup>

The popularity of Victorian Turkish baths was already waning by the time Watson and Holmes relaxed in the Charing Cross drying room. Their sudden rise in the mid-1800s resulted from two enthusiasts who had read David Urquart’s 1850 book *The Pillars of Hercules*. Urquart described the Hammam (Turkish bath) in detail, and sparked the interest of Dr. Richard Barter and Charles Bartholomew. Barter remodeled a vapor bath in Blarney, Ireland and Bartholomew asked Urquart to design help him design another bath in Blarney and then used that design to open a chain of baths across England.<sup>2</sup>



The bath was designed with a series of pools and rooms, each with a specific function. After the man (and in some cases, women had separate facilities in the same building) had paid the entrance fee, they left their shoes and belongings in lockers and then disrobed, wrapping a towel about the waist and the shoulders. They then passed through a series of three rooms, each one hotter than the last. The dry heat, which distinguished the Turkish bath from other steam baths, reached a temperature of about 154° F in the last room. After a cold-water plunge, the person lay on a table for a “shampooing.” In this process, a “shampooer” would first massage the muscles, then vigorously scrub the body with camel hair gloves, and finally crack all the joints. Finally, the bather would relax in the cooling-off room.<sup>3</sup>

Early descriptions of the baths’ benefits included cures for all sorts of illnesses, including smallpox, gout, liver troubles, and, as in the case of Dr. Watson, rheumatism. These were all attributed to the release of toxins through the skin and perspiration. The medical community, however, was never able to substantiate such claims, and within thirty years, Bartholomew offered some of his baths for sale as hyped promises of cures never materialized.<sup>4</sup>

At their height, more than 100 Turkish baths operated in London. By 2017, only 12 remained.<sup>5</sup> Holmes and Watson’s preferred bath was turned into a warehouse sometime in the 1900s, but the Charing Cross Bath at 25 Northumberland Avenue has recently been resurrected as a Thai spa.<sup>6</sup> The dry-hot bath has been replaced with steam rooms, and the shampooing with a Thai massage. While Holmes and Watson might not recognize the treatment, they would most certainly appreciate the relaxation offered at the present facility.

1. Leslie Katz, “Plunging into ‘the full tide of human existence’: The Charing Cross Neighbourhood in the Sherlock Holmes Adventures,” February 19, 2017: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2436060>.

2. Peter Kandela (2000). The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Bath in Victorian England. *International Journal of Dermatology*, 39, 71.

3. Malcolm R. Shifrin, “Victorian Turkish baths,” May 2017: [www.victorianturkishbath.org](http://www.victorianturkishbath.org).

4. Kandela, 73.

5. Shifrin.

6. <https://www.bookyourlifestyle.com/thai-square-spa-101308.html>.