



The Pink 'Un



Editor, Webmaster, Tantalus, Program Chair: **Phil Dematteis**, 1817 Belmont Drive, Columbia SC 29206-2813; hansomwheels@aol.com

Palmetto Club Liaisons: **George and Sarah Linder**

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The Hansom Wheels Website (which includes *The Pink 'Un*): <http://www.hansomwheels.com>

“When you see a man with whiskers of that cut and the ‘**Pink 'Un**’ protruding out of his pocket, you can always draw him by a bet”—
Sherlock Holmes, “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”

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I Find It Recorded in My Notebook . . .

The February meeting of the Hansom Wheels was held at The Palmetto Club on the 20th with eighteen in attendance: **George and Sarah Linder, Kevin and Becky Lewis, Julie Smoak, Wayne Scott, Ashby and Joann Morton, Richard Blenko, Jamie McCulloch, Tom Elmore, Pat McNeely, Joyce Crout, Kelly Weber, Monte Steedley, Joe Long, Mary Dematteis**, and me, **Phil Dematteis**, aka **The Tantalus**.

After dinner, I announced that the game was afoot; we toasted *the* woman, Irene Adler; and **Kelly Weber** led us in the responsive reading of The Musgrave Ritual.

Next up were the Happy Hour Posers, in which the goal is to dope out the titles of Holmes adventures from dopey clues in the form of puns: 1. Several British country-estate owners stood around at the entrance to the property of one of them cracking clever and grimly humorous jokes = the wry gate squires = “The Reigate Squires.” 2. I had a dream in which a nasty, pus-filled sore on my foot could talk and told me how sad it felt = “The Blue Carbuncle.” 3. If the doctor played on TV by Hugh Laurie (and based on Sherlock Holmes) had a brother whose first and middle names were Matthew Thomas, that guy would be . . . = M. T. House = “The Empty House” (the Assigned Story of the evening). 4. The tech guy from Best Buy came to my house and explained to me the meanings of the keys on my computer = the Geek interpreter = “The Greek Interpreter.”

After the groans from the audience had subsided, it was time for the Featured Presentation of the evening: **Joe Long's** disquisition on the martial art of Bartitsu, which, Holmes tells Watson—after reappearing in 1894 from his three-year absence, during which he was thought to be dead—he employed to sidestep Professor Moriarty's attempt to throw him into the Reichenbach Falls and send the evil professor into the abyss instead. In relating this conversation to the reader in “The Adventure of the Empty House,” Watson lowercases the name of the

technique (which is incorrect, because it is based on the name of its inventor, Edward William Barton-Wright) and misspells it by leaving out the first “t,” resulting in “baritsu.” Sometimes I think Watson really was as dumb as he was portrayed by Nigel Bruce in the old Basil Rathbone movies.

Anyway, **Joe** gave an excellent talk. It was, however, marred a bit at the outset when he repeated the old canard about Arthur Conan Doyle “killing Holmes off” in “The Final Problem” in 1893 and “bringing him back to life” in “The Empty House” in 1903. But we forgave him, because, although **Joe** is an expert on many subjects, he is not a Sherlockian, and therefore he doesn't know that Holmes was a real person, the stories are true and were written by Watson (except for two by Holmes himself and two by an anonymous third-person author), and Doyle was merely Watson's literary agent. Everything was fine after that, as he explained that Barton-Wright, who had lived in Japan for several years, combined aspects of boxing, jujitsu, judo, cane fighting, and French kickboxing (*savate*) to create Bartitsu in the late 1890s. He noted that it was a perfect form of self-defense for a rational thinker such as Holmes because it allows one to systematically defend oneself by using an assailant's own strength and movements against him. **Joe** had an umbrella from which he pulled out the shaft, which then formed a cane (I wondered whether there was a sword concealed inside the cane, but if so, it was never revealed) and showed us a few ways to use it to defend against an adversary by hitting him on the head or sticking it between his legs and tripping him up. We ended, as always, with a group reading of Vincent Starrett's Sacred Sonnet, “221B,” and went home to practice what we had seen. Unfortunately, our umbrellas don't have detachable shafts, like **Joe's**, so we wrecked them, and now we get wet whenever we go out in the rain.

For April: A Rollicking Yarn by The Tantalus!

The Hansom Wheels will meet at **7:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, April 17**, at **The Palmetto Club**, 1231 Sumter Street. The Featured Presentation will be **Your Editor's** original story, “The Adventure of the Invidious Lists”—with illustrations! **Trigger warnings:** mild profanity, brief nudity, alcohol and tobacco use, literary criticism. The Assigned Reading is “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box.” The price for dinner will be **\$40.00** per person; adult beverages will be available for purchase. If you have not already made reservation(s), please do so at

hansomwheels@aol.com by **12:00 noon on Monday, April 14**. If you want to add anyone to your party after you reserve, please email that same address. If you have made a reservation, **the deadline to cancel is also noon on the 14th**. We will be charged for all the meals we have ordered by that time, whether they are eaten or not; so if you cancel after the deadline or just don't show up, we will be forced to ask you to fork over the moolah anyway, so that we are not left holding the bag. See you there!

Happy Hour Posers (Name the Adventures):

1. Sherlock Holmes at Simpson's-in-the Strand.
2. He swears that he will never get another dog after this one.
3. Ringo Starr had several life-size cellulose-fiber cutouts made of his wife.
4. You need to use caution at this part of the cycle.

Photos from the Meeting

Courtesy of **Richard Blenko** and **Mary Dematteis**

(We didn't get **Sarah Linder** or **Ashby Morton**. Sorry about that!)



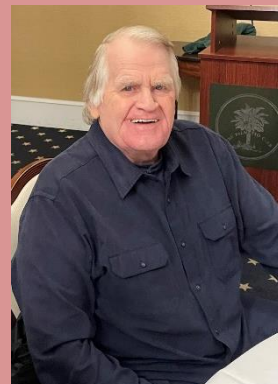
Joann Morton



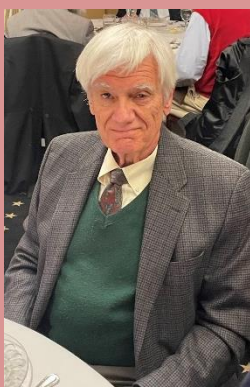
Jamie McCulloch



Julie Smoak



Wayne Scott



**Phil Dematteis, aka
The Tantalus**



George Linder



Monte Steedley



Kevin Lewis



**Richard Blenko with Kelly
Weber, Pat McNeely, and
Joyce Crout**



**Richard with Mary Dematteis,
aka Mrs. Tantalus**



**Richard with Becky Lewis
(why is he in all these
pictures with women?)**



Tom Elmore



Guest speaker **Joe Long** demonstrates the Bartitsu
technique for tripping oneself with a cane