THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

no. 157 29th January 1996

A Happy New Year to all!

Two more distinguished Holmeses died in 1995. **Vassily Livanov** played the part in the well-received Lenfilms series between 1979 and 1933. **Erich Schellow** starred in the Südwestfunk TV series in 1967; an excellent critique of his performance by Uwe Sommerlad (**Schellow Holmes**) was published last year by Von Herder Airguns Ltd.

Chris Redmond reports the death last year of **Bill Schweickert,** "organiser and anchor of the Three Garridebs of Westchester County... the principal Sherlockian society for New York City". He wrote the poem "A Long Evening with Holmes" that appears as superscription to **The Universal Sherlock Holmes.**

BSI investitures awarded during the Sherlockian weekend in New York earlier this month were: Steven T. Doyle ("The Western Morning News"), Ralph Hall ("Smack! Smack! Smack!") (*he's an exterminator by profession*), Hugh Harrington ("Wisteria Lodge"), Peter Horrocks ("The Inner Temple"), Kate Karlson ("The Evening Standard"), John Pforr ("P.C. Cook"), Marsha Pollack ("A Small But Select Library") and Bob Steck ("A Mysterious Scientist").

Our distinguished former Chairman, Shirley Purves BSI, recently broke her leg on the ice. She'd appreciate correspondence and phone calls (Herons Brook, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7RE; phone 01647 52588).

The 6th Musgrave Monograph is a fascinating account of greed, intrigue, manipulation and incompetence. **The Misadventure of the Sherlock Holmes Pilot** by Richard Lancelyn Green tells the story behind **The Man Who Disappeared,** intended as the first film in the first ever Holmes TV series. This nicely presented 40-page brochure contains numerous quotations (some of 'em damning) from relevant correspondence between the producers and the Conan Doyle brothers, and lots of rare stills. Copies can be had for £6.00 post-paid from Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4DN. **The Joint Investigation** by Brian P. Gallimore (see DM 156) can be had for £3.00 in UK or £3.75 overseas postpaid from Shelley Philipson, 4 Dolvin Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9EA. Sterling cheques drawn on UK banks should be payable to The Poor Folk Upon The Moors.

Derek Hinrich put me on to **The Mammoth Book of Historical Detectives** edited by Mike Ashley (Robinson Publishing, 7 Kensington Church Court, London W8 4SP; £5.99). This fat 532-page paperback contains 29 tales, divided into 5 historical periods: the last, "Holmes and Beyond", contains Jack Adrian's "The Phantom Pistol", an investigation by Inspector Stanley Hopkins, and "The Adventure of the Frightened Governess", one of Basil Copper's excellent Solar Pons narratives.

In April, Penguin Books (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) will publish **Sherlock Holmes and the Speckled Band** at 60p in the Penguin Children's 60s

series. Last July Moody Press (no address to hand) published four children's books by Jerry B. Jenkins in a series called **Dallas O'Neill & The Baker Street Sports Club**, at £3.75 each.

The Pleasant Places of Florida have published **Mrs Hudson's Handbook of Sherlockian Cookery, Book no. 2** by Joan S. Wood at $10.00 in the USA or $15.00/£10.00 (cash) overseas (Mrs J.S. Wood, P.O. Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222-0740, USA). Due in early spring from Greenwich Exchange (50 Langton Way, Blackheath, London SE3 7TJ) is **The Case of the Scarlet Woman** by Watkin Jones, an illustrated 190pp novel by Watkin Jones, in which Holmes and Watson become entangled with Aleister Crowley, W.B. Yeats and the occult Order of the Golden Dawn.

Forbes Gibb (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ) has issued **Catalogue Baskerville**, full of Holmesiana and Doyleana for sale. Rupert Books' **Catalogue no. 15** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) is even fuller. **Catalogue 35** from Nigel Williams Rare Books (22 Cecil Court London, London WC2N 4HE) lists a number of Conan Doyle titles among its first editions; prices reflect the West End location and the rarity of the books. (*Wouldn't it be nice to be rich?*)

We recently found a recording of **The Hound of the Baskervilles**, a "full cast dramatisation" lasting 70 minutes on a single cassette. It's nicely done, with rather Rathbone-and-Bruceish leads, a competent script and atmospheric production: excellent value at £1.99. Oddly, there are no credits at all! If you can't find it in the shops (and I've not found another copy), write to Telling Tales, Unit 1, Mill Lane Trading Estate, Purley Way, Croydon CR0 4AA.

Vol. 1 of **The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes**, with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, will be issued on cassette in February by BBC Enterprises Ltd, Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT. Several BBC recordings can be had by post from Heritage Media, PO Box 200, Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 3YY (Freephone 0800 374291), as can the Hodder Headline **Best of Sherlock Holmes** cassettes, featuring John Gielgud & Ralph Richardson.

A company called Speaking Books Ltd (13 Bramley Road, London W10 6SP) has reissued a number of Listen For Pleasure and other recordings in its "Word of Mouth" series, including **The Hound of the Baskervilles** read by Hugh Burden (WORD 4016); **A Study in Scarlet** read by Tony Britton (WORD 4017); **His Last Bow** read by Martin Jarvis (WORD 4018); and the **Return of Sherlock Holmes** audio cassettes taken from the Granada TV series: **The Man with the Twisted Lip/The Priory School** (Word 4007) and **The Musgrave Ritual/The Second Stain** (Word 4008). I spotted these in Woolworths.

I've had a nice letter from the MD of Tangled Web Audio, who says that the American address given in DM 154 is no longer valid ("though our mail is supposed to be forwarded"): **Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Intrigue** and **Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Adventure**, read by Edward Hardwicke, can be had at US$16.95 + airmail postage ($5.00 for one item, $4.00 for 2 - 5, etc.), orders to Tangled Web Audio, 3380 Sheridan Drive, Suite 167, Amherst, NY 14226, USA or Tangled Web Audio, 1063 King Street West, Suite 133, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 1L8, Canada. Murder One does now carry the cassettes. A third collection is due later in the year.

Malcolm Payne of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment has very good news: Crowborough Town Council will include a life-sized bronze statue of Sir Arthur in the newly designed Town Centre Planning. Funds will be raised

by donation, and donors' names will be recorded in a special book to be on public display in the Town Hall. Brochures available from David Harris, Town Clerk, Town Hall, Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex (phone 01892 665464).

In early December, vandals attacked Hound Tor on Dartmoor, sending one of its three huge "fangs' crashing to the base of the tor. The damage cannot be repaired. (*__The Daily Express__ 11th December notes: "Cornishman Sir Arthur Conan Doyle told the film company that made the first Baskervilles production it was Hound Tor which had inspired his story." Hm...*)

Hirayama Yuichi BSI (2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181, Japan) offers copies of a Japanese poster publicising a display of spirit photographs and featuring the face of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He asks for a large self-addressed envelope and a US$1.00 bill or one International Reply Coupon.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW; phone 0131-539 5629) has produced a white-metal figure, about 2½" high, of a pig, in deerstalker and Inverness, with a pipe and a delightfully confident expression. He's mounted on a shallow wooden base. Sherlock Pig was intended to be the main character in a book; the book was never completed, but the figure was, and at £5.00 postpaid it's a snip. (Charles has quite a range of miniatures, Holmesian and otherwise, for sale, as well as postcards, pottery, the handsome Edinburgh Medallion and his books. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for details.)

Newish miniatures are in the shops. No. 62 in the "Country Companions" series by Gordon Fraser (Bedford MK42 0JX) is a hedgehog peering through a magnifying glass at a ladybird, who's holding up a card saying "I ♡ YOU". The hedgehog wears a backwards baseball cap, but the peak and his quiff of quills make it look quite like a deerstalker. It's a nice little resin figure, and costs about £7.99. "The Whimsical World of Pocket Dragons" is a series of cold-cast porcelain models from Real Musgrave (sic - no address to hand); it includes __Elementary, My Dear__ at £21.95 and __Watson__ at £13.95. These little figures would make good Valentine's Day presents.

