



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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At the Baker Street Irregulars' annual dinner on 12 January, Michael Whelan awarded investitures to: **Warren Randall** ('Harold Stackhurst'), **Dayna McCausland** ('Lady Clara St Simon'), **Mike Homer** ('Enoch J Drebber'), **Mike Berdan** ('Henri Murger'), **Maggie Schpak** ('The Soup Plate Medal'), **Mattias Boström** ('The Swedish Pathological Society'), and **Elaine McCafferty** ('Eliza Barrymore'). The newly-minted Editors' Medal was bestowed upon **Peter Blau**, **Steven Doyle**, **Mitch Higurashi** and **Bill Hyder**. At our Society's dinner last weekend Mike Whelan also invested **Jonathan McCafferty** as 'Barrymore', BSI, Freda Howlett presented the Tony Howlett Award to **Bob Ellis**, and **Nicholas Utechin** received our Society's highest recognition, honorary membership.

Headline Review (338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH) has issued the complete Sherlock Holmes in nine paperback volumes, each priced at an attractive £4.99. The books themselves are also attractive, with subtly decorative covers, each having a different colour theme and a different silhouette illustration by Sarah Gibb (I love those illustrations!). The texts are good and set in a clean, clear font. The only extra is an unattributed brief introduction, interesting and generally accurate, though it seems odd to list Michael Caine as an actor who has 'defined' the character of Holmes. Altogether this would make a very nice everyday edition for the seasoned Holmesian and an ideal present to encourage the newcomer. There's a website at www.rediscoversherlockholmes.com.

Kelvin I Jones's new 44-page book *The Phantom Hound: Myth and Reality in Conan Doyle's The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Oakmagic Publications, 33A Red Lion Yard, Aylsham, Norwich NR11 6LW; www.oakmagicpublications.com; £4.95) gathers three previously published essays ('The Psychology of The Hound', 'The Mythology of The Hound of the Baskervilles' and 'The Mythic Hound') with a short piece about the inception of the novel at Cromer and a neat fictional account of that occasion, narrated by Fletcher Robinson.

I wish I could be enthusiastic about *Flat at 221B Baker Street: Holmes Meets Watson* by J R Cammarata (Outskirts Press Inc., 10940 S Parker Road-515, Parker, CO 80134, USA; \$15.95; £11.95). The characters are engaging and the story is entertaining: Geoffrey Holmes sets up as a private detective at 221B Baker Street; in the course of a murder investigation he meets the lovely Dr Bridget Watson-Burns and is surprised to find that she is descended from John H Watson. The writing isn't bad, though Mr Cammarata should

bone up on his British usage (they don't have semesters or a campus at Cambridge University...). But the appalling punctuation makes the book ultimately unreadable. Try this: *My name is Geoffrey and this is my fiancée Bridget we are from across the pond I presume; you mean Great Britain. Yes.*" And there are 444 pages like that!

There have been various attempts to prove that Sherlock Holmes subscribed to a particular religious faith, usually Christian, and several to claim him for a particular branch of Christianity. *An Opened Grave: Sherlock Holmes Investigates His Ultimate Case* by L Frank James (The Salt Works, Publishers Design Group Inc, Roseville, CA 95678, USA; \$14.95) is unusually well done. Mr James captures the Doyle-Watson style acceptably (though there's the occasional alien phrase such as a 'flat of rooms'). More importantly he achieves the considerable feat of treating a serious subject — the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ — seriously within a story that's both thrilling and funny. With Watson as a Doubting Thomas, Sherlock Holmes takes his search for the truth to the extreme lengths of travelling in space and time to ancient Jerusalem. There's excitement in plenty, and the reasoned arguments for and against the Christian faith are thoroughly stimulating. Like G K Chesterton and C S Lewis, Mr James is a fine storyteller and a notable Christian apologist.

Sherlock Holmes claimed that he could easily read 'the apocrypha of the agony column: such crude devices amuse the intelligence without fatiguing it'. Jean Palmer has collected over a thousand in *The Agony Column Codes & Ciphers* (Bright Pen, Authors OnLine Ltd, 19 The Cinques, Gamlingay, Sandy, Beds. SG19 3NU; £12.95), and even when the keys are available they're usually baffling. Some are simply encrypted, though, and some are quite open. From the Daily Telegraph in 1904: 'MORAIRTY. — Send address where I can write you. Important. — M.W.R. 9, Wetherby-terrace, Earl's-court, S.W.' [**A misprint for 'Moriarty', perhaps, but who was MWR?**] It's a fascinating book!

