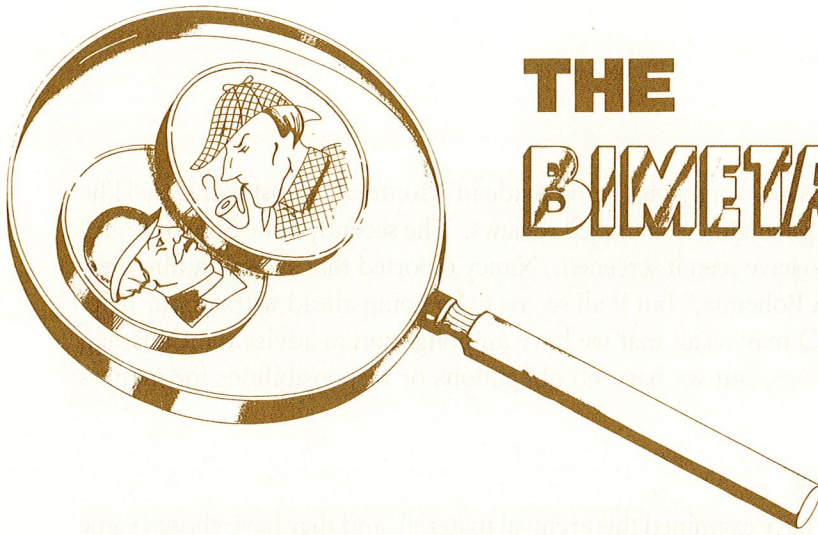


7 JUNE 2001



THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION

Box 883 Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal, Canada H4Z 1K2

The next meeting of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION will held be on Thursday, August 2, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. SHARP at the Westmount Library (Westmount Room), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West, Montréal, Québec. PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO PARKING SIGNS!!!

The NEXT QUIZ will be prepared by JACK ANDERSON based on THE DANCING MEN.

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION held on Thursday, June 7, 2001 at the Westmount Library (Westmount Library), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West, Montréal, Québec.

Present: Jack Anderson, Maureen Anderson, Stanley Baker, Paul Billette, Patrick Campbell, David Dowse, David Kellett, Elliott Newman, Charles Purdon, Lawrence Reich, Nancy Walkling
Regrets: Claude Campbell, Wilfred de Freitas (in UK)
Guests: Canjita Gomes-Fernandes

CALL TO ORDER

David Dowse opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and welcomed those present. David reminded us that all our meetings would be on Thursdays in future, as that is the only evening the library is available. This will, of course, be inconvenient for some members, but we have no choice.

SHOW/TELL

David Kellett brought a fine little bust of Holmes, made by Bosson's-Doubleton in 1984, suitable for wall mounting.

QUIZ

The quiz was held early as Canjita had another appointment, so we started out on an extremely well-produced quiz, Canjita's first, with good clear questions and a very clear marking system. The marking, as usual, raised considerable mirth as the contestants tried to gain points with improbable answers. Canjita handled them well, in a less authoritarian style than some of our recent quiz markings. Well done, Canjita!

The winners of the quiz were Patrick (38/47) Jack (35½) and Nancy (35). The prizes consisted of nice little bottles of Chilean and Portuguese wines and a toothsome bar of Canadian chocolate.

FILMS

There was some general discussion of the recent Sherlockian movies being made in Montréal. Most had seen "The Hound of the Baskervilles," to which our members gave somewhat mixed reviews. The second, "The Sign of Four" is understood to be "in the can," but no one seems to have seen it screened. Nancy reported that she saw a film crew at work in Old Montréal at work on "A Scandal in Bohemia," but it all seems to be going ahead without our help. Those who have read the Constitution of the BMQ may recall that we have an obligation to advise the Canadian Government on matters relating to Sherlock Holmes, but we have no obligations or responsibilities for matters involving the private sector.

