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What the Well-Dressed Beer is Wearing

BY THOMAS YOUNG (*nom de Plum* Young Thos)

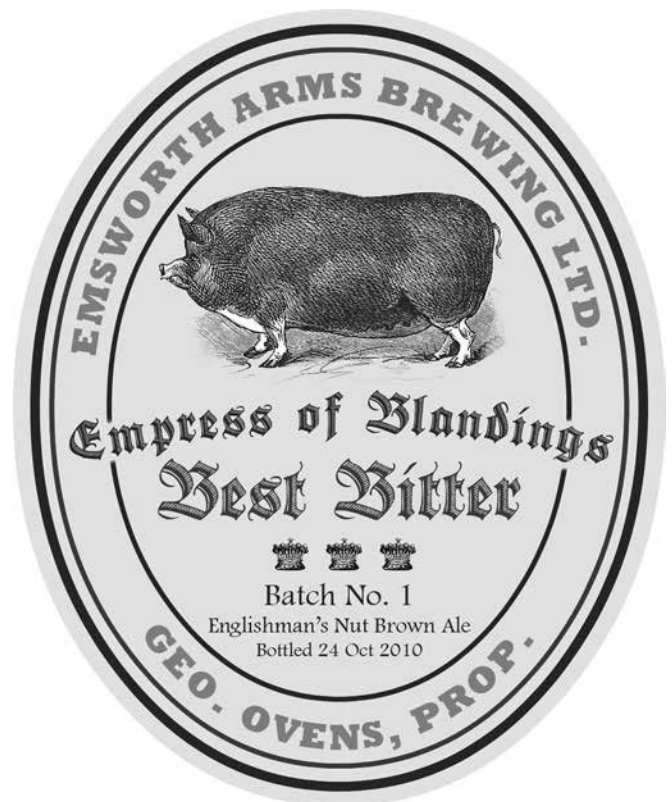
AS THOSE OF YOU who participate in the electronic community of PGWnet are probably aware, a few months ago I caused not a little flurry of activity on the interwebs when I asked the community for feedback on a project upon which I had embarked.

For the finest and purest reasons, I had decided to try my hand at brewing my own beer. Briefly: about a decade ago, I took my first (and thus far only) trip across the pond, spending all of 36 hours in London and environs. While there, I wended my way to a little off-the-path pub outside London, and ordered a pint. I said nothing about what kind of beer I wanted, and the pub keeper, to my relief, did not ask. I was served a delicious, dark golden brown elixir, creamy and malty and with little carbonation. I tried to duplicate that experience but have been unable to find a beer like that in the States. (After extended research and speaking to knowledgeable experts, I have determined that it was, most likely, the local mild or bitter.) So I decided to try to make my own.

As my first beer approached the end of fermentation and the time for bottling, I was struck by a white-hot terror: I needed a name for it! And, I gasped, if it were to have a name, I would need a label on which to proclaim that name.

I immediately quit my job, left my family, and locked myself in a vault in the basement of a disused bank on a remote island off the coast of Portugal so as to properly bend my mind to the task at hand. It took only eight or ten months of this concentrated effort of mind to strike upon Maestro Wodehouse as the one true source of clever names, especially for the name of a proper English pint.

A frothy discussion on PGWnet (<http://wodehouse.org/PGWnet.html>) resulted in several spirited suggestions, from which I seized upon Market Blandings, as the Emsworth oeuvre is by far and away my favorite World of Wodehouse. Of course, the Emsworth Arms (Geo. Ovens, Prop.), being known far and wide for its excellent beer, seemed the ideal home for my English ale. So I began to think about what kind of label Geo. Ovens would have



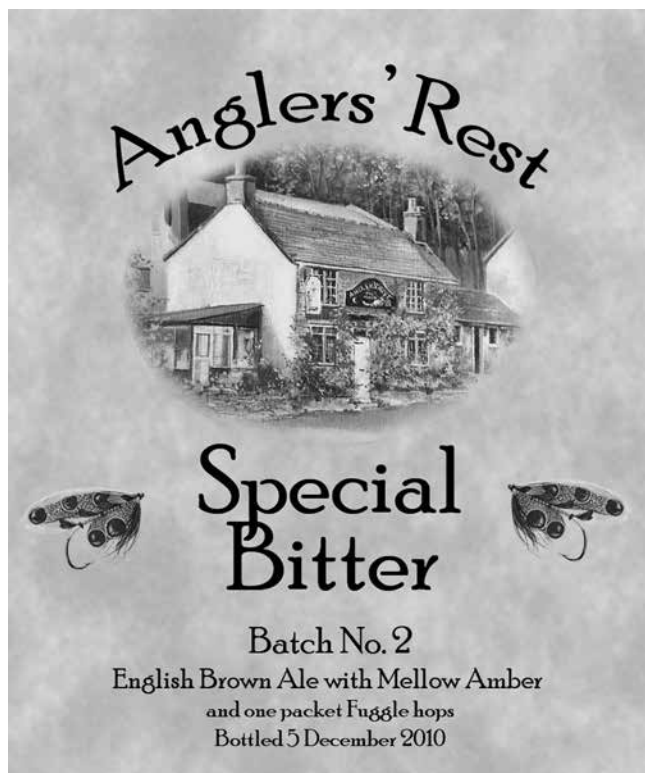
Young Thos's first success; pig courtesy of Sallie Hobbs

for his best bitter. Being no fool, he would naturally do everything possible to curry favor with the local laird, and, as a regular subscriber to the *Bridgnorth, Shifnal, and Albrighton Argus* (with which is incorporated *The Wheat-Growers' Intelligencer and Stock-Breeders' Gazetteer*), no doubt he would know that the way to do this would be to name his elixir after the Empress of Blandings.

And thus, a label was born (see page 1).

(Special thanks to the incomparable Norman Murphy for insisting upon the correct Earl's coronet, and especially to Sallie Hobbs for finding such a splendid rendering of a Black Berkshire!)

Batch No. 2 of my home brew was another take on the English ale, and thus needed another name and another label. Having one under my belt, however, I knew how the thing was done, and made short work of the Anglers' Rest Special Bitter:



After a long day fishing, or a long night telling stories

The hardest part of this particular label was getting the blasted apostrophe correct. I did not have my Wodehouse collection at hand, and so I had to rely upon my knowledge that PGW would certainly know the proper way to apostrophize such a name. Therefore I went with my gut, a decision that was subsequently validated.

The painting is that of an *actual* Angler's [sic] Rest, on the banks of the River Wye in the hamlet of Millers

Dale, near Buxton. There is no confirmation that this is the true source for the Anglers' Rest (in description or name), but it was too lovely an image not to use.

For my third batch of beer, I departed from the English ale to craft a more "summertime" beer: something that would be cool and refreshing with a slice of orange in it for those hot summer days. (That's one thing about beer: it does take time to ferment and condition, so one must be thinking a full season ahead of schedule.) The recipe I decided upon included a half cup of honey, and from honey to bees to drones to the Drones Club was mere child's play.

Once again, I had to try to get a feel for the Club, in terms of how they would present their house beer, in terms of style and font and layout. I am not displeased with the result:



The toast of the Drones

Special thanks here to John Dawson ("Jasper") for the wonderful bee image. I also owe special thanks to PGWnetter Alan Follett (Le Vicomte de Blissac) who suggested adding the bar of plum to the black bars in the diagonal corners, so as to pay homage to the Drones Club tie.

My thanks to Gary Hall at *Plum Lines* (aka "Madame's Nightshirt") for spotting the yeasty PGWnet discussion on this topic and asking me to contribute this article (or "piece," as we writers call it) to this season's edition. Cheers!

Pigs is Pigs, Not Pumpkins

BY MARILYN MACGREGOR

We feel that this little ditty, originally published in the Winter 1992 issue of Plum Lines, deserved another go-around. In fact, we're finding a lot of past articles that would entertain the current membership, many of whom never saw the original versions of these classics, and the rest of whom stand a good chance of having forgotten that they did see them! Stay tuned for more of our prized past articles in future issues.

ONCE THE BRAIN gets working, there is no knowing where it will stop, and you know how it is when you get an idea. For a while it sort of simmers inside you, and then suddenly it sizzles up like a rocket, and there you are, right up against it.

That's how it was with me when, after several meals of fish juxtaposed, if juxtaposed is the word I want, with a rereading of "The Custody of the Pumpkin," I began to wonder how Clarence, ninth Earl of Emsworth, had come to shift his focus from pumpkins to pigs. The splendid family record already included first prizes for roses, for tulips, for spring onions, granted, but Clarence was the first of his line to strive for and win a first prize for pumpkins. And then he went on to pigs. Fat pigs. One might almost say pumpkin-shaped pigs.

Is that a clue? Could that amiable, woolly-headed earl, who had one of those minds capable of accommodating but one thought at a time (if that), have initially confused two round things that both begin with "p"? I think he did, but, still, why pigs?

It is necessary here to bung in a bit of background information. One does not wish to fail to grip, but it is essential for the reader to understand the full posish, if you understand what I mean. We shall, therefore, temporarily leave the Earl of Emsworth suspended between pumpkins and pigs.

On my first visit to England, Margaret and Jim Earl showed me around Shropshire, including the Blandings Castle grounds (now apparently known as Weston Park) and told me something of the history of the countryside. Romans had been there, I heard, and, as I learned later, Celts and the Druid statesmen-priests who controlled the tribes.

We know that Blandings Castle was one of the oldest inhabited castles in England and the Threepwoods were an ancient and sturdy stock. The eighth earl was killed in a hunting accident at 77, another relative broke his neck trying to jump a five-barred gate at nearly 84, yet another lived to nearly 90. Women in the family ate

broken bottles. Ancestors of Clarence and Galahad went off to fight the Paynim and returned to tell their tales. They had the rights of the high, the middle, and the low justice and could divide a head-gardener into four with a battle-axe and no questions asked. Clarence was the ninth of these hardy, long-lived earls, and there must have been generations of nobly prominent Threepwoods settled in and around Shropshire before the first earl's creation. It is my contention that the family goes back in Britain at least to the time of the Druids; and it is my belief that a love of pigs was in the Threepwood blood.

Until I discovered the book *The Life and Death of a Druid Prince*, I had known only about as much of Druids as the average reader of the popular press. The book contains an examination of Celtic and Druid society during the years of Roman contact, a well-documented period of British antiquity. The authors base their scholarly conclusion (that a Druid prince was a willing ritual sacrifice) on the results of a number of tests and techniques, from radiocarbon dating to botanical and pollen analyses, omitting no detail, however slight. Their Appendix One provides an excellent overview of the Celtic world and Druidic life.

