



Pink 'Un



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I Find It Recorded in My Notebook . . .

In February we did something a little different: we met on a Tuesday (the 18th, to be exact) instead of a Thursday, and we met at the South Carolina State Museum instead of the Palmetto Club. The reason was The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes, running at the museum from January to April of this year—an event that it would have been a disgrace—a *disgrace*, I tell you!—for us, Columbia's only Sherlock Holmes society, not to have taken advantage of. And we met on Tuesday because that is the one day of the week that the museum is open until 8:00 p.m. instead of closing at 5:00. Now, we *could* have met on Thursday evening and had the whole place to ourselves; but the cost would have been astronomical. So we compromised, and everything worked out fine.

In attendance were **Myrtle Robinson** and her grandson **Tom Cranford**, **Twyla Tuten** and **Monte Steedly**, **Loretta Winburn**, **Nancy Washington**, **Wayne Scott**, **Kevin** and **Becky Lewis**, **Stan** and **Barbara Bugner**, **Julie Smoak**, **Hannah Timmons**, **Manuel Mesa**, **Carl** and **Elaine Johnson**, **Carlina de la Cova**, **David** and **Carol Belding**, **Ruth Flackstrom**, **Michaela Bishop**, **Mary Dematteis**, and **your Editor**.

Dinner wasn't exactly the fancy repast we are accustomed to at the Palmetto Club; instead, we had box lunches prepared by the museum's Crescent Café and consisting of a sandwich, fruit cup or chips, a cookie, and a beverage (bottled water, Coke®, or Diet Coke®). We could have had a cash bar for alcohol, but by museum policy that would have meant shelling out an extra \$135 to pay for deputies from the Richland County Sheriff's Department to stand guard in case we got drunk and disorderly. (The joke is on them, because we can get pretty disorderly without being drunk!)

After we ate, we toasted *the* woman, Irene Adler, and **Twyla Tuten** led us in the Musgrave Ritual. Under the heading of "All other Unavoidable Scionic Business," **Michaela Bishop** asked me to explain the purpose of our club, since she had never been to a meeting before. That stumped me for a minute. What *is* the purpose of The Hansom Wheels, anyway? Why do we bother? What is the point? Then I began to generalize that observation: What is the point of *anything*, when it comes down to it? We are tiny little specks creeping around on a planet that is itself no more than a mote of dust in an incomprehensively vast universe; in a few billion years our sun will become a

supernova, and all life on Earth will be wiped out, along with all of our recorded history, scientific discoveries, and works of art. I was just on the verge of taking out my Swiss Army knife and slitting my wrists in despair, but I snapped out of it and told her that we read the stories, solve Happy Hour Posers, have presentations that include "scholarly" papers and parodies and pastiches of Holmes stories by our members and talks by guest speakers such as real-life detectives and forensics experts, and put on stage and "radio" plays. She said that all sounded very interesting. I doubt we'll ever see *her* again.



Julie Smoak, **Carlina de la Cova**, your Editor, and **Myrtle Robinson** outside the elevator door leading to the exhibition (photo by Kelsie Crocker)

Carlina de la Cova read the Sacred Sonnet, "221B," and we went out past the display of artifacts from the Robert Downey Jr. movies, got on the elevator, and rode upstairs to the exhibition. It was really something! When you went in you got a little notebook that led you around the vast room to various stations where you could investigate poisonous plants, blood spatter (**note: not "splatter"**), ballistics, footprints and drag marks in sand by the "Thames," broken busts of Napoleon, and other stuff; at each point you would put a stamp or a rubbing or punch a hole in a page of the notebook, and at the end of it, you would have solved a double murder and attempted suicide. Many of our members tried it, but I didn't; I just wandered around and soaked up the atmosphere. I was especially impressed by the re-creation of Holmes and Watson's sitting room at 221B, complete with the unanswered correspondence stuck to the mantle with a jackknife, the tobacco in the Persian slipper, the cigars in the coal scuttle, the wax dummy of Holmes in front of the window, the violin, the bearskin rug, Henry Baker's battered hat, and so on and so on. Pictures can be found on page 2.

For April: Zero, Zip, Zilch, Nada, Bubkes (i.e., Nothing)!

Thanks to the coronavirus, **The Hansom Wheels** will *not* meet at **7:00 p.m., Thursday, April 16**, at **The Palmetto Club, 1231 Sumter Street**. The price will *not* be **\$27.00 per person**. Please *do not* make **reservations** at **(803) 787-2219**; by email at hansomwheels@aol.com; or

click "Reply" on the message to which this newsletter is attached. Please *do* stay home, keep six feet between you and other people if you have to go out, wash your hands, don't touch your face, and for God's sake, stay safe! Maybe we'll be able to get together again in August!

