



# The Pink 'Un



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

Seventeen people attended the August 15 meeting of the Hansom Wheels: **Tom and Krys Elmore, Becky and Kevin Lewis, Jamie McCulloch, Pat and Allison McNeely, Manuel Mesa, Myrtle and Linda Robinson, Dr. Ed Salkind, Wayne Scott, Julie Smoak, Hannah Timmons, Nancy Washington, Mary Snead Dematteis (Mrs. Tantalus);** and **your Editor/the Tantalus.** Memo to the rest of you: If you had attended, you could have seen *your* name here, too. I mean, think about it: when do you ever get to see your very own name in print? In an actual publication, not just on the junk mail you get every day? The phone book doesn't come out anymore, and they don't put birth announcements in the newspaper. So it would only be in an article about you being arrested and in your obituary, and you wouldn't see the latter, anyway.

I had forgotten to bring the Gold Kazoo, so after dinner, I made a kazoolike sound with my mouth and announced, "The game is afoot!" Folks grudgingly gave up the interesting conversations in which they were engaged and turned to look at me. We toasted *the* woman, Irene Adler, and **Linda Robinson** led us in the Musgrave Ritual.

Next came the Happy Hour Posers, composed by **yours truly**, which entail figuring out the titles of Adventures from silly clues. Ordinarily one of these is the title of the Assigned Story for the meeting, but this time I threw them a curve (or maybe it was a knuckleball or a slider; no, it couldn't have been a slider, because we were eating at The Palmetto Club, not White Castle): *all* of the Posers were the Assigned Story! 1. The vacationing nun stayed at an Airbnb [this was misspelled in the August *Pink 'Un* as "AirB&B" because I was too lazy to look it up] = "The Veiled Lodger." 2. I tried out for the Los Angeles baseball team but didn't make it = The Failed Dodger. 3. The elderly carpenter had to go to the hospital because he accidentally attached his hand to a board with the compressed-air tool he was using = The Nailed Codger. 4. The NFL commissioner was being followed by the cops = The Tailed Roger.

Under "Any and All Other Unavoidable Scionic

Business," I pleaded with the guests to come up with presentations for future meetings, and **Tom Elmore** pointed out that that very evening would bring the series finale of *Elementary* on CBS. We all had a good cry about that. No, seriously, **Tom** said he thought that Jonny Lee Miller ranked pretty high on the list of TV Sherlock Holmeses since the 1950s, which includes Ronald Howard, Douglas Wilmer, Peter Cushing, Jeremy Brett, and Benedict Cumberbatch. Just about everybody seemed to agree that even a New York-based, twenty-first-century, heavily tattooed Holmes who cavorts with prostitutes and whose Watson is a Chinese woman is better than no Holmes at all.



**Your Editor, aka The Tantalus, declaiming at the August meeting**

The Featured Presentation was **your Editor's** talk, "A Walk down Memory Lane," which consisted of my reading semifictionalized and (what I hoped were) funny passages from old *Pink 'Uns*. I did it only because nobody else had volunteered to do a presentation, but the audience seemed to get a kick out of it. In fact, I have to say in all modesty that they laughed their keisters off. Some of the passages are reproduced on page 2 of this issue for those of you who weren't there, and also so that those who *were* there can relive some of the glory of that night.

**Allison McNeely** read the Sacred Sonnet, "221B," and everyone picked the keisters they had laughed off up off the floor and went home.

I just hope they didn't get them mixed up.

## For October: The Virtual Return of Don Mankowski! (Who?)

The Hansom Wheels will meet at **7:00 p.m., Thursday, October 17, at The Palmetto Club, 1231 Sumter Street.** The price will be **\$27.00 per person.** The Featured Presentation will be "Holmes and the Hound," by **Don Mankowski**, who was our official quizmaster from December 1977 until April 1985, when he moved to Florida to work for NASA. Since he has selfishly refused to drive up from Orlando to deliver it himself, his place will be taken by an impersonator. The Assigned Story will be, of course, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Please make

reservations at **(803) 787-2219**; by email at [hansomwheels@aol.com](mailto:hansomwheels@aol.com); or click "Reply" on the message to which this newsletter is attached **as soon as possible** but **no later than Monday, October 14.** See you there!

**Note:** If you make a reservation and then find that you can't attend after all, *please* call or email and **cancel** as soon as possible. The Palmetto Club charges us for uncanceled reservations! Thank you!