I now approach the nib, or nubbin if you prefer, of my argument. It was on page 153 that I came upon a particular sentence, and I tell you when I read it I was astonished. Amazed. In fact, dumbfounded about sums it up. Here it is: "Pork seems to have been the meat most commonly eaten, and the Celtic aristocracy is known to have had a passion for pork."

I don't pretend to be a Sherlock Holmes or anything of that order, but suddenly a ripe and fruity idea struck me. I saw that all through the Threepwood generations the pork gene had lain dormant. What's bred in the bone will come out in the wash, and all that kind of thing, you know, and it took pumpkins to start the master of Blandings off in the right direction.

Once started, it was a short step from large pumpkins to fat pigs. It had been well said of Clarence that he had an I.Q. some thirty points lower than that of a not-too-agile-minded jelly-fish, yet as he stared reverently at the prize pumpkin's golden roundness lying on the strawy bottom of one of the largest packing-cases ever seen in Shrewsbury town, something stirred. He began dimly to grasp the concept, to make the grand transition from packing case to sty, from pumpkin to pig.

So you see, the obsession with pigs came to him naturally through genetic heritage, and winning those silver medals ensured that the ninth earl was, as we all know, a worthy descendant of his ancient line of noble ancestors.

An Unplanned Pilgrimage

BY BOB (OILY CARLISLE) RAINS



ON NOVEMBER 6, 2010, Sweetie and I were driving from downtown Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to Riverhead, New York, in eastern Long Island, to attend a wedding the next day. For those of you who are not up on your East Coast geography, this necessitated a jaunt around the City of New York, to get to the other side. As it turned out, there were more than a few other motorists going our way of a Friday afternoon, or at least trying to move in that direction.

As we crept along the aptly named Long Island, I had a thought. Sweetie, I asked, where exactly is this place called Remsenburg? Although Sweetie hails from Elmont, Long Island, she didn't know. But upon checking the map, she discovered that Remsenburg was only a few miles from the hotel where we were to stay, if we ever got there.

Despite all the efforts of our fellow travelers to elbow us out of the way, we did eventually arrive at our hotel. After a refreshing sleep and the taking of

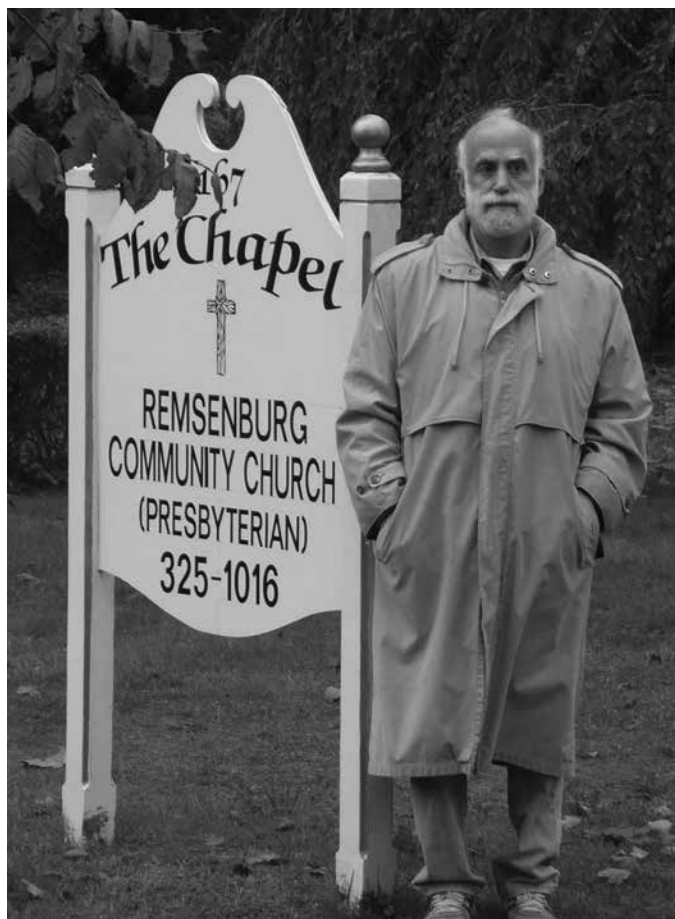
morning nourishment, we headed out on our quest. I had checked online and learned that Plum's grave is behind the Remsenburg Community Church on Main Street, Remsenburg. Since the church's address contains no number on Main Street, I figured that Remsenburg's Main Street must be somewhat shorter than Broadway. So, if we could find Remsenburg we could find Main Street, and if we could find Main Street we could find the Remsenburg Community Church, and if we could find the Remsenburg Community Church we could find Plum's grave site.

As it turned out, the people of eastern Long Island seemed not particularly concerned about visitors who might be poking about. I am not saying that the residents are unfriendly (they are not), only that they do not believe in posting signs indicating which way you are going, what communities lie ahead, or even where you are now. But with help from a nice man at a gas station, we learned that if we continued down the road a mile or so and turned left at a certain dental clinic, we would end up in Remsenburg. We did, and we did.

Whether out of modesty or diffidence, Remsenburg does not alert the visitor that he has arrived. There is no sign announcing "Welcome to Remsenburg." But when we passed the Remsenburg Post Office, I deduced that we were in the right town.

We asked a gentleman who was taking his morning constitutional how we might find Main Street, and he allowed that he wasn't really a Remsenburger himself, but, as far as he knew, we were on the mainest street in town, whatever its name might be. So we proceeded along, and in less than a half mile found ourselves in front of the Remsenburg Community Church. Trying to control my excitement, I parked the car and we got out, took photos of the lovely red brick church, walked out back, and found . . . no graveyard!

But Sweetie, ever the helpmeet, espied a graveyard about a hundred yards away. So we walked along the road a bit and came to the equally lovely, white wood-sided Remsenburg Community Church Chapel. (Why is the RCC Chapel separated from the RCC itself? Might there have been schism within the RCC leading to competing, even hostile congregations? Perhaps some dispute over the niceties of transubstantiation? Heaven forbid!) The Chapel does indeed have a graveyard behind it, and in that graveyard Sweetie and I reached our destination, the impressive (but not imposing) and touching grave of Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse.



Solemnly, Oily poses as he and Sweetie close in on their goal.



Sweetie and the Infant Samuel

At the bottom of Plum's headstone are chiseled the words "He gave joy to countless people." As we made our homage that chilly November morning, I could not help but think of all the joy he has given me, in his writings—the stories, the novels, the poems, the songs—with Bertie and Jeeves and all the other wonderful characters who seem so real to me, as well as the further joy of connecting us with so many real people, fellow enthusiasts, who have themselves enriched our lives. And, I thought of Wodehouse living the last decades of his life essentially as an exile from the country he so loved and whose mores and idiosyncrasies of a bygone era he so gently preserved. I concluded that at least and at last he had found another home that he also loved, and that this beautiful but isolated and peaceful spot is exactly the right one for his final resting place.

I would be remiss if I did not add that, still watching over Sir Pelham, courtesy of Jean Tillson and Elin Woodger, is a statuette of the Infant Samuel, now an angel. (See *Plum Lines*, Autumn 2010.) I can report that, as of November 2010, Aunt Dahlia has not yet appeared to remove said infant's statuette and hurl it against some hard object. One hopes that the Infant Samuel and Sir Pelham will abide together behind the Remsenburg Community Church Chapel for the duration.

One last note: Believe it or not, there is no historical marker that I could find honoring Sir Pelham Grenville Wodehouse and indicating his place of eternal repose. What are we going to do about this?

Ken Clevenger's *Rannygazoo*

IF A PERSON were to have surfed over to Amazon.com prior to 2011 and searched for the title *Rannygazoo*, he or she would have been disappointed. Nothing of interest would have leaped onto their computer screen. Now, however, the seeker would discover a quite pleasant result to their search: Ken Clevenger's new collection of his Wodehouse-related work, entitled (as you've already guessed) *Rannygazoo*.

The price is an enticingly good bargain, at \$7.99, plus shipping, to acquire the book via lawful interstate commerce.

Apparently, you can now search for "Clevenger" on the website and also find the book. For a while, that would not work, as the Amazon tribe had misspelled Ken's surname ("Clenvenger"). Ken points out that the slight was not taken personally, as he regularly reads Plum's poem "Printer's Error" to lull himself to sleep. Anyway, all is fine now.

So it's only March, and already you could have a leg up in your search for stocking stuffers. Buy now in mass quantities, and Ken may stand you a Green Swizzle (or alternate beverage of your choice) in Dearborn in October!



*The Infant Samuel calmly continues working on his book.
And what story is it that keeps him so enraptured?*

Wodehouses Around the World

BY NORMAN MURPHY

ONE OF THE downsides of being Remembrancer of the UK Wodehouse Society is that people expect you to remember things. Luckily, I have a retentive memory; I can recall buildings and books I looked at 50 or 60 years ago, though my memory for names is appalling. I am prepared to pass on now (though only to readers of *Plum Lines*) the secret of being a good Remembrancer. And that is—make sure you have got the right books.

My stalwarts are copies of *Who's Who* for 1900, 1920, and 1950; a *Kelly's Directory for London 1937* (2,500 pages); and, most useful of all, *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage*. Admittedly, the print on the four closely printed pages about Wodehouse in the 1970 *Burke's* edition induce eye strain, but they are fascinating. From Sir John Wodehouse who fought gallantly at Agincourt in 1415 to an earldom in 1866, they show the gradual rise of the family. And while, in the traditional manner, the head of the family looked after his estates, the younger sons followed the professions of the Church, the Army or Navy, or the Law. In the 19th century, when the British Empire was being won, there was always a Wodehouse colonel or general doing his bit in winning it. And when the Empire had to be administered, the Wodehouses were there as well.

That is why there is a Wodehouse Road in Bombay (Sir Philip Wodehouse, KCB, Governor of Bombay 1872–77). Then there is the Hawaii connection. James Hay Wodehouse, a first cousin of PGW's father, was the last British Commissioner of Hawaii; his son married a local girl and their descendants will still be found there as well as in Chile, Peru, and Florida. P. G.'s father was a magistrate in Hong Kong, his brother Peveril served in the police there, and his brother Richard also worked in China. Recently, I identified Richard's wife's silver cigarette box, which turned up in Shanghai 80 years later.

I could name a dozen more places in the world where the Wodehouses left their mark, but I shall conclude with the third Baron Wodehouse, who held a series of Government appointments, beginning with Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1852; he became Lord Privy Seal in 1868 and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1894. In 1866 he was raised to the Earldom of Kimberley (the name comes from his family estate in Norfolk). His name was given to the Kimberley region of Western Australia and Kimberley in South Africa where, in 1871, diamonds were found which started the mining craze of the late 19th century.

And if you are wondering why so many little girls and boys are called Kim or Kimberley, then yes, the name became widely popular after the diamond mines were discovered. I wonder how many of them realize they might be named after the head of the Wodehouse family.

