

The 2024 BSI Weekend Report

with

BSI Poem 2024 by Albert M. Rosenblatt and Betsy Rosenblatt

The Spring 2024 BSJ will provide a report on BSI Weekend events, including an abridged version of the “BSI Poem 2024” below. For some photos including the newly invested members of the BSI, see our online 2024 report web page via:

<https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/tag/reports/>

BSI Poem 2024

by Albert M. Rosenblatt, BSI, and Betsy Rosenblatt, BSI
recited at the Saturday luncheon



Another year has come ashore
And knocked upon our door –
If anyone is keeping score,
It's Twenty Twenty Four!

And as for Holmes's birthday health:
We calculate that he
Is sound of mind and body at
One hundred seventy.

We're sure his mind is limber
And his body wouldn't stall.
He's following the sporting trend
And playing pickleball!

The year has been a doozy;
We'll supply a partial primer—
From orcas drowning yachts to
The success of Barbenheimer.

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The Britons welcomed Charles the Third
His crown a jeweled chinchilla
And on his arm as consort was
The newest Queen, Camilla.

A spy balloon went wafting by,
We stuck it with a fork.
It floated on an Eastern wind
From China, not Von Bork.

A major entertainment strike—
The first in many years—
Showed jobs had been mishandled like
The thumbs of engineers.

We said farewell to actors, too,
Who graced both screen and stage
We got to spend some time with them,
But now we turn the page.

In nineteen hundred seven eight
A play that was no dud
Had opened at the Helen Hayes:
The Crucifer of Blood.

With Paxton Whitehead as the lead
Endowing Holmes with life
He played the Great Detective well,
The drama rife with strife.

He joined the Birthday Dinner twice
In dignified black tie
And when he read a bit of Holmes
He charmed the BSI.

Another loss has saddened us:
She played on TV's Benson,
A sit-com that gave stardom to
The actress Inga Swenson.

But our affection traces back
To 1965
When Swenson starred in Baker Street
And brought its songs alive.

Fritz Weaver played the Great Detective,
Some will still recall.
And Inga as Irene Adler
Kept us all in thrall.

Last month, we opened up the mail
And found the BSJ.
Imagine our surprise—we thought
We'd never see the day

That Moriarty graced the front.
What outrage will be next?
Will Moriarty change the name
Of Twitter into X?

[sung to the tune of *We Never Mention Aunt Clara*:]
We've always put down Moriarty
His picture was turned to the wall
But he's now on the BSJ cover
And he's gotten one up on us all

We've learned that when it comes to logic,
Sherlock Holmes is keen.
His thinking has been likened to
A reasoning machine.

But now we have machines that learn
And even speechify.
Could Holmes have competition
From a sentient AI?

We've queried Bing and hounded Bard
And asked ChatGPT.
Of Llama-2 we've made requests.
We've even quizzed Dall-E.

We took them on a Midjourney
But all of them declined:
There's no machine that could compete
With Sherlock Holmes's mind!

The great detective has no match;
He runs while others plod.
The reasoning machine is Holmes
And AI is Lestrade.

We also are relieved to give
Some selfish poem news:
An AI won't replace our yearly
doggerel reviews.

We asked AI to write a verse
to see if it was neater.
But nope, it's iffy content and
It's *really* bad at meter:

Query to ChatGPT: "write a stanza about Sherlock Holmes in iambic heptameter"

Response from ChatGPT:

"In Baker Street, where shadows hint the game,
Holmes unravels mysteries, fame his aim.
With piercing wit and pipe held firm and true,
Deductions dance in iambic review."

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Distinguished speaker Gerritsen
Impressed us Thursday night;
Victorian physicians had
Their patients filled with fright.

She told of snatching bodies,
Amputations, shortened lives –
And catalogued the dangers posed
By surgeons' dirty knives.

The best advice that one might give
A patient of that day
Is: "stay away from hospitals
And find some other way."

Last night the BSI convened;
The Yale Club was our host,
Producing waves of merriment
In roast and boast and toast.

The night began with cocktails and
The heroes of the romp were
A friendly open bar and our
The Woman, Pam'la Wampler.

Some 90 years have passed since
First the BSI convened.
Our group has grown but still we keep
The Master's mem'ry greened.

The Constitution and the buy-laws
Solberg said with grace.
He emphasized that monthly meetings
Never would take place.

From Carla Coupe an ode
To Mrs. Hudson made the grade-oh
The truth was inescapable:
Her Head was a Potato.

Latella told us Mycroft Holmes
Was irreplaceable;
Per Holder, Watson's second wife
Would be embraceable.

The toast to Sherlock Holmes from Ludwig
Started pretty weird:
He thought that Holmes would toast himself,
But then he disappeared.

But Ludwig got a note that Holmes
Had given us the slip.
He'd dressed in a disguise so Ludwig
Told Bob Katz to strip.

He said that Holmes had sat with him
At Table Number Three.
The great detective was disguised
As Armstrong or as...me?

Another note said Holmes was hiding
In the party-cus
We wondered: who'd confess to being
Holmes, like Spartacus?

The truth, of course, as Ludwig shared
Is where our friendship starts:
The great detective carries on
And lives within our hearts.

From Pollock, Don, we learned of
Bill S. Hall and history;
And PJ Doyle walked us through
The Musgrave mystery.

When Curtis Armstrong catalogued
The Canon's nemeses-es
He said that some were nothing more
Than penny-ante sleazes.

They're paltry crooks and criminals,
Like gudgeons in the sea
Like Windibank and Spencer John,
Their list is very "B."

His talk regaled us all and made us
Shake our heads in wonder
At how "Negretto Sylvius"
Was quite the naming blunder.

Did Curtis make it up? Of course.
But now we're pretty willin'
To see that boxer Dixie as
Vaudevillian more than villain.

A ninety year dilemma has
Befuddled our array,
So Rothman, Doyle, and Betzner thought
Each side would have its say.

Was Alexander Wolcott just
An interloping guy
Or do we count him as among
Official BSI?

We put it to a plebiscite;
Democracy prevailed—
And when the vote was tallied up,
His membership was hailed.

With Karen Wilson, Alex Katz
Sang out a song of friendship,
Of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson
Fashioning their blendship.

We stood with Pollak on the terrace,
Mourning those we knew.
But joy returned with 14 Shillings;
Penzler garnered two!

Matetsky read from Starret's ode
Before we would depart.
His reading touched the most romantic
Chambers of the heart.

But though the world explode
These two survive to bring us cheer.
We'll say farewell for now, but hope
To see you all next year.

Photo by Ben Vizoskie

Report produced by Randall Stock

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