THE JONES-LINGARD-KELLY ARCHIVES

David Dowse advised that the Westmount Library have examined this archival material, and they have chosen some of it for general use, open to the public. Maureen Anderson volunteered to design and produce an appropriate bookplate, acknowledging the source of the material. There was some discussion as to whether the material should be offered to other libraries, but the decision was against that course. A suggestion was made that some of it could be sold to members as a "fund raiser," and this seemed to be generally agreeable. A copy of the inventory will be made available to all members, listing the audio and video tapes, and all the books, when the items chosen by the Westmount Library have been deleted. It seems we were never able to devise a convenient method of storing and issuing the material to members. It was also agreed that some items could be distributed as prizes at some future events.

MOUNT PHILO PICNIC/GARDEN PARTY

Charles Purdon agreed that he will take bookings for this event, to be held on June 23 with The Goose Club of the Alpha Inn. Those interested should call Charles at 748-2667, and we will meet at the Westmount Library at 8:00 a.m. All should, of course, send their \$10.00 (US) to Jeanette Pyle. Some will be staying overnight as guests of The Goose Club members. A total of nine members and family have booked so far.

Members had been asked to suggest some form of short entertainment that our society could present at the garden party. Suggestions included the "Silver Blaze" game, another entitled, "The Game is ..." or perhaps a play reading. With some help from Jack and Stanley, we did a reading of "The Field Bazaar" and Elliott and Paul did "Aftermath of Maiwand" in ten minutes flat.

VARIA

We have an open invitation to visit Doug Grove's delightful estate in the Laurentians, but it will need someone to organize the event. David suggested we might schedule a used book sale sometime. Good idea!

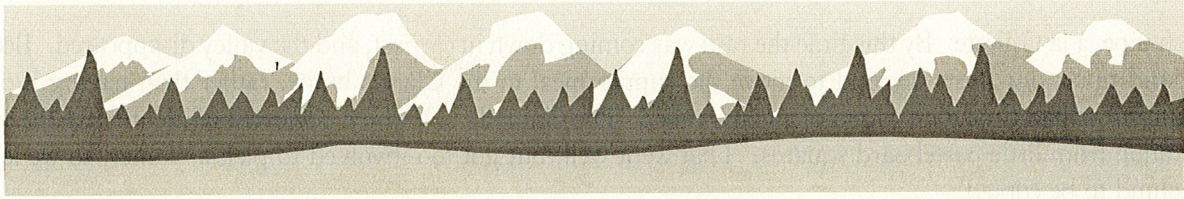
A call was made for volunteers to organize our society for the next two years. There were two volunteers: Elliott Newman said he would help in some position, and Maureen Anderson said that she would take a stab as Secretary. She will contact Claude Campbell to take over, and will bring her trusty laptop to the meetings.

The usual toasts were reduced to one liners, there being no further written toasts provided. Surely someone can pen a few toasts suitable for our next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Campbell / cac



REPORT ON THE GREEN MOUNTAIN SHERLOCKIAN SOCIAL FOR 2001 JUNE 23-24, 2001

Our small but determined group of Bimetallic Questionables set out, at the crack of dawn, down the long road to Burlington, and on, a further fifteen miles south, to the splendid Mount Philo National Park; said to be the oldest national park in Vermont.

This was planned as the first Sherlockian picnic to be arranged by the Goose Club of the Alpha Inn, with invitations sent out to their own members, those of the Breakfast Club of Bennington, the group from Manchester, New Hampshire, known as Cox and Co., and, from Montreal, the members of the Bimetallic Question.

We had left Montreal under a threatening sky, and it was no surprise when we encountered heavy rain along the Richelieu, as we had leaked the news to Professor Moriarty that the event was to take place in Sabrevois. Unfortunately, the rain followed us down. The site chosen for the picnic was the top of Mount Philo, a wonderful eminence that rises abruptly, like a huge sugar loaf, right up into the base of the clouds. Our group consisted of Elliott and Eva Newman, David Dowse (one of our founders), Patrick Campbell, and Paul and Raj Billette ... in reverse alphabetic order for once.