Florence Cunningham, 1918–2011

BY DOUG STOW

I'VE BEEN ASKED to write a few words about my dear friend Florence Cunningham, who passed away on February 24. I could write a book about Florence; to write a only few words is difficult. [*Doug has kindly consented to write a longer article about Florence for our Summer issue, in which we will also include some wonderful photographs of Florence.*]

Florence loved Wodehouse and she loved Wodehousians. Whenever we spoke she would ask about our mutual friends who had fallen in love with the works of P. G. Wodehouse. She had favorite characters, favorite stories, favorite books, and she could quote, cite incidents, and carry on into the evening, holding her own and more in any discussion of the Wodehouse world. Florence was a true champion of Wodehouse.

Florence was not a one-trick pony, however. She introduced my wife Margaret and me to Jan Karon, Miss Read, and Alexander McCall Smith. Her literary borders were broad, and she was always looking for new authors she could introduce to her various reading groups, book clubs, and associates. She was often asked to write reviews, speak to groups about books, and host parties to promote literature. I imagine she was sought after because she so effortlessly expressed her love.

Len Lawson says that she could "light up a room." Suzanna Smart called her "Glitterbug," and those who were lucky enough to know her would agree enthusiastically that she was indeed a sparkler. There is no accurate accounting of how many people she brought to the love of Wodehouse, but the number must be great. She was the second president (1985–1987) of the Wodehouse Society following its founder, Bill Blood. After her term as president she became a lifelong Wodehouse ambassador, and her light and love will be missed.

A Few Quick Ones

John Baesch and Evelyn Herzog provide a passel of Quick Ones from time to time. Here are the highlights from the latest collection, which merits a section unto John and Evelyn themselves!

In the September 25 *Daily Telegraph*, theatre critic Robert Gore-Langton ponders the question of why there are so many productions of *Hamlet*, and why so many actors want to play the role. At one point he quotes P. G. Wodehouse: "It's 'Hamlet' here and 'Hamlet' there and 'Hamlet' on next week. / An actor not in 'Hamlet' is regarded as a freak."

The 2010 *Cats* version of the Page-A-Day Calendar shows a picture of a cat with pharaoh's garb. The caption quotes P. G. Wodehouse: "Cats as a class have never completely got over the snootiness caused by the fact that in ancient Egypt they were worshipped as gods."

The advice column ("Ask E. Jean") in the July 10 issue of *Elle* includes a "9 to 5" question from a "Miss Integrity" asking how to catch a break in her career and gain a seemingly impossible promotion. In her reply, E. Jean talks about the value of some artful praising of the boss, or "sucking up" as she calls it. She points out that your career may be exterminated if you "lack 'the old oil'" and gives credit to "the great P. G. Wodehouse" for that phrase, which means smoothing the way.

In the letters column ("Free for All") of the September 25 *Washington Post*, Danielle Karson of Rockville, Maryland, responds to a prior article (apparently Gene Weingarten's eulogy to the English language) by asking whether anyone relishes "the pitch-perfect narrative of P. G. Wodehouse anymore?"

The Travel Doctor in the October 2 *Times* (London) suggests that Noel Harbage (who is planning a ruby wedding for his parents) contact Blandings (blandings.co.uk), which specializes in this sort of thing. A good country house starts at about £5,000 a week, a butler can be added for about £1,200 a week, and a "high standard" cook for about £1,000 a week.

In the October 1 *Times* (London) letters to the editor, Paul Clapham of Margate offers a bit of a comeuppance to a previous letter writer who berated modern teens for their grating conversational style. Mr. Clapham suggests that all generations have their idiomatic

idiosyncrasies, and asks that the writer of the concerned letter revisit *Very Good, Jeeves*, in which "Bertie Wooster is upbraided by Sir Roderick Glossop thus: 'Kindly refrain from inflicting your idiotic slang on me.'"

Lloyd Rose reviews *Showtime*, Larry Stempel's new book on American musical theater, in the October 3 *Washington Post*. Wodehouse is mentioned a couple of times in the review as one of the more "self-conscious crafters of musicals" (along with Bolton, Kern, etc.) and as the fellow who said that the dialogue is just "the stuff that keeps the numbers apart."

The July 25 *Sunday Telegraph* gives hope to lovers of amphibians. In a report describing a project to build numerous new ponds across Britain, writer Richard Gray states happily that "animals such as the great crested newt . . . are starting to thrive again."

The July 30 *Times* (London) includes an obituary of Sir John Riddell, who was "headhunted from a successful career in international banking to be private secretary and treasurer to the Prince and Princess of Wales." At the end of the article, the writer states that Riddell was funny and spontaneous with a "self-deprecating sense of humor and a store of Wodehousian remarks."

In July 2010, *Real Simple* published the readers' answers to the question "What is the funniest book you've ever read?" Properly, *Right Ho, Jeeves* made the list.

Simon Horsford's travel column in the August 8 *Sunday Telegraph* described a tea and croquet afternoon as part of the Goring Hotel's 100th anniversary celebration. Mr. Horsford said, "There is something very P. G. Wodehouse about The Goring and the afternoon tea and croquet reinforces that image."

More Info on Young Thos's Beer Labels

IF YOU would like to see more of Young Thos's PGW-Inspired labels, or have any comments or suggestions, please take a gander at <http://youngthoslabels.blogspot.com>.

Thomas expects to be adding a few more, and based on the creativity of his art, it would seem to be a good site on which to keep either a sober or bleary eye.

Mulliner Menagerie

BY KEN CLEVENGER

No. 10 (Gorillas, etc.)

WODEHOUSE'S MULLINER STORY "Those in Peril on the Tee" uses the literary device of a fictional novel. In this case it is *The Mystery of the Severed Ear* in which a human gorilla provides the terror. It is one of seven Mulliner stories in which we find a gorilla, monkey, ape, or chimpanzee.

The gorilla in "Monkey Business" takes a star turn. But it turns out that the beast in question is really an artistic Englishman in a gorilla suit, an Oxonian (Balliol), in fact. In the story the gorilla is referred to as a "monk" by the famously clay-footed Jack Fosdyke. And, with some passion and provocation, it is called a "smelly monkey" by Montrose Mulliner before he meets the man inside the suit. In "The Voice from the Past," a young girl warns the man about to meet her father that he (the father) is "a gorilla." The metaphorical image works well—we can imagine Lt. Col. Sir Redvers Branksome as a wild brute of a beast.

Apes appear twice in the Mulliner stories. The first ape is the "Human Ape" in a fictional mystery novel, *Gore by the Gallon*, in "Strychnine in the Soup." A second ape ("Buried Treasure") abandons its stereotypical menacing image and takes on biblical overtones of exotic wealth and splendor of faraway lands, of a time when apes, ivory, and peacocks are offered as gifts, along with camels, elephants, precious stones, and spices.

The sole chimpanzee reference relates to humans and the odd things they leave on trains. In "Strychnine in the Soup" the list of the amazing things in the railroad station Lost and Found includes, along with half-read mystery novels, stuffed chimpanzees.

In Mulliner, monkeys make only two appearances. One is in "The Romance of a Bulb-Squeezer," in which the pet monkey of Lady Monica Southbourne induces much anguish in Clarence Mulliner.

The next reference is most interesting. We know "monkey wrench" generally as an unforeseen complication, a spanner in the works. But in "The Reverent Wooing of Archibald," Aurelia Cammerleigh calls Archie Mulliner "the world's worst monkey-wrench" and adds insult to insult by indicating that he is seriously nonbonhomous, a stick-in-the-mud, and kind of a wet smack.

Finally, and again in "Monkey Business," that wellspring of simian sightings, we learn that it is a porilla, not a gorilla, that Jack Fosdyke was fond of



strangling bare-handed, and that a porilla is a kind of wombat. Follow me closely here: wombats are related to bandicoots. We know from our lesson on cartoon animals (Mulliner Menagerie No. 5, *Plum Lines* Spring 2009) that the bandicoot is a rat. So what could be a better segue to our next segment? Read on!

No. 11 (Rodents)

RODENTS INFEST FIFTEEN Mulliner stories (not including the Mickey Mouse reference in "Buried Treasure"). If any animal category revels in cliché surely it is the rodent category.

In both "The Romance of a Bulb-Squeezer" and "The Awful Gladness of the Mater," characters are described as being as quiet as a mouse. In "George and Alfred" we find that one is trapped like a rat. In what I hope is a somewhat dated cliché, the predominant scent of mice in a home, room, or cupboard is noted in "Anselm Gets His Chance" and "Portrait of a Disciplinarian." In the latter tale, obscured by darkness, a scurrying mouse frightens a girl into the arms of her estranged young man, who is in a favorable position both to explain all and to kiss.

In less traditional fashion, the Mauve Mouse in "Came the Dawn" is a dance club, not unlike the Mottled Oyster, and in the same story a mousetrap appears in the guise of a Mouso-Penso gadget sold by an earl in an effort to restore the family fortunes. An accidental rodent reference is created in "The Passing of Ambrose" when a Cockney theater usher in the uniform of a Czechoslovakian rear admiral retrieves Ambrose's topper with the phrase "Here's your rat" (in a sentence in which " 'at" also is transformed into yat, tat, nat, and sat).

White rodents appear in five stories. In "The Passing of Ambrose" a white mouse, pet of an oyster-loving child, pops up on an omnibus and disconcerts a glassy-eyed man who has injudiciously over-lunched on liquids, then creates a commotion among the passengers, which makes for a vivid scene. White mice also play disruptive roles in "Mulliner's Buck-U-Uppo," "Something Squishy," "The Knightly Quest of Mervyn," and "The Voice from the Past." Not infrequently, there is a schoolroom involved.

In a poignant touch, it is to a pet mouse in a cell that Bulstrode Mulliner in "The Castaways" likens the girl whom he was kissing when observed thusly by his betrothed. For the record, it was a successful plea in mitigation. The kissed girl was Genevieve Bootle

and the betrothed was Mabelle Ridgway. The latter refrained from calling Bulstrode “rat-faced,” for which the circumstances may in fact have called. But we can believe the rat-faced bookie in “Romance at Droitgate Spa” probably lived up to his name before reforming.

No. 12 (Human Descriptions)

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE is rich, expressive, and perfectly employed by Wodehouse; he was a master of *le mot juste*. Part of the richness of English is its piratical thievery of words and phrases from other languages. Chutzpah! Hai! Si! Jawohl! In “A Slice of Life,” Wilfred Mulliner even swears faintly in French (“*Jer mong feesh der selar*”) to express his disdain for a suitor preferred by the girl Wilfred loves.