Mark Chadderton has sent "The Hound of the Basketballs", one of a series of punning greetings cards by Simon Drew of Dartmouth, Devon. The nicely drawn picture shows a dog surrounded by basketballs. You could write on the card with the Sherlock Holmes "Scribbler" pen, whose casing incorporates a detailed caricatural model of Holmes. The pen takes Bic refills. It's available from Cynthia G. Wein, 65 Briarwood Lane, Plainview, NY 11803-6329.

The University of Essex is running six day schools from 10.45 to 4.30 on Saturday 23 March in the Lecture Theatre Block. Peter Street, an extra-mural tutor in history for Essex, London and the Open Universities, will take the course "Sherlock Holmes and His London, 1880 - 1914". The fee of £12.00 (£8.00 concessionary) includes the cost of morning and afternoon refreshment. Write for details, or to book a place, to Continuing Education, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ (or phone 01206 872446/872519).

A reminder that The Sherlock Holmes Experience is running at Croydon Clocktower (Katharine Street, Croydon CR9 1ET) until 10 March.

American visitors in particular may be interested in "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Journey", an 8-day trip from Geneva to Meiringen and the Reichenbach Falls, roughly in the steps of Holmes and Watson, organised by Gemini Travel

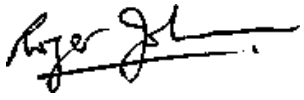
(The Barn Studios, Carters Lane, Old Woking, Surrey GU22 8JG; phone 01483 757660). Cost is $1930.00/£1198.00 per person in a twin room; single room supplement is $120.00/£85.00. Flights aren't included. The brochure looks very attractive.

The next meeting of the Northern Musgraves will be the Jeremy Brett Memorial Luncheon on Saturday 16 March at the Café Royal in London (details from David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER), Over the weekend 23-25 February the Franco-Midland Hardware Company and the Baskerville Hounds' Company Workshop will investigate Holmesian locations on Dartmoor (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Michael Doyle has kindly sent a copy of **Canadian Holmes** for Michaelmas 1995 (The Bootmakers of Toronto, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). This issue of an always well produced, instructive and entertaining journal contains (among much other grand material) Michael's own story "Sherlock Holmes and the Legacy of Rachel Howells", in which he proposes a remarkable solution to a problem that baffled Conan Doyle (see "Some Personalia about Sherlock Holmes" and Richard Lancelyn Green's introduction in **The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes**). It's a very clever and well written tale which raises some questions about the relationship between fiction and fact. Copies of the journal can be had from Mr Raymond for Cdn$7.50.

Other periodicals received. **The Sherlock Holmes Journal** Winter 1995 (*Derek Hinrich's essay on Mycroft Holmes and the Civil Service is first-rate*); **The Ritual** Autumn 1995 (The Northern Musgraves, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) (*given David Stuart Davies's relationship with Jeremy Brett and Granada, it's not surprising that this journal contains fuller and more personal appreciations of JB than any other except **The Sherlock Holmes Gazette***); **The Waterloo Sherlockian Letter** nos. 36 & 37 (Chris Redmond, 523 Westfield Drive, Waterloo, Ontario N2T 2E1, Canada) (*without doubt the most personal and intelligently opinionated Holmesian periodical I know; reading it is like chatting with Chris); **The Cormorant's Ring** vol.2 no.4 (The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA) (*Vinnie Brosnan, Don Hardenbrook & Jim Coffin provide a delightful account of the dedication of the John Bennett Shaw Library at the University of Minnesota*); **The Soft-Nosed Bullet-in** no.19 (Von Herder Airguns Ltd, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) (*most of it's in German, of course, but it does include Uwe Sommerlad's engaging and enlightening interview with David Burke <u>in English</u>; as a supplement there's **Sherlock Holmes auf Briefmarken**, a short pictorial survey of Holmes on postage stamps*); **The Striking (T)rifles** November 1995 & January 1996 (Von Herder Airguns Ltd); **The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication** no.156 & no.157 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) (*always good fun, and Joan Wood's recipes are mouthwatering*); **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press** (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*<u>the</u> Sherlock Holmes newsletter*).

Stop Press: Mr J. A. Row (102 Hillview Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4PE; phone 0181-428 1778) has the first 13 volumes of **The Strand Magazine,** Jan. 1891 - Dec. 1897, containing the complete **Adventures and Memoirs** plus much else. Fair condition. Offers of £120.00 or better. Free delivery within Greater London.



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no. 158 4th March 1996

If your subscription is due for renewal, please send several stamped & self-addressed envelopes, or (overseas) send £5.00 or US$10.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton.

The Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library (c/o George A. Vanderburgh, PO Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada) has published an excellent collection of essays: **From Baltimore to Baker Street; Thirteen Sherlockian Studies** by William Hyder. The author cuts through the accretion of error and fantasy that has bogged down Holmesian scholarship since before the days of Vincent Starrett, and presents well-researched, well-reasoned and intensely readable papers on Holmes' musical ability, Watson's education and career, religious figures in the Canon, and more. His investigation of the Abernetty business and of what he calls "The Martha Myth" are models of their kind. There's really funny humour in "The Root of the Matter" and "The Detectives of Penzance", and the two short plays are so good that I want to see them performed ("The Impression of a Woman" is admittedly similar to David Stuart Davies' **Sherlock Through the Magnifying Glass**, though neither could have influenced the other). Look, this one's really good, and every home should have a copy. It's a nice 216-page hardback, costing £15.00 + £2.00 postage. Cheques should be payable to George A. Vanderburgh.

The Baker Street Irregulars have published **Irregular Proceedings of the Mid 'Forties**, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; $24.95 + postage). I hope to review it before long.

Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West: Norwood, London SE27 9EL) have produced a 1996 **Sherlock Holmes Diary**, available in two versions at £6.00 each: 'filofax' or wire-bound. It's nicely done, with Holmesian or Doylean facts for appropriate dates, and a quotation for each week, but now a sixth of the year's gone it's a bit late.

Our member William Green has bound volumes of **The Strand Magazine** to sell: 6, 9 (2 copies), 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14. No. 6 has the last five of **The Memoirs**; the others all have Conan Doyle material. Offers, please, to Mr Green at 30 Hinksford Gardens, Swindon, Dudley, West Midlands.

Michael Cox points out that Worldbooks (BCA, Guild House, Farnsby Street, Swindon X SN99 9XX) is offering members the hardcover edition of **The Oxford Sherlock Holmes** at £34.97 (publisher's price £69.95).

Gravesend Books' 2nd supplement to their Catalogue no. 32 is full of Holmesiana and Doyleana (Box 235, Pocono Pines, PA 18350, USA).

The 27th issue of that splendid magazine **CADS** (Crime and Detective Stories) is out, with extensive contributions from our member Tony Medawar (enquiries and orders to Geoff Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA). Tony is also responsible for volume 1 no. 1 of **Notes for the Curious**,

a journal for admirers of John Dickson Carr (the greatest detective-story writer bar none, and a major Doylean and Holmesian to boot). Like **CADS,** it's on sale at Murder One. Enquiries should go to The Noughts-and-Crosses Club, 24 FitzJohn's Avenue, Hampstead, London NW3 5NB.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has excelled himself with his latest white metal miniature figures. Brace yourselves: these are **Oliver Hardy & Stan Laurel as Holmes & Watson!** They're exquisitely detailed, with stance and expression perfect. They stand just over 2½" high, and they're a bargain at £7.50 the pair. (Charles has a considerable range of delightful figures and other productions. Send a stamped & self-addressed envelope for a list.)

