



# The Pink 'Un



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

**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 2024 Hansom Wheels Christmas Party was held at The Palmetto Club on December 5 with twenty-three members and guests in attendance: **George and Sarah Linder, Kevin and Becky Lewis, Julie Smoak, Wayne Scott, Carl and Elaine Johnson, Myrtle Robinson, Robert and Will Cranford, Mark McGill, Ashby and Joann Morton, Richard Blenko, Jamie McCulloch, Austin Keefer, Pat and Allison McNeely, Joyce Crout, Nadia Eileen Mostafa, 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 we did the responsive reading of *The Musgrave Ritual*.

As a bit of Christmas music played over the PA system, courtesy of **George Linder's** laptop, the Hansom Players got into their costumes and gathered up the props for the Christmas play: *The Lauriston Gardens Mystery*, by **Bob Robinson**, adapted from the London portions of *A Study in Scarlet*, by John H. Watson (the Utah portions are by an anonymous author; possibly Watson's literary agent, that guy Doyle). The cast, in order of appearance, comprised **Phil Dematteis** as Sherlock Holmes, **Richard Blenko** as Dr. John H. Watson, **Robert Cranford** as Commissionaire Peterson, **George Linder** as Inspector Tobias Gregson, **Carl Johnson** as Inspector G. Lestrade,

**Will Cranford** as Enoch J. Drebber (deceased), **Robert Cranford** again as Constable John Rance, **Elaine Johnson** as Jefferson Hope's confederate “Mrs. Sawyer,” **Will Cranford** again as street urchin/Baker Street Irregular Wiggins, and **Wayne Scott** as Jefferson Hope. It was directed by **Allison McNeely**, who did all she could to whip us into shape during the rehearsals—actually, *rehearsal* singular, since we only had one. **Richard Blenko**, who couldn't make it down from his home in West Virginia in time, didn't even have *that* and was practically cold-reading the script, but you wouldn't know it from his performance.

The penultimate event of the evening was the drawing for door prizes, which we had postponed until this point to make sure everybody stayed through the play. As has been the case for the last several years, these were supplied by **Richard Blenko**, who always goes all out to provide basketsful of sumptuous gifts, including books, food, knickknacks, and God knows what all. And there were no losers, because he brought enough for everybody!

We ended, as always, with a group reading of Vincent Starrett's Sacred Sonnet, “221B,” and went home to sit up and await the arrival of jolly old Saint Nick, who, unfortunately, wouldn't get there for another nineteen days.

Exactly two weeks after the Christmas Party—on December 19, 2024—we lost one of our longtime members with the death of **Bernard Manning** at the age of ninety-nine. **Bernard** (pronounced “BER-nerd,” like George Bernard Shaw) had an aristocratic demeanor but a good sense of humor and was always ready to join the other actors embarrassing ourselves in the Christmas plays. In fact, I looked back at old *Pink 'Uns*, starting with issue number 1 (June 1977), and the first mention I found of **Bernard** (which doesn't mean that he wasn't also present at earlier meetings) was when he acted in *The Devil's Foot* at the 1981 Christmas Party. He and his late wife, **Betty**, were mainstays of our group for many years, and we miss both of them. Our condolences to their daughter, **Elizabeth**, and the rest of their family.

## For February: Bartitsu!

The Hansom Wheels will meet at **7:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, February 20**, at **The Palmetto Club**, 1231 Sumter Street. The Featured Presentation will be **Joe Long's** discussion of Bartitsu, the martial art that, Holmes tells Watson in “The Adventure of the Empty House,” he used to throw Moriarty into the Reichenbach Falls. (Watson misspells it as “baritsu,” lowercasing it and—possibly fearing the wrath of the censors—leaving out the first “t”). The Assigned Reading, obviously, is the aforementioned “Empty House.” The price for dinner will be **\$40.00** per person; adult beverages will be available. If

you have not already made your reservation(s), please email me at [hansomwheels@aol.com](mailto:hansomwheels@aol.com) by **12:00 noon on Monday, February 17**. If you want to add anyone after you reserve, please email that same address. If you have made a reservation, **the deadline to cancel is also noon on the 17th**. 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 regretfully be forced ask you humbly for \$40.00 (\$80.00 for a couple) anyway, since we are not made out of money. Thanks, and see you there!

## Happy Hour Posers (Name the Adventures):

1. Several British country-estate owners stood around at the entrance to the property of one of them, cracking clever and grimly humorous jokes.
2. I had a dream in which a nasty, pus-filled sore on my foot could talk and told me how sad it felt.
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 ...
4. The tech guy from Best Buy came to my house and explained to me the meanings of the keys on my computer.

## Photos from the Christmas Party

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

We didn't get pictures of everybody this time, but that's all the more reason for you to come to the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> so we can get another shot at you! **Note:** This is the first-ever three-page issue of *The Pink 'Un*, so keep scrolling until you get to the end!



**Kevin and Becky Lewis**



**Carl and Elaine Johnson**



**George Linder**



**Jamie McCulloch**



**Ashby Morton**



**Richard Blenko**



**Myrtle Robinson and Mark McGill**



**Pat McNeely**



**Austin Keefer**



**Nadia Eileen Mostafa**



**Mary Dematteis**



**Will Cranford**



Director **Allison McNeely** introduces the play, *The Lauriston Gardens Mystery*



Commissionaire Peterson (**Robert Cranford**) delivers a message to Watson (**Richard Blenko**) and Holmes (**Phil Dematteis**)



Inspectors Gregson (**George Linder**) and Lestrade (**Carl Johnson**) stare helplessly at the body of Enoch J. Drebber (**Will Cranford**) as Holmes and Watson lurk outside the door



Holmes inspects the body as Watson looks on



“Mrs. Sawyer” (**Elaine Johnson**) comes to Baker Street to retrieve Jefferson Hope’s ring



Lestrade and Holmes question Jefferson Hope (**Wayne Scott**) as Watson (blocked from view by Holmes) looks on)



Holmes perishes in an atomic-bomb blast set off by Professor Moriarty, who has invented a time machine, gone into the future, seen that Holmes will one day throw him into the Reichenbach Falls, and come back to eliminate the detective before that can happen



The cast takes a bow to thunderous applause. Left to right: **Robert Cranford, Will Cranford, Wayne Scott, Carl Johnson, Elaine Johnson, Richard Blenko, Phil Dematteis, and George Linder**