But our subject is not rude French. Instead, we now study animals used in human descriptions. My favorite is in “Mulliner’s Buck-U-Uppo,” where Augustine describes a housekeeper who routinely fails to give satisfaction as a beetle-wit. In our customer-service-free economy, it is a phrase that often comes to mind. (I am reminded of a friend who referred to McClure’s Law, a distant connection to Murphy’s: “If they could do a better job, they would have one.”)

Wodehouse sometimes uses clichés to describe human appearance in animal terms, but more often his similes are his own. He gives us characters with a face like a horse (“Big Business”), a vulture (“The Castaways”), a fish (“The Fiery Wooing of Mordred”), and a camel and a pig (“The Man Who Gave Up Smoking”). The latter two were brothers, and doubtless their mother would disagree. There is also a rat-faced former Silver Ring bookie whose character no longer equates to his face in “Romance at Droitgate Spa.” And Dogface is a distinct term of endearment in “The Voice from the Past.”

Continuing with the deeper qualities of a character as distinct from physical features, a man may be a rabbit with a good deal on its mind in “Cats Will Be Cats” or a gorilla (a girl’s warning about her father given to a hopeful suitor) in “The Voice From the Past.” A man of dubious character can be a bird (“From a Detective’s Notebook”) or a worm or a hound (both in “Those in Peril on the Tee”). And an unloved female may be a reptile, a viper, or a serpent (“The Rise of Minna Nordstorm”). Less inherently evil but not yet the *parfit gentil preux chevalier*, would be men who are butterflies (“Open House”) or lizards (“Gala Night”).

In some cases it is just one feature that is animalistic. For example, eyes can be like a prawn (“Unpleasantness at Bludleigh Court”) and “The Smile That Wins”) or like

a fawn (“The Fiery Wooing of Mordred”). Then there is the eye like a meditative codfish in “The Truth About George.”

This latter reference calls to mind the overall impression that some people make upon others. Before partaking of the magic elixir, Augustine Mulliner’s demeanor was said to be that of a saintly but timid codfish in “Mulliner’s Buck-U-Uppo.” Another image I adore is when Mr. Mulliner is asked by his nephew, George Mulliner, “Why are you looking at me like a sheep with something on its mind?” (“George and Alfred”). Less endearing is the image of Genevieve Bootle in “The Castaways”: “She was not a beautiful girl . . . she had a distinct look of a halibut.”

In fairness to Miss Bootle, she was happily engaged and in fact a “vision” to Bulstrode Mulliner. But Wodehouse magistrates, inevitably male, fare much less well than his females. Thus, in “The Knightly Quest of Mervyn” we find a magistrate who “looked like an owl with a dash of weasel blood in him.”

As an old magistrate myself, the “weasel blood” crack rankles, but, like Anatole, I’m able to take “some roughs with the smooth.”

This segment ends the Mulliner Menagerie series in Plum Lines. Ken has revealed that there are additional segments. He plans to publish these in paperback form. In that book, you may find information about the Mulliner treatment of dogs, cats, fish, fowl, insects, sea life, farm animals, wild animals, and perhaps even named animals. In the meantime, Ken has published a new book (Rannygazoo) that collects his various other Wodehouse articles. Details on page 5.—Ed.

Remsenburging

IF YOU ENJOYED Bob Rains’s article on his and Sweetie’s pilgrimage to Remsenburg (see page 4) and think that you, too, may like to go there, then help is at hand. Elin Woodger, who has led a few pilgrimages to that sacred spot, has a map of the area. There are directions for getting to Plum locations, including the gravesite, the house where he and Ethel lived, the creek where Wodehouse went swimming, the post office where he walked to pick up his mail, and the pet cemetery where several of their pets are buried. If you would like to get this information, just write to Elin, and you will have it faster than you can say “Infant Samuel.”

They Say It's Your Birthday: The Dearborn Convention

BY ELLIOTT MILSTEIN

ELIN WOODGER, in her excellent "History of The Wodehouse Society & Its Conventions," published in the 2003 convention program, recounts that the second convention "was held in Doylestown, Pennsylvania on October 15, 1983, to celebrate the 102nd anniversary of Plum's birth." After that time it became traditional to hold the convention in October as close as possible to his birthday (with a few summer exceptions for fairer weather, and to accommodate members who might be prevented from attending October conventions due to an academic calendar or otherwise schedule conflict). But none since had the good fortune to fall precisely on that noble date. Until now.

The 16th International Convention of The Wodehouse Society will be held in Dearborn, Michigan, on October 13–16, 2011, the Saturday of such weekend being October 15. It is therefore fitting that this convention bear the official sobriquet of "Happy 130th Birthday, Plum" and that the traditional Saturday night banquet be turned into a giant birthday party. (Some members thought it was a little creepy having a birthday party for someone who has long since handed in his dinner pail until it was pointed out to them that Wodehouse will never die.)

The banquet will be held in the beautiful Alexandria Ballroom, the centerpiece of the renowned Dearborn Inn. Banners, balloons, streamers, and other festive decorations have been designed (Pickering has its own in-house graphic designer in the form and outline of Adam Bayer) to adorn the gala. Dining will begin with a champagne toast to the Master, with each guest retaining a commemorative champagne flute specially designed for the occasion.

The menu, chosen by Pickering hostesses and culinary experts Elyse Milstein and Sherry Smith, includes a choice of New York strip steak, a grilled chicken breast with roasted shallot and rosemary potato puree, or a vegetable black truffle strudel, all completed with a birthday cake and a gorgeous chocolate dessert. Anatole himself would be pressed to do better.

Of course there will be music. Being so close to Detroit, we will add plenty of Motown to the mix. But worry not, Norman, there will still be ample opportunity for ballroom dancing (Colonel Murphy would not have it otherwise). And, of course, there will be costumes.

Now here's the thing about costumes. Some

people like 'em. Some don't. Personally, I am not overly fond of costume parties. But the nice thing about the Wodehouse convention Saturday night gala is that costumes are completely voluntary and, in reality, most people do not partake, though it must be said that the partakers are a large minority and are much more visible.

There are old favorites, like Marilyn MacGregor's classic "Lord Emsworth's girl friend" and Tony Ring's subtle "Bill, just Bill (a regular guy)" (you have to see it to get it). But the awards usually go to the creative, outrageous, ingenious, and strange. Who can forget Tamaki Morimura's Buttercup girl, or Christine Hewitt's Ouled Nail dancer, or that indomitable couple, Oily Carlisle and Gumshoe Gertie (aka Bob Rains and Andrea Jacobson), not to mention the self-typecast Masha Lebedeva as Vladimir Brusiloff (the beard gave it away long before she spoke a word)? And there is always a bevy of flappers, like Elizabeth Peel, Deborah Bellew, Karen Ruef, and Hope Gaines at the height of '20s fashion in 2007.

But, even if you are not of a mind to dress in such a manner, it is always great fun to gape and laugh at those who do. I, myself, take a middle course, arriving as "young man about town" in faultless evening attire (but then I have the waistcoat to pull that off).

If you are a regular conventioneer, I hope these recollections have brought a wistful smile (or witless grin, if you are more like me and Bertie) to your lips and a strong desire to fill out that registration form ("Do it NOW!") and send it in. If you have only been to one or two conventions, you still know what I mean; and this is the one to come back to, I assure you. And if you are new to the society, or a lurker who just reads your *Plum Lines* and wonders every two years what all the fuss is about, trust me—you are missing a true Wodehousean treat. The place to be this October is in Dearborn at the biggest birthday party Plum has ever had!

Can I Get a Map?

IN AN OBITUARY for cartographer Colonel Michael Cobb in the August 14 *Times* (London), the writer mentions Mr. Cobb's opus *The Railways of Great Britain: A Historical Atlas* (2004). The idea of this atlas "had its genesis in a request from the P. G. Wodehouse scholar Richard Usborne to produce a postscript for Wodehouse's last (unfinished) novel, *Sunset at Blandings*."

Patrick Armine Wodehouse, 1920–2011

BY ELIN WOODGER

THE WODEHOUSE WORLD has been deeply saddened by the death on January 29 of Patrick Wodehouse.

Patrick was the only child of Ernest Armine (PGW's older brother) and Helen (Nella) Wodehouse. Born in West London, he went to India with his parents, but his mother soon brought him back to England. She returned to India in 1924, and thereafter he saw his parents only occasionally. For a few years he lived with foster parents in Bexhill-on-Sea and also stayed with his Uncle Plummie and Aunt Ethel in London. In 1929 his mother moved him to Cheltenham Junior School, where he boarded until his parents' return to England. About this time he began building radios; he became a lifelong ham radio enthusiast.



Patrick and Nancy Wodehouse

When war was declared in 1939, Patrick left Imperial College to volunteer for the RAF and soon found himself working on a top-secret project: radar. After the war, he obtained his university degree; married his first wife, Joyce Champion, with whom he had a son, Nigel; and served in the Royal Auxiliary Air Force for 14 years. After a couple of short-term business ventures, he moved to Italy, where he lived for 20 years, working for the European Space Agency. In Rome the now-widowed Patrick met the American artist Nancy Kominsky. They married in 1983 and moved to England in 1994, settling in Wimbledon.

In 1997, when The P G Wodehouse Society (UK) was formed, Patrick became a patron and steadfast supporter, remaining so to the end of his life. He attended many U.K. Society events and, most memorably, on the first night of the 2007 Week With Wodehouse, entertained everybody with humorous stories of

his uncle. Despite his failing health, he attended the society's dinner at Gray's Inn this past October, and as always he was surrounded by those who wished to hear his stories of Uncle Plummie.

Shortly after I moved to the U.K. in 2001, Patrick and Nancy invited Norman and me to dinner—prepared and served by Patrick. The walls of their flat were covered with Nancy's splendid artwork, and both provided a very happy and warm welcome to England, for which I will always be grateful. Norman and I were subsequently honored to be invited to Nancy's 90th birthday celebration in 2005 and to their 25th wedding anniversary party in 2008. The following year, I asked Patrick to write an article for *Wooster Sauce*, and he obliged with a delightful reminiscence of enjoying jam roly-poly with his uncle.

Patrick was a truly gentle man—thoughtful, kind, extremely intelligent, generous, and so much more. Along with many others, I shall miss him very much.

Taking Humorists Seriously

KAREN SHOTTING read James Wolcott's article "Comics Between Covers" in the November 2010 issue of *Vanity Fair*. Given PGW's history with the magazine, she felt that Mr. Wolcott's comments about the lot of the humor writer had a distinctly Wodehousean flavor.

Wolcott declares that "a stigma hovers over humor books and literary snobbery attends the writers who perpetrate them." Karen points out that P. G. Wodehouse expressed analogous feelings on the same subject in *Over Seventy*, when he stated that "humorists . . . are looked down upon by the intelligentsia and sneered at."