The Enesco Corporation (One Enesco Plaza, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-9941, USA), who make the Cherished Teddies figurines (see DM 156) have another series from the same designer, Priscilla Hillman's Calico Kittens. No. 129585, "It's No Mystery We're Friends", is actually a companion piece to the "Sherlock" Cherished Teddy: a seated kitten, dressed in deerstalker, waistcoat and cape, holding a magnifying lens and with a book in front of him entitled "A Story of Mystery". He's very cute and not over-expensive at about £13.00, but he comes with a truly emetic "certificate of friendship" ("As one of the Calico Kittens and a faithful companion, I will always be close to your heart to share your joys and sorrows..." *Yuck!*).

Deirdre Keetley has produced a fine limited edition plate in commemoration of Jeremy Brett's Sherlock Holmes. **The Sherlock Holmes Gazette** has forty copies for sale, numbered 61 - 100, at £29.95 each plus postage (UK £1.50, EEC £2.00); USA/Canada and rest of world US$45.00 + $5.00 airmail. Send cheque or credit card details to: Plate Offer, 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berkshire RG10 8AR. The products of Simpich Character Dolls (2413 West Colorado Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80904, USA) are considerably more expensive. The Sherlock Holmes "dressed sculpture" is $225.00; the cold-cast white porcelain bust is $85.00 (painted, it's $135.00) - and so on. Photos show these works to be very handsome, but there's no mention of size.

The exhibition **The Sherlock Holmes Experience** is running at the Croydon Clocktower until next Sunday, the 10th March. On Friday the 15th there'll be a conference at St Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham TW1 4SX: "Does Crime Pay: Uncovering Criminal Heritage". Among a very wide-ranging programme will be a discussion of the mystery devised for the Croydon exhibition. Attendance fee is £35.00, including lunch and refreshments. For more details contact Honor Godfrey on 0181-240 4078 (fax: 0181-240 4255).

Pam Bruxner passes on the news that the Undershaw Hotel & Restaurant (formerly ACD's Surrey home) is for sale. The asking price is a staggeringly low £150,000, but apparently a lot will need to be spent on the fabric. Further information can be had from the Operating Director & General Manager, Ivan Sljivic, at the Undershaw Hotel & Restaurant, 1 Portsmouth Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6AH.

Malcolm Payne of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment sends more information about the statue of ACD that the Town Council plans to erect at Cloke's Corner. A statue fund has been set up to raise the necessary £20,000, and the names of all subscribers will be recorded in a memorial book to be on permanent display at the town hall. Subscriptions can be sent to the Conan Doyle Statue Fund, Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough, or to

National Westminster Bank PLC, 7 High Street, Crowborough (Sort Code 60-06-27, Account Number 51597055).

Mark Hunter-Purvis sends a list of Northern Musgraves merchandise available from him at 6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD. Sweatshirt (L or XL, black or blue) with Peter Cushing's Holmes design on breast: £12.50. T-shirt (L or XL, white) with Kathryn White's Hound design in black: £8.50. Car windscreen sticker (12"x 2") with Cushing design & NM name: £2.00. Half-size sticker: £1.50. All prices include postage.

Recently issued on video is **Sherlock Holmes Returns: The Adventure of the Tiger Murders** (Arena Home Entertainment). This is the TV movie about the cryogenically frozen Holmes being revived in present-day San Francisco, originally broadcast in America as **1994 Baker Street.** Holmes is played by Anthony Higgins, and the film is quite good fun, though not as enjoyable as the similarly-themed **The Return of Sherlock Holmes,** with Michael Pennington and Margaret Colin.

I'm delighted to note that Michael Doyle's remarkable story "Sherlock Holmes and the Legacy of Rachel Howells" (see DM 157) is joint winner of the Derrick Murdoch Memorial Award for the best paper published in **Canadian Holmes** in 1995. Nice one, Michael!

Issue no. 14 of **The Sherlock Holmes Gazette** is just out. The outstanding feature for me is Michael Cox's account of Jeremy Brett's memorial service, but there's a great deal else here. David Stuart Davies pays tribute to Robert Stephens, and Uwe Sommerlad remembers Erich Schellow; April Carlucci looks at Nero Wolfe; Barbara Roden writes about "The Terror of Blue John Gap"; Catherine Cooke continues her survey of **The Strand Magazine;** Martin Pallant visits Crowborough and the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company; Jean and I consider Sherlockian miniatures in "Collectors Corner"... The retail price is £2.25; an annual subscription is £14.00 (UK), £18.00 (Europe), £21.00/$35.00 (USA & Canada), £22.00 (rest of world). The address is 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berkshire RG10 8AR. (The US representative is Classic Specialties, PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219.)

Our Society's next meeting will be on Wednesday the 20th March, at the Law Society in Chancery Lane, when Frederick Bryan-Brown will be the speaker. On the previous Saturday, the 16th, the Northern Musgraves will host the Jeremy Brett Celebration Luncheon at the Café Royal in Regent Street. There may still be places available: contact Kathryn White at Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER.

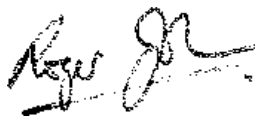
On Sunday the 24th March the Priory Scholars will meet in Leicester to present case studies of "The Six Napoleons" (details from Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). The following weekend the American Exchange will explore **The Valley of Fear**'s American setting, based at Pottsville, Pennsylvania (Bob Carter, PO Box 762, Fort Montgomery, NY 10922, USA), and on Sunday the 31st, the Franco-Midland Hardware Company and the Head Llamas will follow a Holmesian trail around the Victoria *&* Albert Museum in London ("The Stockbroker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

For Friday the 19th and Saturday the 20th April, the Irregular Special Railway Company plans to visit the Post Office Underground Railway, the Middlesex Assize Court, Bart's Hospital, some Newgate Prison cells and the House of Detention (Antony J. Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea,

Essex S39 2RB). (*There will probably be changes or cancellations to this programme now that the ISRC is independent of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company.*) On Saturday the 27th April, The Poor Folk Upon The Moors will host a talk by Roger Matthews on "The Bruce-Partington and All That" at the Dartmouth Inn, Totnes, Devon (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). (*The Poor Folk also have a range of merchandise: send Vosper a stamped & self-addressed envelope for a list.*)

Periodicals received. **The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication** no. 158 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) (*contains one of the most magnificently tortured puns I've encountered in a long time*); **Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser,** Thursday May 25 1895, Wednesday May 25 1895 (sic), Thursday October 19 1895 and **Bulletin d'adhesion** 1896 (La Société Sherlock Holmes de France, 26 avenue de la République, Paris XIe, France) (*superb spoof newspaper accounts designed and produced by Thierry Saint-Joanis and Jean-Pierre Cagnat; these cover the society's visit to Reichenbach last May and a tribute to Jeremy Brett*); **The Parallelogram,** January 1996 (The Parallel Case of St Louis, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA) (*some interesting observations on "Charles Augustus Milverton" by Joe Eckrich and a rather far-fetched list of twos in "Black Peter" by Pasquale Accardo*); **The Petrel Flyer** vol.8 no.1 (The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (*Hichimes Lagg explains British railway terms for North Americans, Frank Darlington writes about Eleanor of Castile, and there's a good collection of toasts from the Master's Dinner, with a fine lot of photographs for the rogues' gallery*).