## Happy Hour Posers (Name the Adventure)!

1. A huge pile of athletic equipment
2. I heard the projectiles from the flintlocks whizzing past my head
3. The pallbearer with the big red nose kept dropping the coffin
4. I gave a British banknote to two young boys named William to split between them

### High(or Low)lights from the *Pink 'Un* Excerpts Read by **your Editor/Tantalus** at the August Meeting

Once the crooked drawing for the door prizes was over, it was time for the annual Christmas play. This year it was *The Adventure of the Dying Detective*, adapted by **Bob Robinson** from a true account by Dr. John H. Watson. **Your Editor**, for a change, got a chance to play a role worthy of his talents, instead of the usual bit part as a cab driver or shoeshine boy to which I am usually relegated: I was cast as Watson. While the director, **Al McNeely**, introduced the play, I ducked out to the men's room to apply my makeup, which consisted of a crepe-hair moustache. To my horror, however, I found that the cap of the spirit-gum bottle was stuck tight. Since I was in the opening scene, the play could not start without me. So, while I frantically did everything I could think of to get the cap off the bottle, **McNeely**, having no idea what was going on back in the men's room, had to stall for time until I showed up. After telling the audience the title of the play, listing the cast, and giving a synopsis of the plot, he told a few jokes, sang a couple of songs, did a soft-shoe dance, and went through his entire repertoire of impressions (Humphrey Bogart, Cary Grant, Groucho Marx, Newt Gingrich, O. J. Simpson, Michael Jackson, and Heather Locklear). Having finally gotten the cap off and affixed my moustache, I arrived just in time to see him juggling some objects he had found lying around the dining room—a light bulb, a fire extinguisher, and a brassiere. (February 1996)

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Under the heading of All Other Unavoidable Scionic Business, **Jo Bradford** announced that **Helen Rader** had recently become a grandmother; we all turned around and looked at her, and sure enough, her hair was tied up in a bun, and she was wearing an apron and baking cookies. (June 1995)

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The Featured Presentation of the Evening was **Myrtle Robinson's** biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whom the ignorant masses believe to be the author of the Sherlock Holmes stories but who was, of course, merely Dr. Watson's literary agent.

**Myrtle** was certainly thorough. She began not with Doyle's birth, but long before it: with the molten Earth spinning off from the Sun and cooling to a solid state, life forming in the seas, the early organisms crawling onto the land, the age of the dinosaurs, the advance and retreat of the glaciers, and the evolution of man from an apelike creature (or, so as not to offend anybody, the creation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden). Skipping over the Roman Empire and the Crusades, she finally arrived at Doyle's grandparents and parents and his birth in Edinburgh on May 22, 1859. He was named "Sir" after the character Sidney Poitier played in the movie *To Sir, with Love*; "Arthur" after "King" Arthur Eppes, the singer who sounds just like Nat "King" Cole; and "Doyle" after Jimmy "Popeye" Doyle, played by Gene Hackman in *The French Connection*. He was sent to Stonyhurst boarding school, where the students were whipped forty times a day with a thick leather strap and given a tablespoonful of rancid porridge every two weeks. He studied medicine at Edinburgh University under Sherlock Holmes, whom he later used as the model for his character "Dr. Joseph Bell." He set himself up in practice in Southsea; being too poor to afford a shingle, he hung out his little brother, Innes. He got married and had a bunch of children but no patients. So he decided to support his family by becoming a writer and dashed off a novel called *A Study in Scarlet*. It was never published, but his friend, Dr. Watson, used the title for a true account of a case solved by Doyle's former teacher, Sherlock Holmes.

A dinner with the editor of *Lippincott's Magazine* at which Oscar Wilde was also present resulted in Wilde writing *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Doyle writing *The Sign of Four*, and Wilde putting his hand on Doyle's knee. *The Sign of Four* was rejected for publication, but once again, Watson borrowed the title and had a success with it.

On a vacation, Doyle introduced skiing, watchmaking, chocolate, and the numbered bank account to Switzerland. He also visited the Reichenbach Falls and wrote to his mother, whom he called "the Mom," that he wanted to push his old teacher, Sherlock Holmes, into it; but she put her foot down.

Doyle did many more things in an eventful life, which, because he was a Spiritualist, did not even end with his death; but I don't have the space to go into them. (August 1990)

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There was no meeting in June, but here is what might have happened had there been one:

Spokesman **Cap'n Billy Rawl** called the meeting to order by announcing, "The game is afoot." **Al McNeely**, who was playing cards with his wife, **Pat**, and **Joe** and **Margie Plyler**, objected: "The game is *not* Afoot. The game is Texas Hold'em." (August 2007)

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Under Avoidable Scionic Business: 1. **Margaret Hoffman** passed around a sheet of British postage stamps that have pictures of Sherlock Holmes on them. **Joe Plyler** took umbrage at this: "I thought you had to be dead to get your picture on a stamp. Sherlock Holmes isn't dead!" But it was pointed out that Queen Elizabeth II is on British stamps, too, and everyone except Price Philip thinks *she's* still alive. 2. **Bob Robinson** announced that his wife, **Myrtle**, was named *the* Woman at the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) meeting in New York in January. **Myrtle** told us about all the honors that were heaped upon her: a limousine picked her up, a toast was drunk to her, she was given a corsage and a pendant, and she was allowed to pick any member of the BSI to be her love slave for the night. (April 1995)

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Because too many people (including **your Editor**) were out of town, the Hansom Wheels did not meet at the New Orleans Riverfront Restaurant on June 18. Zero people attended. **Cap'n Billy Rawl** did not announce that the game was afoot, we did not toast *the* woman, and **nobody** led us in the Musgrave Ritual. (September 2009)