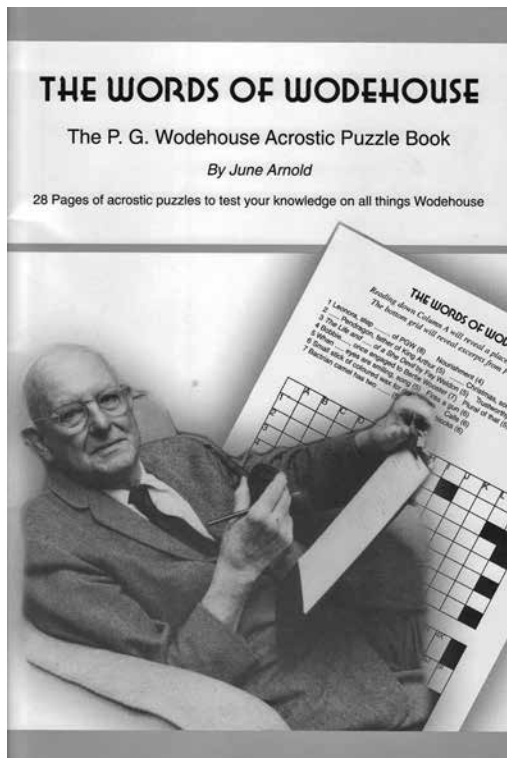
Mr. Wolcott further states that "[a] 'humorist' [is] someone who pokes fun at the foibles of everyday life. Let's face it, nobody cares about foibles anymore." Karen compares this to PGW's take on the subject: "Humor implies ridicule of established institutions, and [people] want to keep their faith in the established order intact."

Mr. Wolcott then summarizes the problem succinctly: "Humor writing just seems so unsexy and low-flying."

PGW said it a little differently: "Like Jeeves, I know my place, and that place is down at the far end of the table among the scurvy knaves and scullions," and he pointed out that humorists are "lumped in with the other outcasts under general head of *canaille*."

Announcing The Words of Wodehouse

A BOOK OF ACROSTICS



pounds sterling; please *do not* send it in dollars. Please add £1 PayPal fee to your order for one copy, 10p per copy thereafter.

Payment by check (on U.S. banks only): Make out your check to Ellin Woodger, and send it with your order to: June Arnold.

Order your copy now! It is an ideal way to combine two passions—Wodehouse and puzzles—into one. Aunt Dahlia would surely approve.

I know I was writing stories when I was five.
I don't know what I did before that. Just loafed I suppose.

*P. G. Wodehouse, age 91,
from an interview with Gerald Clarke*

Slight Effusion, Composed in the Shower-Bath (Presented to The Broadway Special, January 21, 2011)

BY T. MICHELLE FROMKIN

Raise a cup to Bertie Wooster
And to Jeeves, who ne'er will flooster.
To Lord Emsworth up at Blandings
(Foremost in our noble standings).
Mulliners from all perspectives,
Be they anglers or detectives,
Uncle Fred, that sprightly schemer,
And the argent bovine creamer,
To P-smith and G. Fink-Nottle
Dedicate a vintage bottle.
Lead a flourishing of trumpets
For the beans and eggs and crumpets,
Heralding in ringing tones
All the chappies at the Drones.
Toast the Empress, ever fatter,
And the Broadway Special hatter.
These are found in ev'ry good house,
Courtesy of P. G. Wodehouse.

ARE YOU a puzzle addict? Do you especially enjoy solving acrostics? You know what an acrostic is—a two-part puzzle wherein, after solving the first part, you transfer selected letters to a second grid to get a quotation and sometimes a surprise.

Since 2008, June Arnold, a retired teacher, has been creating Wodehouse-themed acrostics for *Wooster Sauce*, the journal of The P G Wodehouse Society (UK). (For a taste of one of her puzzles, see facing page 13.) Late last year, June published a book of 28 all-new acrostics, *The Words of Wodehouse*, which was initially available only to members of the UK Society.

Now members of The Wodehouse Society have the chance to enjoy this delightful book, published with the support of the Wodehouse estate and Sir Edward Cazalet. Here is how you can order a copy (or more than one):

Price: £5 per copy via PayPal, or \$9 by check (see below).

Shipping: £2 via PayPal; \$3.50 by check. For each additional copy, add 50p or 80¢.

Payment by PayPal: Payment *must* be made in

The Words of Wodehouse

by June Arnold

Solve the clues in the top grid, and then transfer the letters from there to the bottom grid, which will give you an extract from a Wodehouse novel. Reading down Column A will give you the main character from that novel. Answers are on page 16.

Clues:

- 1 Aunt Dahlia's temperamental French chef (7) / 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's ass' is the _____ Commandment (5)
- 2 *The _____ China*, musical by PGW and Bolton (4,2) / The _____ Amendment, part of the Bill of Rights
- 3 Mr _____ is an aged estate agent with a long, white beard in *Sam the Sudden* (9)
- 4 Reginald 'Kipper' _____, friend of Bertie Wooster (7) _____ *Ho, Jeeves*, title of a BBC Radio 4 series (4) /
- 5 Asian country (5)
A garden boundary (5)
- 6 Art dealer in *The Man Upstairs* (also name of famous sculptor) (7) / Recorded in writing (5)
- 7 _____ *Jeeves*, a novel by PGW (2,3) / A molar (5)
- 8 Situated on the other side (8)
- 9 George _____, character in *The Small Bachelor* (5) / Cereal ground for flour (5)
- 10 Lady Julia _____, character in *Summer Lightning* (4) / Hate (6)
- 11 Not present (6) / Nutrition (4)
- 12 Lady Florence _____, sister of Lord Emsworth, appears in *Sunset at Blandings* (7) / Keats, for example (4)

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2F	4C	12B	7A		8G	9E	6E		5C	1A	12G	3I		11I	10A	
8B	1C	3D	5I	2B	4D	11A		6M	8D	9G	7E		11F	3B		
10H	2L	1G		6B	12C	4B	8E	9I	11E	7G		1D	2I	7C	3E	
8A	5B	10G		12J	2H		6D	4A	1J		9D	10D	3G	5H	2J	
9A	7D	8F	3F	5A	6I	4G	11C		7H	11H						
4J	3H	12A	5E	1B	10B	9K	7B		5G	4K	2C		12F	6A	11D	1K
4L	7K	6L		11K	9B	10C	8C	1E	12E	4E	7J	5D	11J	6G		
10k	2E		6J	12I	2D	9C		1I	9H	6F	4F	5J	10J			
6K	1M	9J	2K		4I	10I	3C	12D		11B	5K	1L	12L	8H	2A	
3A	1F	7I	6C	12K	10F											

War with the Newts

PENGUIN MODERN CLASSICS has republished several old titles from Central Europe, including one from 1936 called *War with the Newts* by Karel Capek, translated by Ewald Osers. In the story, Captain van Toch and his crew encounter "devils" while diving for pearls in Sumatra. These creatures turn out to be an "amazing colony of intelligent newts. They can communicate and use tools and are 'very nice and sweet.'" The May 8 *Times* (London) recommends the satires, saying that it "still packs a punch and the storytelling is brilliant." Review, anyone?

Remembering Nigel Williams

BY JOHN GRAHAM

FOR MANY WODEHOUSIANS, one of the highlights of a trip to London was being able to visit Nigel Williams Rare Books in Cecil Court, just off Charing Cross Road near Trafalgar Square. As you entered the shop, you would be greeted warmly by either Nigel himself or his wife, Sophie, and there on your right was an entire wall of books devoted to Wodehouse, ranging from pricey first editions to inexpensive reading copies of nearly every title Wodehouse ever wrote. It comes then as particularly sad news to report that Nigel died suddenly and quite unexpectedly on December 24, 2010, at the age of 49.

Nigel Williams grew up in Ireland and was a classically trained bass-baritone. In the late 1980s he and Sophie, also a classical musician, moved to Dulwich, where they started buying and selling modern first editions from home while continuing to pursue active singing careers. Nigel issued his first book sale catalogue in 1989; just before he died, catalogue number 161 had appeared. Every catalogue carried at least some Wodehouse, since Nigel himself was a lifelong fan of the Master. In September 1991, Nigel issued his first all-Wodehouse catalogue, with 259 items for sale, ranging in price from just a few pounds up to £995 for a 1925 first edition in dust wrapper of *Carry On, Jeeves*. His all-Wodehouse catalogues quickly became annual publications and collector's items in their own right. The last one to appear was number 20, issued in 2009, with 526 items for sale, including a nearly fine first edition of *The Pothunters* offered for £4,750.

In June 1995, Nigel opened his book shop at 25 Cecil Court. For a time he also maintained a second shop across the courtyard devoted entirely to children's books. In his main shop, he specialized not only in Wodehouse but also Conan Doyle as well as many of the great English writers of the first half of the 20th century. The quality of his stock was consistently high, and his prices among the most reasonable of all high-end book dealers in London. He and Sophie became personal friends of many book collectors all over the world. They made frequent trips to the United States over the years, to visit loyal customers, and to exhibit at antiquarian book fairs in New York, Boston, and California.

Not only did Nigel sell Wodehouse books, but he also helped Tony Ring, with the permission of the Wodehouse estate, to produce and market several hard-to-find or previously unpublished Wodehouse stories, under the imprint Galahad Books. These include 12

booklets together making up a series called *Plum Stones*, issued between 1993 and 1995; *The Luck Stone* in 1997; and *A Prince for Hire* in 2003. All of these publications were strictly limited editions and sold out quickly. Copies sometimes show up for sale online, but often at high prices.

Even as his bookstore flourished, Nigel continued his singing career as well. He frequently appeared as a soloist (under the name Nigel Leeson-Williams) with musical groups throughout the United Kingdom, on the Continent, and especially in his homeland of Ireland. He made several outstanding recordings. One of his finest is as bass soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland in the *Requiem* by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, available on the Naxos label (catalog number 8555201-02). Although not as well-known as the great funeral masses of Mozart, Verdi, or Fauré, the Stanford *Requiem* is a beautiful piece of music, definitely worth getting to know. I hope they played it at his funeral, which took place in County Tipperary, Ireland, on January 12, 2011.

Nigel Williams Rare Books was a favorite and regular stop of many Plumies while visiting London. The shop has now been closed, and its contents will be auctioned.



FOR THOSE INTERESTED in knowing what will happen to the Wodehouse books once available at Nigel Williams Rare Books, we have learned that they will be auctioned by Bloomsbury Auctions, London. While the sale date is projected for May 12, it might move earlier to April 21. To find out current information, visit their website at www.bloomsburyauctions.com. You may also call them in London to order a catalogue at 020 7495 9494.

Information will also be posted on the UK Society's website at www.pgwodehousesociety.org.uk.