From Bennington we had Sally and Bob Sugarman, and, regrettably, no one from Cox and Co. There was, however, a fine turnout from the host club, Barbara and Bill Wicker, Nancy Walsh, Nancy and Len Tashman (accompanied by a delightful Thurberesque puppy named Mauzy), Sylvia Sprigg, Bob Schultz, Jeanette Pyle, Beatrice and Ron Jordan, Joanne Hurst, Collette Hebert, Sherlock Dumais, Mark Conrad, Lisa, Miranda and David Clark, and last, but not least, Brenda Burchard ... a very good turnout indeed. Imagine if the weather had been fine!

A long winding road circles around the mountain, rising steeply to the picnic areas at the top, where our hosts had taken the precaution of renting a fine chalet, with chairs, tables and some kitchen equipment, and David Clark was soon at work with a barbecue and a toothsome table of snacks was soon in action. All were seated and lunch was served, barbecued chicken breasts, salads, some rather weird hickory-smoked potato chips, olives, pasta, and a selection of cakes and brownies. David brought in some spherical hamburgers and some large calibre sausages, both well-done, and looking more cannonicle than canonical, but more than welcome. All was washed down with some nice Californian white wine and a magnum of one of my favourites, Montepulchiano d'Abruzzo; just saying that makes one thirsty! At each place at table was a menu, and we had to guess which of the Holmesian dishes listed was NOT from the Canon.

Then came the entertainment ... each group had been told to bring along something suitable, and the Montréalers gave a reading of a short radio-play, *Aftermath of Maiwand*, that explains how Watson came to have two wounds. Bill Wicker had a very complex game that involved guessing the name of a tune or a piece of music from some rather obscure clues, then identifying the story in the Canon, then answering a question taken from that story. There were two teams, and an even more complex marking system, which Bill manipulated shamelessly to keep the two teams more-or less even! There were many hilarious moments, and Bill was kind enough to give us a copy to bring back to Montréal. Mark came up with an ingenious game, in which he held up a card with 5 or 6 names, places, events or other items, and we had to decide which of the items was NOT mentioned in the Canon. Of course, he got some passionate arguments and the game was enjoyed by all.

Next, as far as I remember, was a reading of Conan Doyle's curious little tale "The Field Bazaar", with David Dowse, Raj and Elliott doing the reading ... Elliott wearing a scarlet dressing gown, a deerstalker and carrying a

Calabash pipe, à la Gillette. By this time the rain was coming down in earnest, and the valley disappeared. Because of the conditions, our hosts decided to move the supper meal to the Clark's home, rather than having it on the mountain, so we had time for a round of a game called "The Game Is ...", which consisted of identifying the stories of the Canon from little pasteboard squares. That went well, but got too involved to pick a winner, so we left the game behind to be copied.

While all this was going on, Jeanette Pyle was running a huckster's table, with a selection of Sherlockian books and memorabilia. Perhaps this could be expanded a little next year with members bringing along items they have for sale, and perhaps there could be sample copies of the journal of the Goose Club, "The Uncrumpled Morning Paper."

With the food packed up, and all the tables and chairs safely packed away, we said farewell to The Mouse of the Baskervilles, who had enlivened our day, and set off in groups for the Clark residence, very close to the railway, a sort of super Toonerville Trolley, that will come into its own when they rip up Route Seven. Here, while supper was being prepared, Miranda Clark asked us a series of canonical questions with some hilarious results, and Bob Schultz showed us just how much a long time Sherlockian can retain in his memory. I seem to remember that at the Baker Street Irregulars Banquet last January, Bob was commended for attending his first banquet since the one he attended in 1947. That seems quite reasonable to me. Everyone then fell to, and ate and drank everything that hadn't been polished off on Mount Philo. All in all it was a wonderful day, and several of us who accepted invitations to stay the night, wandered off with our respective hosts to exchange final views on what had been an eminently successful occasion. There was some talk of repeating it next year at some location in Northern Vermont, perhaps at Swanton or along the Islands, if a suitable location can be found.

A most sincere thanks to all the people who organized this excellent event and we hope that the results will encourage them to do it again next year. One thing that I remarked with pleasure was that, in the entire day, everyone was having such a pleasant time that none of them made a single mention of the inclement weather. As a last gesture, all those attending were presented with a very nice certificate of achievement.

Thank you Goose Club, thank you for your first Victorian picnic, on behalf of those you entertained so memorably.