



## Programming Ideas

The Sherlock Holmes & the Clocktower Mystery traveling exhibit has traveled for over nine years. During that time the exhibit has been hosted by 27 Museums and viewed by over 2,000,000 visitors. The following are examples of programming ideas that have been used at previous venues. Please let us know if your Museum has any new and creative ideas that you would like to share. We will add them to the list. Thanks!

### **Sherlock Holmes Film Festival at local theaters**

As Sherlock Holmes is such a popular character, there have been many theatrical stage and cinematic adaptations of Conan Doyle's work. The Guinness World Records has consistently listed him as the "most portrayed movie character" with over 70 actors playing the part in over 200 films.

Basil Rathbone starred as Sherlock Holmes, alongside Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson, in fourteen films (two for 20th Century Fox and a dozen for Universal Pictures) from 1939-1946. Jeremy Brett is generally considered the definitive Holmes of recent times, having played the role in four series of The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, created by John Hawkesworth for Britain's Granada Television, from 1984 through to 1994, as well as depicting Holmes on stage. Brett's Dr. Watson was played by David Burke and Edward Hardwicke in the series.

In November, 2009 the movie Sherlock Holmes, based on the graphic novel by Lionel Wigram and directed by Guy Ritchie is scheduled to be released. The role of Holmes is performed by Robert Downey Jr., in a reinterpretation more focused in the character's martial arts abilities.

### **Local Book Clubs Specials, Readings**

Traditionally, the Canon of Sherlock Holmes consists of the fifty-six short stories and four novels written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In this context, the term "canon" is an attempt to distinguish between Doyle's original works and subsequent works by other authors using the same characters.

Local Book Clubs, Libraries and Bookstores often have "dramatic-readings" of Doyle's works during the term of the venue. Some readings have been directed toward children where children's mystery stories are read and discussed.

### **Victorian London costume contest**

The Victorian Era was the period of Queen Victoria's reign from June 1837 to January 1901. This was a long period of prosperity for the British people, as profits gained from the overseas British Empire, as well as from industrial improvements at home, allowed a large, educated middle class to develop.

Methods of clothing production and distribution changed dramatically during this time. The introduction of the sewing machine in mid-century simplified dressmaking, and enabled a fashion for lavish application of trim that would have been prohibitively time-consuming if done by hand. Lace machinery made lace at a fraction of the cost of the old, laborious methods. New materials from far-flung British colonies gave rise to new types of clothing and fashion became an important part of London's style and culture.

Many museums have a preview party or opening party where guests are encouraged to dress in Victorian style clothing. Some Museums have docents or museum staff dress in costume and guide and direct visitors through the exhibit. This helps continue the Victorian Era “ambiance” of the exhibit.

### **Lecture Series (Sherlockian Society)**

In 1934 the Sherlock Holmes Society, in London, and the Baker Street Irregulars, in New York were founded and both are still active today. Who are the Societies? They are groups of enthusiasts brought together by a common ideal - to share in the enjoyment of the life and times of Sherlock Holmes, the world's first and foremost consulting detective, and his friend and chronicler, Dr. John Watson, made famous in the splendid tales published under the auspices of Dr. Watson's colleague, Arthur Conan Doyle.

The two initial societies were followed by many more Holmesians circles, first of all in America (where they are called “scion societies”—offshoots—of the Baker Street Irregulars), then in England and Denmark. Today, there are over 2,000 Sherlockian societies in many countries like India and Japan with over 280 in the United States alone. A list of these Societies can be found at: <http://www.sh-whoswho.com>.

Many museums have worked with local Societies for lecture series and other programs to augment the Exhibit.

### **McGruff the crime-dog event “take a bite out of crime”**

McGruff the Crime Dog is a cartoon bloodhound created for the National Crime Prevention Council for use by American police in building crime awareness among children. He debuted in July 1980. McGruff reaches kids through commercials, songs and booklets from the National Crime Prevention Council, talking about drugs, bullying, safety and the importance of staying in school. Recently, McGruff has appeared in commercials addressing identity theft. The character is often used with his motto “Take a bite out of crime!” He also reaches kids through personal appearances as both puppets (often used in classrooms) and costumes worn by police officers nationwide.

Many Museums have had McGruff visit the museum during the term of the exhibit to talk about various subjects. Information about McGruff programs can be found at: <http://www.mcgruff.org>

### **Event to take children's finger prints and pictures for their parents**

In 1997, the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) created the National Child Identification Program with the goal of fingerprinting 20 million children. Today, more than 16 million I.D. Kits have been distributed, making the National Child Identification Program the largest child identification effort ever conducted. The goal of the program now is to reach all 60 million children in the United States.

In December 2001, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) joined in partnership with the AFCA to help increase parents awareness regarding the need to improve child safety. Agents have participated with the AFCA in numerous national, regional and local efforts to explain the problem of missing children and the importance of having a completed Child I.D Kit to provide to law enforcement in the time of need. The FBI has encouraged all 18,000 law enforcement agencies throughout the U.S to participate in the National Child Identification Program.

Many Museums which have hosted the Sherlock Holmes & the Clocktower exhibit have held weekend events to promote the National Child Identification Program. Information about the program can be found at: <http://www.childidprogram.com>.

## **Crime Stoppers Event**

Crime Stoppers is a non-profit organization of citizens against crime. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards of up to \$1000 to anyone furnishing anonymous information that leads to the arrest of criminals, including those committing serious felony crimes, and fugitives. Information is received through anonymous Crime Stoppers tips that are received through a secure tips line or through a secure web connection manned by a professional program coordinator. Each caller is assigned a code number for the purpose of insuring anonymity.

Many Museums have promoted Local Crime Stopper programs at the Exhibit. Information about the Crime Stoppers program can be found at: <http://www.crimestopusa.com> or by contacted your local police department.

## **Community Reading Program**

Wonderworks offers a Sherlock Holmes Community Reading Program which can be offered through the term of the exhibition. The purpose of the program is to foster the reading and discussion of Sherlock Holmes Stories in the local community which in turn will help promote and advertise the exhibit.

Wonderworks offers a dozen of the greatest stories of the Sherlock Holmes canon, accompanied by notes, illustrations, and suggestions for further exploration that will enhance the readers experience. The stories offered include: "The Empty House," "Silver Blaze," "The Musgrave Ritual," "The Reigate Squires," "The Greek Interpreter," "Charles Augustus Milverton," "The Abbey Grange," "The Second Stain," "The Bruce-Partington Plans," "The Devil's Foot," "The Dying Detective," and "His Last Bow."

The museum can offer these stories on the museums website where they can be downloaded by visitors to the site (usually one each week). Please contact Wonderworks Education Department for information about this program: [info@wonderworksexhibits.com](mailto:info@wonderworksexhibits.com)