A Few More Quick Ones

Liesel Wildhagen (mother of TWS member Tad Boehmer) sent this reference from Ben Brantley's review of Pace University's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in the October 31 *New York Times*: "Merry Wives is Shakespeare's only small-town comedy, and this production, designed by Janet Bird, makes a charming case for it as an ancestor to the antic novels of British village life by P. G. Wodehouse and E. F. Benson. As in Wodehouse's 'Blandings Castle' and Benson's 'Lucia' novels, *Merry Wives* takes place in a comfortably insular, pastoral world where people know their stations in life and, of course, everyone else's business. Small rivalries loom large in such worlds, and private, elaborately contrived acts of getting even become major diversions."

Bob "Oily Carlisle" Rains passed us a reference from his colleague Bill Butler. Bill found the following in John le Carré's *Our Kind of Traitor* (pp. 93–94):

"If we'd been playing tennis next morning, I'll bet he'd have played his usual game. He's got a huge engine and it runs on alcohol. He's proud of that."

Perry sounded as if he was proud of it, too.

"Or if we misquote the Master"—Hector, it turned out, was a fellow devotee of P. G. Wodehouse—"the kind of chap who was born a couple of drinks below par?"

"Precisely, Bertie," Perry agreed in his best Wodehousian . . .

In our Autumn 2010 issue, we published **Bob Buchanan's** article, which compared Jeeves to the butler Stevens from Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *The Remains of the Day*. **Chris Dueker** replied to that article: "One of the magazines I devour (as if) has a fine reference in its October issue. From page 166 of *Oprah*, Kazuo Ishiguro discussed *Right Ho, Jeeves* in his article 'Books That Made a Difference to . . .'" Chris explained that he especially liked Ishiguro's comment that "Wodehouse does make you believe (at least momentarily) in a world where trivial problems have the status of huge ones, and the huge ones have vanished altogether. Pure delight." Chris went on to say, "Ishiguro is, of course, an important author who wrote one of my favourite books ever and many which have not interested me. I just read a fine thingy about him in *Plum Lines* and I wept. Silently."

Swan problems erupt in Essex! The August 20 *Daily Telegraph* reports that an aggressive swan known as "Hissing Sid" has "been evicted from its riverbank home . . . after a series of attacks including one that almost caused a teenage girl to drown."

Greg Darak sent information about CDs that are available from the Comic Opera Guild in Ann Arbor, Michigan (www.comicoperaguild.org) as part of their American Musicals in Concert series. Shows involving Wodehouse, Bolton, and Kern that are now available include *The Cabaret Girl*, *Have a Heart*, *Leave It to Jane*, and others. Greg recommends the "complete performance" versions, rather than the "songs only" CDs. Note that these are not big-budget productions (the instrumentation is two pianos and there's often more narration than dialogue), but the songs are there, including bonus tracks with numbers that were cut before the shows opened. Single CDs are \$15, and two-CD sets are \$20. Postage is \$5, but free if you're ordering more than one item.

Bob Rains passed along an item from Nadia Ivanovna, who found reference to "The Parrot" on the *Financial Times* website (www.ft.com). In a January 15 online letter, John H. V. Gilbert of Vancouver, British Columbia, compares the issues discussed in a recent *Financial Times* editorial to the intense national debate on the cost of food in Britain during the early years of the 20th century. Mr. Gilbert quotes one of the Parrot poems (written by Wodehouse for the *Daily Express* in 1903) that poked fun at the politicians and the problems with food prices. [Note that our last issue of *Plum Lines* included a review of *Bobbles & Plum*, where the Parrot is amply present in four satiric political playlets.] Quoth the Parrot:

He doesn't mind what's said to him, or sung to him, or read to him,
For he can answer nothing but: "Your food will cost you more!"

Ed Bowen found an article in the November 15 *New Yorker* on Rory Stewart, the iconoclastic new member of Parliament for Cumbria. Stewart is quoted about his former disillusionment with the Conservatives and their "feel-good, idea-light" policies. He also says that "Churchill has been replaced by Bertie Wooster." The author of the piece, Ian Parker, wryly notes that "it is hard not to read [that] as a criticism of [party leader David] Cameron."

Gazelles and Chevaliers

KAREN SHOTTING finds that, no matter where she travels, she seems to see something that reminds her of Wodehouse. “At Versailles,” Karen says, “it was the statue of the Chevalier Bayard (one of Bertie’s role models in his quest to be a preux chevalier). At the San Diego Zoo, it was a dear gazelle.”



Chevalier Bayard

Whether I acted judiciously at this point is a question which I have never been able to decide. Sometimes I think yes, reflecting that the Chevalier Bayard in my place would have done the same, sometimes no.

Bertie Wooster Sees It Through (1955)



Blizzard was Mrs. Fisher’s pride and joy. She had never, like the poet, nursed the dear gazelle, but, had she done so, her attitude toward it would have been identical with her attitude toward Blizzard.

“High Stakes” (1925)

The 2013 Convention

WE’VE EXTENDED the deadline for chapters to prepare their bids for the 2013 convention. All bids must be submitted by May 1, 2011, to Elin Woodger.

For full host chapter selection criteria, you may download the CSC Charter from our website.

Answers to *The Words of Wodehouse* (page 13)

1. Anatole / Tenth
2. *Rose of* / Fifth
3. Cornelius
4. Herring / *What*
5. India / hedge
6. Epstein / noted
7. *My Man* / tooth
8. opposite
9. Finch / wheat
10. Fish / detest
11. absent / food
12. Moresby / poet

Quote: From the days of Pandora down to the present time, one of the chief failings of humanity has been the disposition to open things that were better closed.

Character: Archie Moffam



Wodehouse Slept Here

IN THE SEPTEMBER 24 *Times* (London), in an article entitled “Houses With the Write Stuff,” Ruth Bloomfield describes how “homes with literary connections and a notable history” can add to their market value. Realty group Chesterton Humberts employs a full-time historian (Melanie Backe-Hansen), who helped (for example) “to discover the background to P. G. Wodehouse’s home in Mayfair.”

The Plaque at the Little Church Around the Corner

NEWS OF Florence Cunningham's death (see page 6) brought to mind a project in which she was the driving force: a plaque commemorating the Wodehouse's marriage that was installed at the Little Church Around the Corner, New York City, in 1994. The project took three years of patient planning and execution.

The day after the conclusion of the 1991 New York convention, Florence began investigating sites for a plaque and lit upon the Little Church, where Plum and Ethel were married in 1914. As Florence lived in Washington, then-TWS president Len Lawson asked Frits Menschaar and John Graham to take on the legwork involved in seeing the project through. Meanwhile, Len arranged the financial side of things, which included a \$1,200 benefaction to the church (much of which was generously provided by Edward Cazalet).



The Little Church, site of the Wodehouse nuptials

The plaque is inscribed:

P. G. WODEHOUSE, 1881-1975, AUTHOR

married Ethel Rowley in 1914 in this church:

“... the only church that anybody could possibly be married at. It's on Twenty-ninth Street, just around the corner from Fifth Avenue. It's got a fountain playing in front of it, and it's a little bit of Heaven dumped right down in the middle of New York.”

In loving memory,

THE WODEHOUSE SOCIETY

In the Spring 1994 *Plum Lines*, Frits described the work involved in creating the plaque, including deciding the text to use: “Florence had already suggested an eminently suitable quotation from the last chapter of *Uneasy Money*. Edward Cazalet, Norman and Charlotte Murphy, Barry Phelps, and Toni Rudersdorf were amongst others who contributed to the text and plaque design.” When the plaque was installed, it was decided to hold a dedication ceremony on Sunday, May 1, following the church service.

That weekend turned into a mini-convention, as Toni Rudersdorf (then TWS president) and Elin Woodger reported in the Summer 1994 *Plum Lines*. The day before the dedication, some 12–15 Wodehouseans trekked out to Remsenburg, where they were joined by Plum and

Ethel's great-grandson Hal Cazalet; Bolton, Wodehouse and Kern author Lee Davis; a former Wodehouse secretary, Ann Smith; and Margaret Zbrozek, who had been Lady Wodehouse's housekeeper. There were, of course, visits to the grave, to the Wodehouse house on Basket Neck Lane, and to the Bide-a-Wee pet cemetery.

Saturday evening, back in New York, more Wodehouseans joined the party, including PGW's publisher Peter Schwed. After dinner, certain Steggles-like members proposed a Great Sermon Handicap, and bets were irreverently placed regarding the length of the upcoming sermon. (The winner was Chris Riff with a bet of 16 minutes, 45 seconds; the sermon was 17 minutes, 10 seconds long.)

On Sunday, following the Mass, the congregation moved to the sanctuary, where Florence delivered a short, warm message of welcome and described the joy that Wodehouse had brought to millions through his works. Toni then spoke on Wodehouse's life with Ethel, emphasizing their dedication to their pets and to each other. Then, “at last the veil was dropped and our plaque revealed itself in all its bronze glory.” This was followed by a reception in the garden and a tour of the church.

As part of the event, Frits donated a copy of *Uneasy Money* to the church, and Doug and Margaret Stow printed a beautiful booklet to commemorate the dedication; one page is reproduced here. Should you attend a service at the church, look for the plaque on the north wall. In 2002, Gus Caywood reported that the church was raising funds to save the north wall, and it appears that appeal is ongoing; see <http://bit.ly/fw1P2B> for details.

Chapters Corner

IT'S FUN BEING with other fans and reading about what others are doing. So please use this column to tell the Wodehouse world about your chapter's activities. Chapter representatives, please send all info to the editor, Gary Hall (see back page). If you're not a member of a local chapter but would like to attend a meeting or become a member, please get in touch with the contact person listed.

Anglers' Rest

(Seattle and vicinity)
Contact: Susan Collicott
Phone:
E-mail:



Birmingham Banjolele Band

(Birmingham, Alabama, and vicinity)
Contact: Caralyn Campbell
Phone:
E-mail:



THE BIRMINGHAM BANJOLELE BAND started 2011 with a meeting on January 29 in Knoxville and Ken Clevenger spoke on "Wodehouse and Churchill: Contemporaries from Different Eras." Our next get-together is set for March 19 at the lakeside home of Cynthia Yeager in Knoxville, for a high tea and a reading of "Jeeves and the Old School Chum." Costumes are encouraged!

April 23 will find us south of Nashville at the Homestead Manor Plantation tea room for a gracious luncheon and the extra treat of Dr. Barbara Bowen speaking on "P. G. and the Frogs." Barbara is the author of "P. G. Wodehouse: Linguist?" and "Rabelais and P. G. Wodehouse: Two Comic Worlds," both of which have appeared in *Plum Lines*, and she will help us comprehend our Gallic confrères' delight in "Wodenhorse," as he was styled in 1944. Space is limited, so please RSVP. On July 23, we'll be back in Knoxville at the Crown and Goose Pub, with their good selection of English beers and gastropub food. There, we will browse and sluice merrily again. No formal program will interfere with the feast of reason and flow of whatever. Our final 2011 binge will be on October 22 in Knoxville for a "you-should-have-been-there" report on the big doings at the TWS convention in Dearborn the week before.

