

# The Tweet Sheet



The occasional newsletter of The Notorious Canary-Trainers of Madison, Wisconsin  
A Scion of the Baker Street Irregulars • [communities.madison.com/canary](http://communities.madison.com/canary)

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## FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES

*(Note: The following was contracted by a representative of the Notorious Canary-Trainers and published under the above headline in the Friday, Jan. 2, 2009, edition of The Sussex Express, a newspaper located in Lewes, East Sussex, England.)*

**D**ear Mr. Holmes: Greetings of the season from the Notorious Canary-Trainers of Madison, Wisconsin, USA! And a happy 2009 and 155<sup>th</sup> birthday as Jan. 6 approaches.

We are publishing this communication in the Sussex Express because your mailing address appears known, for understandable reasons, only to a small circle of your acquaintances.

This is the first time our group, which will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of existence this April, has attempted to make our humble organization known to you. What follows is an annual report of sorts which we hope you will find of at least some interest.

We are and remain faithful students of your methods and accomplishments as they have been handed down to us. We meet year-round to focus monthly on a single case of yours which we have read in advance. We then gather to share the fruits of whatever individual research we have undertaken or have come across in our travels.

We continue to attract fans of yours, each year welcoming several newcomers to our midst who wish to expand the pleasure which comes in knowing more about you and your work.

We began 2008 with our eighth annual celebration of your birthday anniversary, a dinner on Jan. 6 at a local establishment officially called J. T. Whitney's, a brewpub. We choose to rename it for that one day a year The Criterion Bar for the key role it played in your meeting Dr. John Watson and, through him, our meeting you.

We continue to meet the third Sunday of every month from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. except for January and, in 2008, February due to heavy snows that day (a rare cancellation). We also met on the second Sunday of December this past year to avoid conflict with our individual Christmas plans.

**A**ll in all, we held 11 events, of which 10 were case studies. In 2008 those cases were the adventures of the Devil's Foot (March), Dancing Men (April), Retired Colourman (May), Charles Augustus Milverton (June), the Six Napoleons (July), (the Problem of) Thor Bridge (August), Priory School (September), Shoscombe Old Place (October), the Three Garridebs (November), and the Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax (December). Attendance totaled 144 for an average of about 13.

Our discussion leader for these monthly gatherings for some years has been Thom Boykoff, also known within our group as Godfrey Norton, Esq. He is one of 16 in our group who has chosen what we call a Canonical name taken from some character, event, place, or object mentioned in the 60 case accounts of yours published with the assistance of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

We also occasionally issue a newsletter called "The Tweet Sheet" to record our activities. In addition, we have maintained our own Web presence in the Community Pages at Madison.com since April 2002 and at our nct1969 Yahoo Group (another type of Web site), established July 2, 2001. The former was visited 873 times during 2008 while the latter now has 81 members with a total of 81 messages posted there during the year. (If you are as yet unfamiliar with the Internet and Web, perhaps you have a

technical resource available to you -- we Americans often rely on teenagers in such matters -- who can explain and even demonstrate.)

After several years of meeting at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in the West Towne shopping area - one of the largest bookstores in that national chain - we moved in September to a new regular meeting place, the Booked for Murder bookstore, a locally-owned establishment specializing in mystery novels and non-fiction, because of the welcoming ambiance we found there. (By coincidence, Booked for Murder originally was owned by a founding member of the Notorious Canary-Trainers.)

Finally, we wish to advise that our 2009 observance of your birthday anniversary will again be held at J. T. Whitney's, this year on Saturday, Jan. 10, beginning at 5 p.m. If you are up to the trip, you are invited to be our guest of honor and speaker. You can fly from London to Madison in less than a day and your meal will be provided at no cost. Knowing of the current sour economic conditions around the world, we also will be more than happy to take up a collection among those present to help cover your travel and lodging expenses. We'll save a spot for you, just in case it's a last-minute decision.

Faithfully yours  
*The Notorious Canary-Trainers*

P.S. As our name derives from a brief mention in the Adventure of Black Peter, we would be most interested in any details you might be able to share with us about Wilson and what made him such a notorious canary trainer. You can address any reply to us in care of Booked for Murder, 2701 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705 USA.

P.P.S. There seems to be some disagreement among your faithful followers as to whether you actually were born on January 6, 1854. We'd appreciate any correction if we have the date wrong.



**WE'RE NOW TAKING RESERVATIONS** for our annual Master's Dinner

commemorating Sherlock Holmes' birthday anniversary, to be held at J. T. Whitney's Pub and Brewery on Madison's west side Saturday, January 10, 2009. It starts at 5 p.m. with a social half-hour (or so), then dinner and a program. It's our ninth annual celebration and Sherlock Holmes' 155th birthday!

This event, held each year since 2001, is sponsored by the Notorious Canary-Trainers for its members, friends, and any other interested fans of the Master Detective who wish to attend.

Those who will be attending are invited to join in the traditional toasting to the year past, the year ahead, and all things Sherlockian. Please start thinking about which toast(s) you want to offer.

We'll also feature a display of Sherlockian collectibles that attendees bring from their personal collections. Table space will be provided, as will time on the program for owners to make any comments about the items they've brought.

Send your reservation to Mike McCoy at [mccoymh@chorus.net](mailto:mccoymh@chorus.net), 608/274-1638, or One Hiawatha Circle, Madison, WI 53711.



**HERE'S OUR MEETING SCHEDULE THROUGH JUNE 2009.** All meetings are at Booked for Murder, 2701 University Ave., Madison, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month unless otherwise noted.

February 15: The Illustrious Client; March 15: The Red Circle; April 19: The Blanched Soldier; May 17: The Three Gables; and June 21: The Mazarin Stone.

*To nominate items for publication, send them to Michael H. McCoy at [mikemccoy1852@yahoo.com](mailto:mikemccoy1852@yahoo.com) or One Hiawatha Circle, Madison, WI 53711. This and future editions of this publication will be posted in our Web site archives. For information: Thom Boykoff 608/833-3369 □ Mike McCoy 608/274-1638*