In the 2006 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual: Quartering in the Fifties*, edited by Nicholas Utechin (*The Baker Street Journal*, Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; USA \$11.00, elsewhere \$12.00), Colin Prestige's correspondence with four distinguished American Sherlockians (Nathan L Bengis, Jay Finley Christ, James Montgomery, and Edgar W Smith) tells us of the transatlantic Holmesian friendships of the nineteen-fifties and of our own Society in its early days. (In 1952 the Conan Doyle estate 'flatly refused permission for us to give *private* showings of the old Holmes films'!) The letters also give us an insight into the personality of Colin Prestige himself, a founder of our Society and the third Briton to be invested into the Baker Street Irregulars. In later years he was a deaf

old curmudgeon, and I wish I'd known the eager, friendly young fellow he was half a century ago.

The latest offering from Bjarne Nielsen is *Sherlock Holmes: Paa Spor efter Houdini*, an unauthorised exploit of the great detective, first published in 1909 (Sherlock Holmes Museet, Egebjergvej 206, DK-4500, Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark; Kr.75 — approximately £6.85, \$13.00 or €10.00).

Also recent or forthcoming: *Alas, Poor Sherlock: The Imperfections of the World's Greatest Detective (to Say Nothing of His Medical Friend)* by Joseph Green and Peter Ridgway Watt (CBD Research, Chancery House, 15 Wickham Road, Beckenham BR3 5JS; £16.95). *The Baker Street Boys: The Case of the Ranjipur Ruby* by Anthony Read (Walker Books, 87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ; £4.99). *The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes* by Paul D Gilbert (Robert Hale, 45-47 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0HT; March; £18.99). *Sherlock Holmes and the American Angels* by Barrie Roberts (Severn House, 9-15 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1DF; April; £18.99).

The Belgian at Baker Street by **Rafe McGregor** is available from www.amazon.co.uk as an 'Amazon Short' (no price to hand). **David Stuart Davies** (31 Matthew Lane, Meltham, West Yorks. HD9 5JS; overdale@btinternet.com) is preparing an anthology of new pastiches for Wordsworth, and invites stories of 5000-7000 words, 'in the spirit of Conan Doyle but with some panache and originality'. **Brian Pugh** (20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN; brianpugh140@btinternet.com) is working on a booklet about the various Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes memorials: plaques and statues. He needs good photos of some of the older plaques.

Not quite Holmesian is *The Missing Museum* by Andrew Thorburn (Trafford Publishing, 9 Park End Street, 2nd Floor, Oxford OX1 1HH; £12.99/ \$22.59/ €18.56). Mr Thorburn was invited to construct, finance and operate a permanent museum of the London police, to be housed in the former Bow Street Police Station. After much work and expense the plans were scuppered when the building was sold by a partner in the project — the Metropolitan Police Authority!

See www.sherlock-holmes.com/e-times14.htm for *The Sherlockian E-Times*, **Classic Specialties** catalogue-newsletter. Or write to PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA. And there's a new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

It looks as if *Sherlock Magazine* really has folded. Well, it's gone out in style, and David Stuart Davies can be proud of having brought high editorial standards to the magazine. Enquiries about unfulfilled subscriptions should be directed to Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ (phone 01425 623960; e-mail subs@sherlockholmes.com).

Andrey Orlov's handsome new statue of Holmes and Watson will be unveiled in Moscow next month. The figures depict the characters as played by the great Russian actors **Vasily Livanov** and the late **Vitaly Solomin**, and there are pictures of Mr Livanov and Mr Orlov with the statue at <http://alek-morse.livejournal.com/tag/photos>. Vasily Livanov was in London a couple of weeks ago, being filmed for Russian television, and a group of us had the great pleasure of meeting him at the *Sherlock Holmes* pub. There are photos on the Society's website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

Paul Lamond Games (PO Box 3353, London N1 1SR) has released a 'DVD Murder Mystery', *Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Silver Bullet*. It's available from Amazon and other sources at about £12.00.

At www.storyteller.net/amphitheater/18 you can hear *The Dying Detective* read by **David Ian Davies**. *Sherlock Holmes on the Rails*, **Miles Richardson's** reading of 'The Bruce-Partington Plans' and 'The Wealden Pullman Theft', has been reissued by the Irregular Special Press (Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) as a two-CD set priced at £7.00. And on the Society's website you can listen to *The*

Mazarin Stone and *The Veiled Lodger*, dramatised by **M J Elliott** and performed by the Old Court Radio Theatre Company.