Blandings Castle Chapter

(Greater San Francisco Bay area)

Contact: Ed and Missy Ratcliffe
Phone:
E-mail:



The Broadway Special
(New York City and vicinity)
Contact: Amy Plofker
Phone:
E-mail:



"Ah, bitter chill it was! The Owl all his feathers was a-cold!"—The Poet Keats

BETWEEN THE Feast of St. Agnes and the birthday of Byron, a slew of Broadway Specialists gathered at The Players in Gramercy Park South on January 21, 2011, to restore the frostbitten tissues and consider the bits of poetry to be found in the evening's reading, *The Code of the Woosters*. What with the glad trumpeting of view halloos, the welcoming of new visitors to the fold, and the imbibing of warming potables, the company was in fine fettle when Philip Shreffler, Prez, flourished an impressive list of quotations he'd managed to winkle from the text. With an interjection of astonishment, Mark Anthony asked the throng to note that the Special (for perhaps the first time) had actually introduced our topic within the first half hour!

In years past we have given our January meeting o'er to the discussion of, and reverence for, the Poet Burns, he of the roguish and ebullient Scots nation. But in widening our net, we discovered a plethora of poets pleading for our attention. Indeed, Keats provides the opening phrase for *TCOTW*, setting the scene in autumn, season of m. and m.f. And Keats is in fine company with Longfellow, who shows up twice, and Shakespeare, who appears, it seems, on every other page, along with a host of biblical bards. We also identified more Keatses, a couple of Kiplings, Brownings, and the birthday boys Burns and Byron. Shelley was a singleton, as were Arnold, Hunt, Massey, Graham, Henley, and Bradford. Should we include C. M. Denison, lyricist? Well, what is a lyricist but a rhymester, after all, so we tossed in Reginald Heber as well. Most of these Calliopean allusions are uncited, popping up in the story as Bertie describes the plot's descent into Wodehousian anarchy. And having touched on anarchy, our discussion then veered briefly into the glorious tradition of British comedy, from Swift and Wilde at one end of the table to the "Goon Show" and "Beyond the Fringe" at the

other end. We swung back to our theme long enough to speculate on the depth and nature of Jeeves's formal education and his heretofore undetected Viking strain. And as the frost collected on the mullioned windows of The Players, we sallied out into the snowy New York night well warmed by Longfellowship and our favorite Muse of the Fireside, P. G. Wodehouse.

Capital! Capital!

(Washington, D.C., and vicinity)

Contact: Jeff Peterson

Phone:

E-mail:



Chapter One

(Greater Philadelphia area)

Contact: Herb Moskowitz

Phone:

E-mail:



THE CHAPS of Chapter One met for lunch on Sunday, November 14, at the Dark Horse Tavern in Head House Square in Philadelphia's Old City.

We received with sorrow the sad news that our fearless leader Susan Cohen (Rosie M. Banks) would not continue to be our president when she and Dan Cohen (Cyril Waddesley-Davenport) return after Dan's long illness. We are just happy to be getting them back at all. Herb Moskowitz (Vladimir Brusiloff), who had been serving as interim president, was elected president by popular acclaim.

Janet Nickerson (Dahlia Travers) came to our meeting prepared to take part in a war reenactment and was dressed for it in a charming period dress, headscarf, and hat. She told us about a replica show boat that is a model of the vessel Edna Ferber used in the book *Show Boat*, source of the musical which brought Plum's lyrics for "Bill" to fame. She also brought along a book about mensches that lists Bertie Wooster as a mensch. We discussed which Wodehouse characters were mensches or more deserving of one of a number of other, less complimentary Yiddish terms.

David McDonough (The Greasy Bird) told us about a new e-book titled *Bertie Wooster and the Lizard King* by Martin Rowe written in the same style as *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. (No, I am not kidding.)

Herb Moskowitz passed around an advertisement for an alarm clock that uses "Jeeves's" voice to wake one as a gentleman should be awakened by a gentleman's gentleman. Bob Rains (Oily Carlisle) passed around photographs of the Remsenburg church where Plum was buried and of Plum's gravestone. He expressed

his dismay that there is no historical marker and his strong feeling that the The Wodehouse Society should remedy this serious omission. We discussed whether Remsenburg and its inhabitants would find such a marker acceptable. [See Bob's article on p. 4.]

Larry and Deb Dugan (Alpine Joe and Dr. Sally), as co-moderators of our meeting, led a reading from the Mulliner story "Honeysuckle Cottage" of the parts that move the story along. They divided the story into sections so that all of us could have a turn reading aloud, which was a very successful plan. Afterward, we discussed the story and various people called out the names of their favorite Mulliner story or stories.

Since "Honeysuckle Cottage" is a ghost story, Herb Moskowitz gave us a short history of the comic ghost story from Plautus through Middleton, Irving, Dickens, and Poe, with special mention of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Ruddigore* and Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost*, both from 1887. We discussed those authors and whether "Honeysuckle Cottage" is really a ghost story since there aren't any ghosts in it.

Then we all adjourned to a better locale for group pictures taken by our waiter Josh, courtesy of Debbie Bellew (The Girl in Blue), before returning to our meeting room for browsing and sluicing. A good time was had by all.



(Standing) David McDonough, Deborah Bellew, Bob Rains, Dave Ruef, Carolyn Daffron, David Mackenzie, Hope Gaines, Larry Dugan, John Baesch, Herb Moskowitz, Bob Nissenbaum, Karen Ruef; (Seated) Norma Frank, Deb Dugan, Janet Nickerson, Evelyn Herzog

ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, the members of Chapter One gathered for our winter meeting at our usual Old City haunt, The Dark Horse Tavern. Norma Frank (The Bishop of Bongo Bongo, Ret.) moderated our discussion of the Mulliner story "The Nodder." Norma also told us how the *Wodehouse Playhouse* adaptation seamlessly added the story from "Monkey Business."

We then turned our discussion to a wider range of Wodehouse, including the interconnectedness of his stories. Janet Nickerson shared letters by and about Wodehouse from the book *How They Said It* (edited by Rosalie Maggio). The Wodehouse Historical Marker task force and correspondence committee briefed us on their activities. Our next meeting will be Sunday, March 13, 1 P.M., at the same location; fellow Plum enthusiasts are welcome.

The Chicago Accident Syndicate
(Chicago and thereabouts)
Contact: Daniel & Tina Garrison
Phone:
E-mail:



The Clients of Adrian Mulliner
(For enthusiasts of both PGW and Sherlock Holmes)
Contact:
Phone:



The Dangerous Intellectuals
(Florida)
Contact: Alison Currie
E-mail:



THE DANGEROUS INTELLECTUALS' December party was a success. We are happy to report that Thomas "Tweed" Amerson won second place in the Wii bowling tournament, and Sean "Ginger" Holmes took third. Their prizes were a bottle of Arrogant Bastard Ale and a bottle of Lump of Coal Stout respectively. Sadly, Ginger took his prize and did a bunk. He is now living with his lovely fiancée in Salt Lake City, Utah. He will be missed, but we wish him well. Eddie's homebrewed ales were consumed with gusto. At the last official meeting (October), we chose "The Truth About George" as our next group reading. The next meeting was scheduled for February 12, 2011, 5 P.M., at Books Inc. and Book Lover's Cafe, 505 NW 13th St., in Gainesville, Florida. As a final note, we previously discussed the viewing of *Spamalot* as a group at the Tallahassee Civic Center. It is slated to roll into town on Sunday, April 24 at 7 P.M. and takers are encouraged to purchase their tickets in advance.

The February meeting was informal; the assigned reading was "The Truth About George." After lengthy discussion about the story, we watched the *Wodehouse Playhouse* version. The reading for the next meeting will be "Uncle Fred Flits By." The new website design was discussed and met with general approval. The use

of our new Google group was also addressed, as it will act as a forum for posting messages between meetings.

The Drone Rangers
(Houston and vicinity)
Contact: Toni Oliver
Phone:
E-mail:



The Flying Pigs
(Cincinnati area and elsewhere)
Contact: Susan Brokaw
Phone:
E-mail:



Friends of the Fifth Earl of Ickenham
(Buffalo, New York, and vicinity)
Contact: Laura Loehr
Phone:
E-mail:



THE FRIENDS of Lord Ickenham have been hibernating of late. We hope to get together sometime this spring—time, date, place, and activity as yet to be determined, although it will definitely be to spread sweetness and light. Fifth Earl Friends, we'll be in touch by e-mail or by snail mail, so please watch for an announcement!

The Mottled Oyster Club / Jellied Eels
(San Antonio and South Texas)
Contact: Lynette Poss
Phone:
E-mail:



THE MOTTLED OYSTER started out the new year right with a meeting at the local Emsworth Arms (aka the Anglers' Rest, but referred to locally as the Lion and Rose Pub, actually). We were missing a member or two, but made up in enthusiasm what we lacked in number. We managed to mention our selection for the night, *A Man of Means*, no fewer than three times. We are rather proud of that number, as I think it may tie our record for last year's mentions of our month's books.

Later that evening, Bryan heard that there was going to be a trivia contest, and we formed a team. We did swell on the palindromes; not so well on the audio portion (which included artists we had never heard and never care to hear again, quite frankly); and the rest of the sections became so drawn out such that we began to think longingly of our snug, warm beds. By then we'd figured out that the main point of the whole thing was

to trick us into hanging around long enough to order more whisky sours and pints of stout, mild, and bitter. Since it was Miss Postlethwaite's night off anyway, we headed for the door.

We need to determine a title to read and discuss for next month, but we do know where we will discuss it, which is always a good thing to know. Perhaps we will manage to bring the book up four or even five times during the evening, thus giving us something to shoot for next year.

The New England Wodehouse Thingummy Society (NEWTS)

(Boston and New England)

Contact: David Landman

Phone:

E-mail:



THOUGH STUDENT RIOTS in London put local authorities on high alert and occasioned the stockpiling of extra truncheons, a two-dollar increase in dues was swallowed by the NEWTS without a lashing tail in evidence. Also swallowed was a sumptuous holiday feast, during which the ever-thrifty NEWTS made up for the surcharge in additional trips to the sideboard. The annual grab-bag of legal Christmas gifts also went off irenically, and the NEWTS enjoyed a most merry holiday nottle (meeting).

It will come as no surprise that the NEWTS will remain dormant until the spring thaw. They did, however, rouse themselves sufficiently to wish a Happy New Year for Plummys everywhere.