The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter no.15 (Antony Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-sea, Essex SS9 2RB) (*it really is a newsletter*); **The Sherlock Holmes Railway Journal** vol.3 (The Irregular Special Railway Company, address as above) (*the high point is undoubtedly Bernard Davies' definitive identification of both Hugo Oberstein's house and the spot where Cadogan West's body was found - a coup de maître! - but the other essays, by Bernard Prunet, Catherine Cooke and Malcolm Payne are well worth reading too; non-members can buy copies at £4.00 (UK & Europe) or $8.00 (rest of world) including postage*); **The New Baker Street Pillar Box,** no.25 (The Franco-Midland Hardware Company, "The Stockbroker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) (*the outstanding feature of this issue is an exceptionally interesting account of Sven Hedin's explorations in Asia by members of the Swedish Pathological Society, opening up the possibility that he, not Holmes, was "a Norwegian named Sigerson"*); **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Interim Report 1995: The Thor Bridge Contract Renewed** (as above) (*there's more of interest here than in the Annual Report, notably Don Redmond's piece on Canonical names, Philip Weller's on the "Thor Bridge" hand-guns, and David Trenchard's on how the length of a piece of string can determine the approximate height of the bridge*). **The Baker Street Journal,** September 1995 (sic) (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*the pick here is Francine & Wayne Swift's identification, impeccable by the criteria they use, of George Alexander Baird as Sir Robert Norberton, closely followed by Marilyn MacGregor's comparison between the works of Conan Doyle and those of Wodehouse*); **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press,** Jan. 1996 and Feb. 1996 (Peter E, Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*the invaluable newsletter*).



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no. 159 15th April 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes, or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.00 or US$10.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. (Warning: British postal rates are due to rise sometime shortly.)

Kathryn White ("The Musgrave Ritual" BSI) and David Stuart Davies ("Sir Ralph Musgrave" BSI) were married at Haworth on Saturday the 6th April, in the presence of many Sherlockian friends. Congratulations!

Patricia E. Moran ("Patience Moran" BSI) died on 12th March, after a long period of illness, necessitating several operations. A founder of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes, and editor of the ASH journal, **The Serpentine Muse**, Pat was also good company and a good friend.

The BSI History Project is undoubtedly Jon L. Lellenberg's **magnum opus**. Now we have the fourth volume, **Irregular Proceedings of the Mid 'Forties** (The Baker Street Irregulars, The Baker Street Journal, P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA). It's engrossing reading for anyone interested in the world of Sherlockians and their activities, drawing on an apparently immense archive of correspondence and other documents. Smith, Morley, Starrett, Steele, Stout, Davenport, Wolff **et al.** - these are the people who founded our Great Game, finding out as they went along what could be done (sometimes at great financial cost, as in Ben Abramson's case). This period from 1944 to 1947 saw the publication of seminal books (by Edgar W. Smith, Christopher Morley and Ellery Queen) whose promotion by the BSI - throwing "the emphasis away from Doyle and toward Holmes" - incensed Denis and Adrian Conan Doyle, resulting in a notorious feud. It also saw the establishment of many scion societies, and the creation of **The Baker Street Journal.** The BSI History Project gives today's Sherlockians the chance to know their predecessors, appreciating who they were, and what they did. **Irregular Proceedings of the Mid 'Forties** runs to nearly 400 pages, with numerous illustrations. It costs $24.95 plus postage ($2.95 in USA; $3.95 elsewhere). Highly recommended.

Also newly published is **Sherlock's Veiled Secret** by K.C. Brown, a play which has been well received in performance by American Sherlockians. What is the family connection between the elderly Sherlock Holmes and the young sculptress Violet Sheridan? Why is he so keen for her to join him in solving a blackmail case? Can she solve the problem of her own identity? It's a complex and clever mystery, with well-rounded characters; I'd be interested to see the play performed. The publisher is Dramatists Play Service Inc. (440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, USA). I have no record of a price.

Murray Shaw, author of the grand series **Match Wits with Sherlock Holmes**, has written and illustrated a delightful children's story in which all the characters are cats. **The Case of the Clever Kippered Herring** runs to 32 pages, with some 70 illustrations. Copying, spiral-binding and hand-colouring is all done by Murray himself. The book costs $8.50 postpaid

(within the USA), and is available from Murray Shaw at 3601, N. 5th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85013, USA.

Ian Henry Publications (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) is importing a few copies of a volume called **The Lost Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** by Martin P. Edward. This 144-page paperback is published by Pragma Books of Prague, and the author is Czech, despite the pseudonym. The text is in English, good but not Watsonian, and there are a lot of misprints. The stories take Holmes and Watson to New York, St Petersburg, Singapore, Tokyo, Capri, and somewhere improbably called Askerville. This curiosity is available from late April at £5.25 including postage. Also newly in stock is **The Duties of Servants**, reprinted by Copper Beech Books from the 1861 original (£6.99 + 61p postage); **Sherlock Holmes Little Brown Notebook** (£3.50 + 43p), Paul Lester's **Sherlock Holmes in the Midlands** (£9.95 + 61p), and a die-cast metal Franco-Midland Hardware Company lorry (£8.50).

Dated 1995, but only recently available from the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library (c/o George A. Vanderburgh, P.O. Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario LON 1S0, Canada), is a big cerlox-bound volume containing just about the ultimate collection of songs inspired by Sir Arthur's great creation: **Singalong with Sherlock Holmes**, compiled and arranged by Jim Ballinger. Jim is better known in North America than over here, but if you can imagine a combination of Tim Owen, Auberon Redfearn and Peter Horrocks you may get some idea of his song-writing/singing activities (he writes his own music too). Here are the BSI and ASH favourites (yes, including "We Never Mention Aunt Clara" and the notorious "Reindeer Song"), classics by Harvey Officer, a number of Jim Ballinger's own songs, and much more besides, including a substantial selection from our own Society's **The Final Songbook** and **Chansons Domiciles et Quel Fils.** The list of contributors is extraordinary. So is the book! It costs £15.00 + £1.50 postage. Cheques should be payable to George A. Vanderburgh.

A couple of years ago Magico Magazine (P.O. Box 156, New York, NY 10002) published **Sherlock Holmes Vintage and Spirited**, an anthology of essays on Sherlockian drink, edited by Michael H. Kean. Magico seems desperately keen not to let anyone know about its publications, so I only came across this one by chance, and can't give you a price (though it may be stocked by Murder One and other specialist dealers). It makes an excellent companion to Patricia Guy's **Bacchus in Baker Street** (indeed, Ms Guy is a contributor to this nice volume).

Roman Stus notes that County Bookshops, a remainder store, has recently had copies of **The Annotated Sherlock Holmes** at £16.99. Michael Ross has made arrangements with D.O. Smith to publish a German translation of his fine Holmes story, **The Adventure of the Purple Hand**, as **Die Violette Hand.** It should be available now from Baskerville Bücher (Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) at DM 15. Dixon Smith of Rupert Books (58-59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) tells me of what must be the oddest Holmes anthology yet, **Sherlock Holmes Resurrected** edited by Marvin Kaye (St Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010, USA; $24.95). Living authors have been encouraged to write Sherlock Holmes stories in the styles of dead authors - Kerouac, C.S. Forester, Hemingway... Due in August from the University of Michigan Press is **The Secret Marriage of Sherlock Holmes & Other Eccentric Readings** by Michael Atkinson (£19.95).

Forbes Gibb (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ) has issued his **Catalogue Evans**, featuring books about "cops, spies and private eyes"; he's also having a spring clearance sale on selected titles. Nigel Williams Rare

Books (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE) has issued **Catalogue 37: First Editions,** including a number of Conan Doyle titles, at prices up to £9,500.00. (Please enclose return postage when you write off for a dealer's catalogue.)

Christine Fell wrote to Granada Television regarding video release of **The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes,** the final series, broadcast in 1994. The Viewers' Liaison Administrator replied: "... regrettably these stories were not released on video. Mr Brett was very ill during filming of these programmes and therefore did not appear for very much of the story. Because of that fact it was decided not to release these stories on video. Now, I understand that **The Memoirs** is available on video in America, so it seems rather unfair that we should be denied them. The programmes were good enough to broadcast, so they should be good enough to release on video. If you agree, please tell Granada so. The address is Granada Television Ltd, Manchester M60 9EA.

The BBC Radio 4 production of **The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes,** with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, has now been released on cassette. The third 2-tape set appeared this month, completing the magnificent project of dramatising all 56 of the short stories, in order and with the same actors. Bert Coules, the "onlie begetter", tells me that there is still a good chance of doing **The Hound of the Baskervilles** and **The Valley of Fear** to complete the Canon. The double cassettes are issued by BBC Radio Collection, P.O. Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW.