Due in April from Tadow Music (57 High Street, Tadow, Royston, Herts. SG8 0EU) is the first ever official recording of Miklos Rosza's score for *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, performed by the City of Prague Philharmonic conducted by Nic Raine.

A 'contemporary romantic drama' entitled *Where There's a Will* is in development as a feature film. Characters include the Hereafter Literary Council, of which Arthur Conan Doyle is a member. See www.deepwaterfilms.co.uk/wherewill/htm for more details. Also 'greenlit for development' is *Sherlock Holmes and the Banshee*, for the American series *Sci Fi Saturday*.

A video recording of *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZG7U7y-OUZg. **Roger Llewellyn** says, 'At last! And with what effort... on both sides of The Pond!'

The Hound of the Baskervilles dramatised by Clive Francis begins a national tour next month. Venues are: **Mercury Theatre**, Colchester (01206 573948) 8 - 17 Feb, **Theatre Royal**, Windsor (01753 853888) 19 Feb - 3 Mar, **Theatre Royal**, Brighton (08700 606650) 6 - 10 Mar., **Arts Theatre**, Cambridge (01223 503333) 12 - 17 Mar, **Yvonne Arnaud Theatre**, Guildford (01483 440000) 19 - 24 Mar, **Civic Theatre**, Darlington (01325 486555) 26 - 31 Mar, **Clwyd Theatr Cymru**, Mold (01352 755114) 3 - 14 Apr, **Greenwich Theatre** (020 8858 7755) 16-21 Apr, **Theatre Royal**, Nottingham (0115 989 5555) 23 - 28 Apr. **Peter Egan** and **Philip Franks** are Holmes and Watson.

The comedy trio **Peepolykus** have a rather different take on *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Their spoof version is at **West Yorkshire Playhouse**, Leeds (0113 213 7700) till 17 Feb, and is getting very good reviews. It will then tour to **Everyman Theatre**, Liverpool (0151 709 4776) 20 - 24 Feb, **Theatre Royal**, Winchester (01962 840440) 27 Feb - 3 Mar, **Palace Theatre**, Watford (01923 225671) 6 - 10 Mar, and **Oxford Playhouse** (01865 305305) 13 - 17 Mar.

Conan Doyle called one of his short story collections *Round the Red Lamp*, the lamp being the sign of a Victorian doctor's surgery. **Yves-Charles Fercocq** asks if anyone can provide him with a picture of a doctor's red lamp for a project he's engaged in. E-mail him at yvescharlesfercocq@tele2.fr.

An installation by the artist **Ian Rees**, comprising several interactive models of scenes from the Sherlock Holmes stories, is on display at Marylebone Library. There's more information and a short video at www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/special/sherlock.cfm.

If you fancy your chances in the next **Victorian Cricket Match** against the P G Wodehouse Society on 24 June, please contact Peter Horrocks on 0208 786 6471 or e-mail horrocks@1gc.com.

Jay Pearlman notes that the **Mini-Tonga Society** website has been updated at <http://hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/mini1.htm>. Look and marvel at the miniature re-creations of Canonical scenes!

Jens Byskov Jensen tells me that after many years' service Bjarne Nielsen BSI has handed on the presidency of the **Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark** to Bjarne Rother Jensen.

The Musgraves will hold their Spring Spectacular at the Huddersfield Hotel on 24 February. Get details from Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP.

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Winter 2006 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). *Bohemian Newsletter*, no. 71 and no. 72 (**České společnost Sherlocka Holmese**, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, December 2006 and January 2007 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie

Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Canadian Holmes*, Christmas (Winter) 2006 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada) [**Trevor's last issue as editor; after he's handed over the reins to Barbara Roden, a worthy successor**]. *Communication*, Special He's Everywhere Issue 2006 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *Explorations*, Winter 2006 (**The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, John Bergquist, 3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122, USA). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, December 2006 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *The Illustrious Clients News*, December 2006 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, January 2007 and February 2007 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

Mayday Mayday, December 2006 and January 2007 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Petrel Flyer*, January/February 2007 and The Master's Dinner Special Edition (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Practice Notes*, December 2006 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB). *Prescott's Press*, December 2006 and 'Sherlockian Sing-a-Longs' (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). *The Serpentine Muse*, Winter 2006 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Winter 2006 [**Nick Utechin's last issue as editor, after an amazing thirty years**]. *Sherlockiana*, nr. 4, 2006 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Nivågade 3, 2. th., 2200 København n., Denmark) **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, January 2007 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). *The Whaling News*, November 2006 and December 2006 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, December 2006 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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