The Northwodes

(St. Paul, Minneapolis, and vicinity)

Contact: Kristine Fowler

Phone:

E-mail:



The Perfecto-Zizzbaum Motion Picture Corporation

(Los Angeles and vicinity)

Contact: Karen Shotting

Phone:

E-mail:



OUR READING for January was "Uncle Fred Flits By," in honor of a Los Angeles show of John Lithgow's *Stories By Heart*. Members of PZMPCo's subsidiary group, the Medulla-Oblongata-Glutz Motion Picture

Co., took the opportunity to attend the show on January 16 and chortled happily through Mr. Lithgow's inspired recitation, by heart, of this favorite Wodehouse story. Unlike Uncle Fred himself, Mr. Lithgow did portray the parrot, which, true to the spirit of Uncle Fred, he did "on broad impressionistic terms." Not all of our members will be able to attend a performance, so we have scheduled another viewing of the David Niven version of the story (see below).

Other items discussed at the January meeting included choices for the subject matter of our February-April meetings; whether to effect a change of venue for future meetings; a children's book/graphic novel with the intriguing title *The Trials of Roderick Spode*; and the creation of a signature PZMPCo cocktail.



PZMPCo members Gloria, Doug, Beth, Karen, and Diana

In February the reading was to have been *Summer Lightning*. At that meeting we expected to discuss whether to change our meeting place to Book Alley at 1252 Colorado, Pasadena, as suggested by a new member, who was to provide us with additional information about that venue.

In March we planned to meet at Alice's house for a reprise of David Niven's Four Star Theatre version of "Uncle Fred Flits By." At this meeting there may also be some discussion of the aforementioned signature cocktail. It was noted at the January meeting that our group name has a certain *je ne sais quoi* suggestive of alcoholic concoctions. A motion was put forth that we develop a "Perfecto" or a "Zizzbaum" cocktail, or perhaps one of each—one alcoholic and one nonalcoholic.

The April reading is the Jeeves and Wooster short story "The Rummy Affair of Old Biffy." Further (very superficial) research regarding *The Trials of Roderick Spode* (by David Mamet) indicates that the story is not a report of a courtroom drama regarding Lord Sidcup's misdemeanors, but rather about an accidental superhero who turns into an ant half the time.

The Pickering Motor Company

(Detroit and vicinity)

Contact: Elliott Milstein

Phone:

E-mail:



THE PICKERINGS met once again in the home of Larry Nahigian for the traditional holiday feast of Larry's Uncle Januz's Armenian glorp. Hitherto in these pages I have tried to describe this dish of stewed vegetables and eggs but, with my poor vocabulary, I can hardly hope to express the extreme deliciousness of the amazing stuff. Many drinks were consumed as well, gifts exchanged and laughter knew no bounds.

That is the usual Pickering holiday season. But this was not a usual year. Barely a week later, the Pickerings gathered again in the country estate of Claudia Sinta amidst festive decorations and a sumptuous meal of standing rib roast, Yorkshire pudding, and all the other appropriate fixin's. Yes, we Pickerings know how to browse and sluice.

The latest meeting, however, in the home of Dicron and Sue Mahakian, was a light repast of quiche, salad, and several rum cakes, because serious business was conducted on the convention. I am happy to report that much progress was made and many jobs were assigned (although, as always, David was nowhere to be found when the jobs were being handed out) and we all left feeling very upbeat with the direction things were heading, sensing that we were much ahead of the game with nine months more to go.

Not that there isn't more work to be done, and, once again, anyone living in the Detroit area and finding themselves with a little extra time on their hands is invited to contact us to join in the fun. Pickerings rarely brag, but I do think we are setting ourselves up for the best convention in our society's history, and the planning, as much as the thing itself, will be a joyful process.

The Portland Greater Wodehouse Society (PGWs)

(Portland, Oregon and vicinity)

Contact: Carol James

Phone:

E-mail:



The Right Honorable Knights of Sir Philip Sidney

(Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

Contact: Jelle Otten

Phone:

E-mail:

THE MAIN GUEST at the Knights' most recent meeting was Professor Jacques van der Vliet from both Leyden University and Nijmegen University. He had participated in the translation program of "The Great Sermon Handicap," being responsible for translating this famous Wodehouse story into the Coptic language. He read several sections from his translation in this ancient extinct language.

Etiënne Corljé presented *De Inval*, his own translation in Dutch of *The Swoop*.



Sir Philip Sidney says, "Your need is much greater than mine!"

After that there was a quiz about the Perfect English Gentleman. The question was, "Which Wodehousean character came closest to the description of a gentleman, a snob, parvenu, or nouveau riche?" Josepha Olsthoorn's answer was the most appealing, and she was declared the winner. Ronald Brenner and Martzen Bakker also wrote 33 questions about the features of a gentleman. Robert Reinders Folmer scored best in answering the questions. His prize was a copy of a magnificent book about snobs.

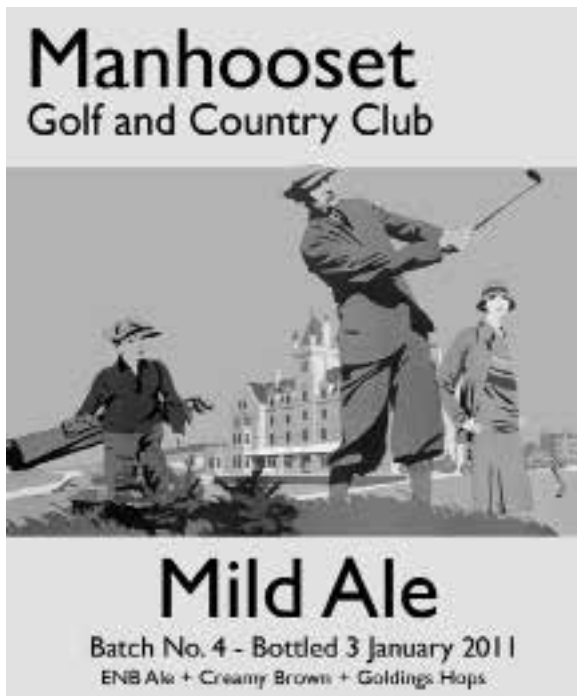
Leonard Beuger presented a new audiobook on CD, called *Jeeves en Ik*. Leonard translated and narrated the work, which is a Dutch version of *My Man Jeeves*.

The last (and traditional) highlight of the meeting was the annual cock-and-bull stories contest. The winning story came from Jacques van Gent. He told how, as a young man, he was stationed as an anthropologist among the Papuans. Once upon a time, he had to do a breast examination on a Papuan woman. The next day, he said, ten other Papuan ladies were queueing up at his door, asking for a mammography.

The next meeting of the Honorable Knights will be on Saturday, June 4, at 1 P.M. in Mulliner's Wijnlokaal, Lijnbaansgracht 266-267, Amsterdam. The schedule of this meeting is not yet settled. Good weather permitting, we could have some outdoor sports on the

wharf of Lijnbaansgracht, which is one of the canals in downtown Amsterdam. We may consider either a three-legged race, an egg-and-spoon race, or a fat uncle contest. Even a cricket match is possible, for which the main task of the fielding party will be dredging up the ball from the canal. Whichever match will be played, it will be accompanied by a sweepstake.

The Size 14 Hat Club
 (Halifax, Nova Scotia)
 Contact: Jill Robinson
 E-mail:



Another of Young Thos's creations (see page 1)

Anything Goes in Canada

THE SHOW *Anything Goes* will be produced this summer by Theatre Under the Stars at Malkin Bowl in Vancouver's Stanley Park, alternating with *Bye Bye Birdie* from July 8 thru August 20. For tickets and information, visit www.tuts.ca.

If you're thinking of attending a performance, remember that Malkin Bowl is situated halfway between Lost Lagoon and Beaver Lake and the bright lights of the outdoor theatre tend to attract all the flying insects that call those two bodies of water home. So make a point of wearing long-sleeved shirts, avoiding short pants at all costs, and bringing along some mosquito repellent to protect any exposed skin.

A Welcome Reprint

MANY WODEHOUSEANS remember 1997 fondly because it was the year that saw the publication of *Wodehouse at the Wicket*, a collection of Wodehouse writings on cricket. The book was edited and introduced by Murray Hedgcock, the well-known Australian (but London-based) journalist, cricket historian, and patron of The P G Wodehouse Society (UK) who has also sometimes contributed to these pages. So highly regarded is *Wodehouse at the Wicket* that Patrick Kidd, a reporter and cricket commentator for *The Times* (London), named it his favorite cricket book in the January 2011 issue of *The Wisden Cricketer Magazine*. Indeed, the small, hardback book has become a sought-after gem, appearing on used-book websites for anything from \$50 to \$290.

So, it is with great pleasure that we announce the publication of a revised, expanded paperback edition on June 2 by Arrow Books, a division of Random House. Murray tells us that the new book will include a couple of minor corrections and "an extra chapter of cricket titbits which have come to light since the hardback was published, such as a summary of Richard Wodehouse's first-class cricket career in India and various other PGW references." (Richard Wodehouse, of course, was PGW's younger brother.)

The bad news for Americans is that the book will not be available in the U.S. However, it will be possible to purchase it through Amazon.co.uk, where it can be preordered for the amazingly low sum of £5.99 (approximately \$10) plus shipping. You may even see a copy or two up for grabs at the convention in October—all the more reason to attend!



The original printing of *Wodehouse at the Wicket*

Call for Performances, Skits, Readings, and Other Clean, Bright Entertainment at Convention 2011

THE PICKERING MOTOR COMPANY cordially requests that any chapter, group, or individual with a desire to provide some clean, bright entertainment at the 2011 convention, and with a desire to be added to the official program (of course, nothing can stop you from doing your thing in the hotel lobby), please give a brief description of the performance, noting precisely how long it will take. Once all submissions are received, a schedule and timetable will be issued.

Deadline for submissions is **April 15, 2011** (a deadline most Americans can remember), but please don't all wait until the last minute.

Submissions can be, well, submitted to Elliott Milstein.

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Volunteer Officers

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Kris Fowler

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<http://www.wodehouse.org/inquiry/>

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Maintenance: Neil Midkiff

Website address: www.wodehouse.org
Website Hosting: Shamim Mohamed, aka Pongo

We appreciate your articles, research, Quick Ones, My First Time tales, and other observations. Send them to Gary Hall via e-mail or snail mail at the addresses above! Deadlines are February 1, May 1, August 1, November 1. If you have something topping that might miss the deadline, let me know as soon as possible and we'll work something out!

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At the age of eleven or thereabouts women acquire a poise and an ability to handle difficult situations which a man, if he is lucky, manages to achieve somewhere in the later seventies.

Uneasy Money (1916)