



Northern Arizona Celtic Heritage Society

October 2019

Moran Taing

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make the Celtic Festival a success!!! You all rock!!! It was a great change... onward and upward to next year!!!

Upcoming Fun

Get ready for the annual Holiday Holley!

Date - December 7

Time - 6:00pm

Place - 3393 S Carol Dr

Bring an hors d'oeuvres to share and a beverage too!

Did you know...

Classical Celtic culture emerged in Central Europe around modern Austria, Bavaria, and Switzerland. The earliest major Celtic settlement dating from 1200 BCE was found in Hallstatt Upper Austria.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

By Meredith Young

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born May 22nd, 1859 in Edinburgh, Scotland. According to his baptism entry, his surname was simply “Doyle,” even though he started using his middle name as part of his surname (Conan Doyle) after high school. His parents were both Irish Catholic; they separated four years after Doyle was born due to his father’s alcoholism and psychiatric problems, and the children were sent to different housings across the city. In 1867, the whole family reunited and lived in a miserable tenement house, but his father was later sent to a mental hospital where he died in 1893. Doyle’s mother, Mary, was a gifted storyteller who loved books. She inspired her son to love literature and creative fiction, and her stories were some of Doyle’s earliest and fondest memories. When he was nine, Doyle’s rich uncles sent him to a Jesuit preparatory school in England. After graduating, Doyle was accepted at Stonyhurst College, but left in 1875. He hated the school’s tendency toward “medieval” subjects and draconian punishment, and he later wrote that he didn’t have any positive memories of the place. He then went to a different Jesuit school in Germany, but only stayed there for a year. The German school broadened his academic background, and it also inspired him to become an agnostic (he renounced his Catholic upbringing even further when he became a spiritualist mystic).

After leaving the German school, Doyle went to the University of Edinburgh Medical School and became a doctor on various ships. Doyle began writing fictional stories during his medical training from 1876-1881 but stopped for a while until he established his own private practice in Southsea. He started writing again as he waited for patients to arrive for their appointments, and he completed his first Sherlock Holmes story, “A Study in Scarlet,” within three weeks in 1886. He was given \$2,700 for this piece, and it was published with good reviews in several British and Scottish newspapers. However, Doyle’s medical practice quickly failed, and he went to Vienna to study ophthalmology in 1891. He found that German medical school was too difficult for him, so he left Vienna and traveled around Europe with his wife. He had married Louisa Hawkins in 1886 after he treated her sister for health problems. Sadly, Louisa died from tuberculosis in 1906, and Doyle married Jean

Elizabeth Leckie in 1907. Doyle and Jean had met while he was still married to Louisa, and for years the two maintained a platonic and celibate relationship out of Doyle's respect for his first wife. Doyle had five children - two with Louisa and three with Jean - but all of them died without giving him any grandchildren.

During the 1890s, Doyle gave up on his medical career and began to write with a passion. The Ward Lock publishing house commissioned Doyle to write a sequel to "A Study in Scarlet," so he came up with "The Sign of Four." He soon felt very exploited by the publishing company, so he left them and wrote short stories featuring Sherlock Holmes for *Strand Magazine*. He based the character of Sherlock Holmes on his old college teacher, Joseph Bell. Even Robert Louis Stevenson recognized the similarities between the character and the real-life man; he wrote to Doyle to complement his work and to ask him if Sherlock was supposed to be "my old friend Joe Bell." The Sherlock Holmes stories became very popular, but Doyle didn't feel a deep connection to his writings. He tried to discourage publishers from asking for more of them by raising his prices to extreme levels, but still the requests poured in. By 1893, Doyle decided he had had enough and killed off his famous detective in "The Final Problem." He wanted to spend more time working on historical novels and other types of written compositions. He completed "Sir Nigel" and its sequel "The White Company," several about the Napoleonic Wars, various stage plays and short stories, and the Challenger stories, but the public was so outraged that he brought Sherlock back for "The Hound of the Baskervilles." Doyle finally decided that he had to keep Sherlock alive for his readers, so he brought the character back to life in 1903. In all, Sherlock appeared in fifty-six stories and four novels, and he was Doyle's greatest literary success.

Doyle's life outside of writing was also fascinating; he investigated two closed cases on his own, and his findings led to the accused men being pardoned. In 1902, King Edward VII knighted Doyle for his work on a historical pamphlet that discussed British actions and intentions during the Boer War. When World War I broke out, Doyle tried to enlist at the age of fifty-five but was denied. Doyle organized a civilian battalion of over one hundred volunteers, and he suggested that the troops wear body armor with inflatable rubber belts to keep the navy from losing more men. Winston Churchill actually wrote Doyle to thank him for his military suggestions. Doyle also became a Freemason in 1887; he later completely entered the world of Spiritualism because he was

convinced that the paranormal and spirit possessions were real. He also dabbled in architecture, and many of his plans (for a golf course, several hotels, and a Spiritualist temple) were used. Doyle was diagnosed with angina pectoris (severe chest pain accompanying coronary heart disease) in 1929, and he was on bedrest for the last six months of his life. His final adventure occurred on July 7th, 1930. Doyle wandered unseen into the garden and was found lying on the ground, one hand clutching his chest and the other grasping a single snowdrop. He died later that day of a heart attack at the age of seventy-one, and his last words were directed at his wife: "You are wonderful." Because he was a Spiritualist and not a Christian, he was first buried in a Windlesham rose garden, but was later reinterred with Louisa in the Minstead churchyard. His epitaph reads "Steel true, Blade straight, Arthur Conan Doyle, Knight, Patriot, Physician, and man of letters."