Random House Audiobooks plan to re-release Christopher Lee's good (abridged) reading of **The Valley of Fear** in August at £4.99.

Seen recently in Long Melford: a resin statuette of Sherlock Holmes from Royal Doulton. It doesn't seem to feature in a catalogue yet, and there's no title or serial number. It stands about 8" tall, and shows Holmes on Dartmoor, examining the footprint of a gigantic hound. It's exquisitely made and painted; the magnifying glass even contains a real convex lens. Well, it should be good. The price is £99.95.

Classic Specialties (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) has issued **"Quick Watson...",** the first of its brief and frequent catalogues - brief, but full of good stuff, including Vanessa Maroney's recording of David Stuart Davies's play **Sherlock Through the Magnifying Glass.** Classic Specialties is one of the world's best and most reliable Sherlockian dealers.

Bob Ellis sends advance notice of **Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's,** a play by Tim Heath, to be produced on tour in the autumn by Stage One Theatre Company. Bob will pass on further news as it becomes available, but if you're impatient you can phone Desmond Maurer on 0181-778 5213.

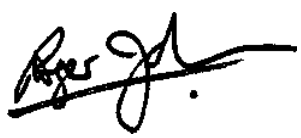
The Northern Musgraves' autumn meeting will be **Write On Sherlock,** held at the Victoria & Albert Hotel in Manchester on the 26th & 27th October. The theme is writing on Sherlock Holmes in all its forms: speakers will include Granada scriptwriter Trevor Bowen, BBC Radio scriptwriter Bert Coules, Doylean authority Richard Lancelyn Green, and crime-writer June Thomson. For £125.00/$190.00 per person (twin or double room; £140.00/$215.00 single room) you get Saturday lunch, afternoon tea. Gala Dinner, bed & full English breakfast, morning coffee, and all the events. Cost without bed & breakfast is £75.00/ $115.00, Details from Write On Sherlock, Overdale. 69 Greenhead

Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER. The summer meeting will be a joint event organised by the Poor Folk Upon The Moors: **The Milverton Upon the Moor Weekend** on the 22nd & 23rd June. Details from Shelley Philipson, 4 Dolvin Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9EA.

Dorothy Stix tells of a new Sherlockian society, for collectors of foreign-language editions, It's called Sherlock Holmes Around the World - or S,H.A.W. (no coincidence). A subscription of US$10.00, gets you the quarterly newsletter. Jeff Decker has designed a lapel pin, which is also $10.00; sign up for both at the same time, and it's $18.95. Details from Ralph Hall BSI, 2906 Wallingford Court, Louisville, KY 40218-2363, USA. And a reminder that the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment welcomes associate members; for a minimum donation of £11.00 you get the annual Birthday Newsletter and ACD Research File. Cheques payable to ACD Memorial Fund should be sent to Malcolm Payne, 4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST.

The Irregular Special Railway Company will visit the Post Office Underground Railway and dine at the Middlesex Old Sessions House on Friday the 19th April (details from Antony J. Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB), The Priory Scholars will hold an informal meeting on Saturday the 20th April to study "The Three Students" (Mr H.L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). On Sunday the 21st, there'll be a joint meeting of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, Baker Street Branch Lines and the Baskerville Hounds (details from "The Stockbroker's Clerk", "Bradshaw" or ''The Kennel Maid" - all of 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RD), On Saturday the 27th April Roger Matthews will give an afternoon talk to the Poor Folk Upon The Moors, entitled **The Bruce-Partington and All That** (Shelley Philipson, 4 Dolvin Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9EA) .

Publications received. **Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter** no. 16 (Antony J. Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-sea, Essex SS9 2RB) (*this enterprising society continues to flourish*). **The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication** no. 159 & no. 160 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) (*Ben Wood is retiring as Chaplain to the Baker Street Irregulars after 15 years*). **The Petrel Flyer** vol. 8 no. 2 (The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (*Hichimes Lagg is on his travels again, this time to Singapore, and there's a good pictorial survey of the "Rache" scene from **A Study in Scarlet***). **The School Report** no. 24 (The Priory Scholars of Leicester, Mr H.L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (*Syd Goldberg writes about Christopher Morley's famous non-Sherlockian novel **Kitty Foyle***). **The Parallelogram** April 1996 (The Parallel Case of St Louis, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA) (*Pasquale Accardo contributes some thoughtful notes on "Charles Augustus Milverton", though he probably overestimates the severity of a London winter*). **The Waterloo Sherlockian Letter** no. 38 (Chris Redmond BSI, 523 Westfield Drive, Waterloo, Ontario N2T 2E1, Canada) (*by far the most personal Sherlockian periodical I know - refreshingly so*). **The Baker Street Journal** December 1995 and March 1996 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*Donald K, Pollock, who made **Baker Street Miscellanea** such a respected publication, takes over as editor from the March issue - which, coincidentally, marks the BSJ's 50th anniversary*). **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press** March 1996 (Peter E, Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830) (*the indispensible Sherlockian newsletter*).



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 160 15th May 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.00 or US$10.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton.

Marlene Aig ("Mrs Turner" ASH), a noted journalist and stalwart of the New York Sherlockian scene, died in late April, aged 43. Her concrete memorial is the anthology *A Singular Set of People*, which she and David Galerstein edited for Magico in 1990, but she'll be remembered by many as a good friend. Marlene was one of the original **Occupants of the Full House**. A fortuitous typo in the Associated Press report called her "an award-wining journalist". She'd have liked that.

David Stuart Davies has done it again. *The Annals of Skelington Bones, number two: The Spectral Passenger of Swarthy Halt*, illustrated by Kathryn White, is the latest publication from Thumbprints (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). These clever and funny parodies are ideal for anyone who loves the Goons or Schlock Homes. Price £3.50 UK; $6.00 US. No.1, *The Phantom Paper-hanger of Bughare Hall*, is reprinted at £2.75/$5.00, or you can have both for £5.00/$10.00. Cheques payable to D.S. Davies.

The seventh Musgrave Monograph, due in the autumn, is *Some Knowledge of Baritsu* by Hirayama Yuichi & John Hall. Copies can be ordered from John Addy (23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU) at: UK £5.00; Europe £5.50; USA $10.00; Canada $11.00; elsewhere $12.00. This promises to be the last word on the subject.

Gerit Stenitzer tells of *Escapade* by Walter Satterthwaite (St Martin's Press; $5.99), a new novel featuring Conan Doyle and Houdini. Murder One in London has (had?) signed copies at £5.99. Gerit also notes *Elementary, Mrs Hudson* by Sydney Hosier (Avon; $5.50 — £5.50 at Murder One), an adventure of Mrs Emma Hudson, "the *other* sleuth of Baker Street". Gerit also came across Barbara Hambly's *Those Who Hunt the Night* (Del Rey; $5.99 — £5.99 at Murder One), a fantasy of vampires in Victorian London.

Malcolm Payne of the **Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** gives notice of *Unravelling Piltdown* by John Walsh, due in September from Random House in New York. Malcolm praises Walsh's thoroughness in investigating the Piltdown hoax and exonerating Conan Doyle.

Murder One has a new London rival. **Crime In Store Ltd** opened on the 2nd May at 14 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9HE. The proprietors are Ralph Spurrier, whose postal business **Post-Mortem Books** is well regarded, and Kathryn Skoyles. The shop has a pleasant atmosphere and a good stock. Call 0171-515 6791 and ask to be put on the mailing-list.

Derek Hinrich recommends *Is Heathcliff a Murderer? Puzzles in 19th Century Fiction* by J.A. Sutherland (Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP; £3.99). The "fiction" naturally includes a tale from the Holmes Canon. Due in August is *The Secret Marriage of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Eccentric Readings* by Michael Atkinson (University of Michigan Press, c/o Trevor Brown Associates, 114-115 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0BY; £19.95).

Very full new catalogues are to hand from **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE), the **Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB), and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE). *(*The last specialises in first editions, and the books are priced accordingly.*)* If you write for catalogues do enclose return postage.

Mark Hunter-Purvis (6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD; phone 0191-414 3218) has a copy for sale, as new, of Ron De Waal's 4-volume *The Universal Sherlock Holmes*. He invites offers around £70.00, or exchange for the Sherlock Holmes chess set.

Clive Stanhope of CSA Telltapes Ltd (101 Chamberlayne Road, London NW10 3ND) writes that the two double cassettes of unabridged Holmes stories read by Edward Hardwicke will be available as a limited edition boxed 4-pack from June/July till the end of the year, priced £11.99, as against £8.49 for each double cassette. The stories featured are Empt, Devi, Abbe, Card, Twis and Bruc. Catalogue number is TT4MC 604; ISBN 1 873859 92 9.

Brian Pugh and Philip Weller have both had word from the Viewer's Liaison Administrator *(sic)* at Granada TV that *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* **will** be released on video in Britain, through a new distributor, VCI. It may take up to 18 months to arrange.

From today until 31st May an exhibition called *Sherlock Holmes et la France*, mounted by the City of Paris with the aid of ***la société Sherlock Holmes de France***, is on view at the *Bibliothèque des Littératures Policières (BILIPO)*, 48-50 rue du Cardinal Lemoine, Paris Vème. This promises to be something really special.

Malcolm Payne passes on the very good news that the internationally praised sculptor David Cornell has been commissioned to create a statue of Arthur Conan Doyle, to be sited at Clokes Corner, next to Crowborough Cross. The project is likely to cost £20,000, of which £5,000 has already been raised. Meanwhile the

Crowborough Sherlock Holmes Festival is going ahead, with various events taking place from 29th June to 7th July. It all seems to be hastily organised, and with singularly little real Holmesian content — or Doylean, for that matter, except for the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment's annual ACD Memorial Ceremony at Terrace Montargis at 10.30 am on 7th July. The Festival Secretary is Susanne Purvis (phone 01892 665464); you may be able to get some information from her — I couldn't.

Mark Hunter-Purvis notes that the Caprian Operatic Society's production of *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* is running at the Little Theatre in Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, until Saturday 18th May. Tickets at £4.00 from Edith Quigley (phone 01207 270596).

Our Society's next event is the coach trip on Saturday 8th June to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and to Undershaw, Conan Doyle's house at Hindhead. On the evening of the same day the University of London Convocation will hold its annual dinner & dance at the Royal College of Surgeons. **The Irregular Special Railway Company** hopes to have a table at this Canonically important college. Interested parties should contact Dr Antony Richards at 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB.

The Glades of the New Forest will commemorate ACD's birthday by visiting his burial place at Minstead on 22nd May. For details contact Jane Weller (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 9th June the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and the **Priory Scholars** will visit the Tram Museum and other sites in Derbyshire ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU, or Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

The Northern Musgraves' Garden Party, under the title *Sherlock in Summer*, will be on Saturday 20th July at Bingley Grammar School. A Canonical Treasure Hunt, papers both light-hearted and serious, and a dramatic presentation are promised, as well as afternoon tea and a cash bar. Cost is £10.00 each. Applications should go to Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4DN. Cheques payable to The Northern Musgraves. The big event in the Musgraves' calendar is *Write On Sherlock*, "an examination of Sherlockian writing" held at the Victoria & Albert Hotel in Manchester over Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th October. Details from Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER.

Malcolm Payne reports that the **Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** is to have an ACD information section on the InterNet. I'll pass on details when plans are finalised. The Establishment can be contacted through Malcolm at 4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST. Associate Membership can be had for a minimum donation of £11.00 (cheques payable to **ACD Memorial Fund**). For that you get the annual Birthday Newsletter and ACD Research File, as well as the knowledge that you're supporting a very worthwhile organisation.

Periodicals received. ***Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser*** no. 12, ***Billy's Page 2*** and ***Le Petit Parisien, Mardi 14 Mai 1896*** (all published by **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France) *(*the usual superbly produced spoofs of Victorian newspapers and magazines, full of wit and solid information about the society and its activities;* ***Billy's Page*** *also features a comic strip adventure,* ***Les Irreguliers de Baker Street*****).* ***The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In*** no. 20 and ***The Striking (T)****Rifles* April 1996 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) *(*an equally admirable series of publications, this time in German; Von Herder Airguns Ltd are joining the Reichenbach Irregulars for a joint weekend at Bad Mergentheim from 27th to 29th September — for details contact Klaus Wörner, Törkelgasse 9, 97980 Bad Mergentheim, Germany*).*

The Torr no. 8 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) *(*outstanding are the editor's essay on "Codes and Ciphers in the Canon" and "Whatever Happened to Murray?", a perceptive fantasy by the pseudonymous Gaberlunzie Man*).* ***The Ritual*** Spring 1996 (the **Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) *(*Paul M. Chapman's "Weddings in the Canon", Rosemary Parry's "No Ghosts Need Apply" and Barbara Roden's "Canonical Misconceptions" seem to me the best among a splendid collection of contributions*).*

The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication no. 161 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) *(*brief, amusing and interesting; Joan Wood's recipe for Cullen Skink is mouth-watering*).* ***The Devon County Chronicle***, January 1996 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707, South 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, U.S.A) *(*Bob notes that the Watsonian Weekend V is scheduled for 19th-21st July; for details contact Susan Diamond ASH, 2851 N. Pearl Avenue, Melrose Park, IL 60164, USA*).* ***The Cormorant's Ring*** April 1996 (**The Trained Cormorants** of Long Beach, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA) *(*exceptionally interesting archival material about and by Robert Pattrick, a founder of the Cormorants*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press April 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) *(****the*** *Sherlockian newsletter*).*

Peter Blau notes that Brook Manor, once home to Richard Cabell (the "real" Hugo Baskerville), is now open as a guest house. Write to Brook Manor, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0HR. Also that Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) has copies of his BBC Radio 4 scripts for sale; write to Bert for details — these are among the best dramatisations *ever*. A new musical will play at the Grand Candlelight Theatre in Milton, PA in August: *The Molly Maguires* (book by William Strempek, music & lyrics by Sid Cherry) — the mind boggles!

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

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no. 161 15th June 1996

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Thanks to those who have expressed approval of the new-look *District Messenger*, and apologies to those who have received duplicate copies of recent issues. You'll be glad to know that we've invested in a new filing system which should prevent such errors in future.

The Annotated Lost World by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by Roy Pilot & Alvin Rodin (Wessex Press, P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA) is a very attractive production, with lots of excellent illustrations from the first British and the first American magazine appearances, as well as some of Ray Lankester's pictures of prehistoric creatures, which partially inspired the novel, and photographic illustrations from the first book edition, featuring ACD himself as George Edward Challenger. There's a most interesting appendix about ACD's working MS and other papers, now held at the New York Public Library, and much else besides. The notes are generally excellent, and conscientiously referenced, though there are lapses: 90 years ago the exchange rate was about $5 to £1, so a fine of £3/15/00 was closer to $20.00 than 75c! And the Camberwell tram that Malone chased after visiting Gladys went *to* Camberwell — presumably where Malone himself lived; there's no conflict here with the suggestion that Gladys lived in Streatham. It'll be a long while before we get a better annotated edition, though. Price is $34.95 + postage (USA $2.75 for 1 copy, 50c for each extra copy; elsewhere $3.75 for 1 copy, 50c for each extra copy).

Even if you missed our Society's trip to Sandhurst and Undershaw last weekend, you can still enjoy the researches and observations of Derek Hinrich, Geoffrey Stavert, Bernard Davies and others. *Going for a Soldier*, edited by Pam Bruxner and produced by Bob Ellis, a handsome, fully-illustrated 32-page A4 brochure in card covers, is available from the Merchandising Officer, Lynne Godden (Appletree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE). Price including postage is: UK £5.00; Europe £6.00; USA $12.00; elsewhere £7.00.

Eric Monahan (Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) has written a very good new adventure, *The Man with the Shaven Scalp*, in which Holmes's knowledge of archaic law enables him to solve a bizarre killing near Crowborough in Sussex. Roger Matthews has contributed a striking cover picture. Price for this 24-page booklet, including postage, is: UK £2.75 (cheques payable to Eric Monahan); Europe US$8.00; USA US$9.00; Canada US$12.00; elsewhere US$10.00. Dollars in cash, please.

Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) has published a new edition of "The Empty House", re-set to resemble its appearance in *The Strand Magazine*, but here presented (rather cheekily) as *The Norwood Magazine*. The text is nice and clean, the front cover picture (by F.D. Steele, in full colour) is striking, but the Paget illustrations are very muddily reproduced. It's a pleasant curiosity, priced at UK £2.50; USA $4.50 (cheques and checks payable to Hugh Scullion). Mr Scullion has another book due out soon from Cadds: *Sherlock Holmes Stories — Politically Correct?* More on this as it reaches me. (Cadds is now on-line at beetons@aol.com.uk.)

Laurie King tells me that HarperCollins are to publish a British edition of her novel *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* in August, with the sequel, *A Monstrous Regiment of Women* coming out next year. The third in the series, *A Letter of Mary*, is due in the USA in January. Ms King will do a signing session at Crime in Store (see next paragraph) in early August.

There are new catalogues, all containing a good amount of Holmesiana, from **Crime in Store** (14 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9HE), **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE), and **Sherlock in LA** (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA) *(*this one is a book in itself*)*. Do enclose return postage when you send off for a catalogue.

More new and forthcoming books. In May, Breese Books Ltd (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) issued *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy* by William Seil (£6.50 or £7.25 post-paid from the publishers). Also in May came *Sherlock Sooty* from World International (£2.99), *The Case of the Scarlet Woman* by Watkin Jones (Greenwich Exchange; £12.95), and *Sherlock Holmes: The Ruanian Succession*, a play by Jim Sperinck (Jasper Publishing; £3.90).

Two Val Andrews titles are due from Breese Books in September: *Sherlock Holmes and the Man Who Lost Himself* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Greyfriars School Mystery* (each £5.99). *A Study in Scarlet* will appear as a Penguin Popular Classic in December, at £1.00. The same month sees *Sherlock Holmes: From Victorian Sleuth to Modern Hero* edited by Joseph A. Cutshall King (Scarecrow Press; £47.00).

Issue 15 of *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette* is out, containing the first part of Michael Cox's "A Study in Celluloid", his personal account of the making of the Granada Television series. Catherine Cooke completes her survey of *The Strand Magazine*; Barbara Roden looks at animals in Conan Doyle's writing; Marcus Geisser considers the "death" of

Sherlock Holmes; David Stuart Davies tells us why *Without a Clue* is worth watching; "Collectors' Corner" deals with film and TV memorabilia — and there's much more besides. It costs £2.25 retail, or you can subscribe for: UK £14.00; Europe £18.00; USA & Canada £21.00/$35.00; elsewhere £22.00. The address is 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. US representatives are Classic Specialties, (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) who have a wonderful selection of Sherlockiana of all sorts. The proprietors, Carolyn & Joel Senter, are interviewed in this issue of the *Gazette*.

Jean and I have taken over co-ordinating the newly renamed "Societies Forum" for *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette*. Tell us about yourselves! What have you been doing lately? What are you going to do? How did you come to be a society in the first place? This is a chance for us to find out what Sherlock Holmes societies are really like, so please send your report or account to us at Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE.

Due in August from Soundings is an unabridged reading of *Sherlock Holmes and the Railway Maniac* by Barrie Roberts (£30.50). The reader is John Hendry.

Bert Coules tells me that BBC Radio 4 is to repeat some more episodes from *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, this time on Saturdays. The time has yet to be confirmed: *The Golden Pince-Nez*, 6th July: *The Missing Three-Quarter*, 13th July; *The Abbey Grange*, 20th July; *The Second Stain*, 27th July. The 8 episodes of *His Last Bow* will follow on Saturdays 3rd August to 14th September. Bert adds: "*The Valley of Fear* (dramatised by me, produced and directed by Enyd Williams) is to be recorded at the end of this year for transmission in early 1997. Format will be two one-hour episodes. *The Hound* is still to be announced, but 'definitely will be produced in the near future' according to a BBC spokesperson..."

Philip Attwell notes that the rock album *Instinct for Detection* by Lionrock (BMG) uses F.D. Steele's picture of Holmes looking at a bloody handprint, but replaces the latter with a red lion's head.

Grayshott Literary Festival will begin on the evening of Friday 20th September with *Alfred & George, George & Arthur* (Tennyson, Eliot, Shaw & Doyle) by Michael Nyman and readers. Events on the Saturday and Sunday include a lecture on Arthur Conan Doyle. Tickets at £10.00 per day (£18.00 for both days) can be had from Grayshott Bookshop, The Square, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6LQ. Enquiries: phone/fax 01428 712892.

The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections (466 Wilson Library, 309 Nineteenth Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA) are appealing for $15,000 to match a proposed grant from the F.R. Bigelow Foundation to support the Sherlock Holmes Collection Specialist. The money must be raised by 30th June.

The Army Hospital at Netley is now a Heritage Centre. Forthcoming exhibitions are: *Hospital Ups & Downs*, showing recent changes in the provision of forces hospitals (22nd-30th June), and *Cooks, Casualties and Claret*, military hospital food from the Crimea to Bosnia (3rd August - 29th September). Details can be had from the Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley, Southampton SO3 5GA (phone 01703 455157).

Invested **Baker Street Irregulars** can once again appear resplendent in a BSI tie striped in the famous dressing-gown colours: purple, blue and mouse. The original version sold out over four years ago, but Wayne and Francine Swift have made arrangements for a new version, which will cost, post-paid, $23.00 in the USA and $25.00 elsewhere. Checks, in US currency, payable to Wayne Swift, should be sent to The Swifts, 4622 Morgan Drive, Chevy Chase, MD 20815-5315, USA.

The Northern Musgraves' annual Garden Party will be held on 6th July in the grounds of Bingley Grammar School; (details from David Stuart Davies & Kathryn White, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). On the 7th July, **The Glades of the New Forest** will go in search of Lord Backwater's estate (Jane Weller, 69 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company's** Works Outing, 27 July - 3 August, is a "Holmesian and Doylean excursion to seven countries" ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). Allan J. Palmer has set up a World Wide Web page on the InterNet for the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. The URL to locate the FMHC page is http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Allan-Palmer.fmhc.htm .

Periodicals received. ***The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication*** nos. 162 & 163 (Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA). ***The School Report*** no. 25 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Parallelogram***, June 1996 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA).

3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles, May-June 1996 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, Editor, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). ***The New Baker Street Pillar Box*** no. 26 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, "The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) *(*a fresh look at Tredannick Wartha by Brian S. Brodie — who takes the 'original' publication date (1932) of* ***Mr Holmes in Cornwall*** *by "Percy Trevelyan" at face value, though that aspect of this important little book is pure spoof; this doesn't affect the value of Brian Brodie's research*)*

The Petrel Flyer, vol. 8 no. 3 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** (Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) *(*a grand essay on the Bruce-Partington submarine by Michael Higgs — but did J.P. Holland* actually *adopt the code-name of "Bruce"?*).* ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) *(*the indispensable Sherlockian newsletter*).*

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 162 22nd July 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues (British postal rates have risen this month). Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton.

Jack Tracy ("A Case of Identity", BSI) died on 9th May. He edited and published many excellent Holmesian and Doylean books, but his lasting memorial is likely to be his own meticulous *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana*, which immediately established itself as one of the genuinely invaluable reference works.

Eddie Maguire has written another Sherlock Holmes adventure, *A Death at the Cricket* (Big House Books, 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ), a clever and entertaining tale that shows close acquaintance with late Victorian times and with the Holmes Canon. It could have benefited from careful proof-reading, but it's worth persevering beyond such lines as: "But there is nothing to relieve me from the mundaying". The price, post-paid, of this pleasant 36-page booklet is £3.00, of which 25p goes to the Brian Johnston Memorial Trust, set up to provide support for promising young cricketers, disabled sportspeople, and entertainers in financial difficulties. *(*Donations can be sent to the Trust at P.O. Box 3897, Lord's Cricket Ground, St John's Wood Road, London NW8 8QG.*)*

Hugh S. Scullion examines the Canon in his new book, a strongly bound 98-page paperback called *Sherlock Holmes Stories:— Politically Correct? With some explanations* (Cadds Printing Ltd, 59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL; £8.00 plus postage at cost). It's refreshing to see the stories through the eyes of an enthusiastic newcomer though I fancy that Mr Scullion hasn't allowed sufficiently for the attitudes of the time. The odd character may use racially dismissive phrases, but that doesn't mean Arthur Conan Doyle himself was a racist bigot. (And on the subject of the "Jew broker" from whom Holmes acquired his violin, Andrew Joffe and Roberta E. Pearson use him as evidence that Holmes himself was Jewish, as no *goy* could get the better of a Jew in business...)

Next month, Calabash Press will issue the first title in *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes*, a series that will eventually cover the whole Canon. *The Musgrave Ritual* features essays (by Richard Lancelyn Green, Catherine Cooke, Owen Dudley Edwards, Roger Matthews, R. Dixon Smith, John Hall, David Stuart Davies, Frank Darlington, Barbara Roden and Christopher Roden) covering numerous aspects of the case, both Holmesian and Doylean. Illustrated throughout, it will be available in hardback at £16.99 + £2.00 p&p, and in paperback at £10.99 + £1.75 p&p (Calabash Press, Ashcroft, 2 Abbottsford Drive, Penyffordd, Chester CH4 0JG).

This month Leopard Books (20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) issued the Canon - except for *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* — in a cheap hardback edition: the long stories are £2.99 each and each volume of short stories is £3.99. In December, *A Study in Scarlet* will appear as a Penguin Popular Classic at £1.00 (Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ).

In May, Carroll & Graf (Worldwide Media Services, c/o Biblios Publishers' Distribution Services Ltd, Star Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8LD) published a very welcome new edition of *The Case of the Baker Street Irregulars*, Anthony Boucher's superbly entertaining detective story (£4.99) *(*this is not a pastiche*)*; this month they issued Edward B. Hanna's *The Whitechapel Horrors* in paperback (£9.99) *(*this is*)*. From Barnes & Noble (c/o Verulam Publishing Ltd, 152A Park Street Lane, Park Street, St Albans AL2 2AU) comes a new edition of *The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by Peter Haining (August 1996; £9.95).

New catalogues are at hand from **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA), **Gravesend Books** (Box 235, Pocono Pines, PA 18350, USA) and **Bibliotective** (Box 47347, Oak Park, MI 48237, USA) - all full of interest and temptation. Classic Specialties' *Quick Watson...! #2* is as much a magazine as a catalogue; Antony Richards and the **Irregular Special Railway Company** are featured strongly. Gravesend's *Catalogue 33* has a lot of desirable material from Julian Wolff's collection, including Droodiana. Bibliotective is new to me; *Catalog 10* has much unusual Holmes/Doyle stuff in with other crime & detective books.

David Stuart Davies is the new editor of *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette*, but there'll be a brief period of transition: David will be responsible for the content of issue no. 16, but Eddie Bissell will attend to the layout. *(*Jean and I have taken over the clubs & societies pages for the* Gazette*. Write to us at Mole End and tell us about your society - what have you done? What are you going to do? How did you get together in the first place?*)*

The long-awaited video of *The Speckled Band* and *The Illustrious Client*, starring our Hon. Member Douglas Wilmer and Nigel Stock, will be released by BBC Worldwide on 5th August. It will be available by post (within the UK) from BBC Video Offer (Sherlock Holmes), PO Box 44, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7AE. Cost, including postage, is £16.50; cheques should be payable to BBC Worldwide Ltd.

Also in August, an unabridged reading of *Sherlock Holmes and the Railway Maniac* by Barrie Roberts is due from Soundings Ltd (King's Drive, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 2JT). The reader is John Hendry, and it costs £30.50.

Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's by Tim Heath will be at the Komedia Theatre in Brighton from Wednesday 11th to Saturday 14th September, prior to a national tour. According to the press release, "This is a tale of love and fear; ruthlessness, revenge, blackmail, murder and scandal - with a touch of operetta!" Holmes is played by Miles Richardson, whose father Ian starred in two successful TV movies as Holmes; Andrew Bridgmont is Watson. An interview with Tim Heath will appear in the next issue of *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette*. Further information about the tour can be had from Desmond Maurer, Stage One Theatre Company, 34 Jasmine Grove, London SE20 8JW (phone 0181-778 5213; fax 0181-778 1756).

Pam Bruxner sends the news that Miles Kington & Simon Gilman will be at The Pleasance Attic (60 The Pleasance, Edinburgh) from 7th to 31st August, with *The Death of Tchaikovsky: A Sherlock Holmes Murder Mystery*. Tickets can be had from The Pleasance (phone 0131-556 6550). Information and photographs can be had from Caroline Maynard at Antidote Theatre (01225 722262).

Phil Attwell tells me that Lip Service (Maggie Fox & Sue Ryding) will be at The Castle (Castle Way, Wellingborough, Northants. NN8 1XA; box office phone 01933 270007) on Wednesday 20th November with a two-person comedy called *Move Over Moriarty*.

The first UK National Collectors' Convention will be held at Holdenby House, Northampton, on Saturday 31st August and Sunday 1st September. There'll be dealers, speakers, and representatives of collectors' clubs. For information, contact Special Event Organisers (UK) on 01773 769335 or 01332 880412.

The Grayshott Literary Festival will be held over the weekend 20th to 22nd September, kicking off with a free recital by Michael Nyman: *Alfred & George; George & Arthur (Tennyson, Eliot, Shaw & Doyle).* On Saturday afternoon Dr Jenny Ward will speak about Arthur Conan Doyle, and Simon Brett will lead a discussion group. Enquiries, phone/fax 01428 712892. Tickets at £10.00 per day or £18.00 for both Saturday & Sunday can be had from Grayshott Bookshop, The Square, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6LQ (phone/fax 01428 604798).

Lasting Impressions, a weekend symposium to celebrate Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Silver Anniversary of the **Bootmakers of Toronto** will take place from 26th to 29th June at the Arts & Letters Club, St George's Hall, Toronto. For details, contact *Lasting Impressions*, 30 Elm Avenue #210, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 1N5.

Allan J. Palmer points out that the URL given in DM 161 for the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company's** page on the World Wide Web should have read: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Allan_Palmer/fmhc.htm.

The Reichenbach Irregulars are in need of assistance in producing their twice-yearly magazine *The Reichenbach Journal*. Specifically, the editors are looking for someone willing to translate classic "writings about the writings" from English into German. If you can help, please contact Marcus Geisser, Alemannenstrasse 4, CH-9320 Arbon, Switzerland (phone 0041 71 446 10 58; e-mail mgeisser@access.ch).

Our own Society's next meeting will be the joint weekend at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, with the Dorothy L. Sayers Society, 20th - 22nd September.

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company's "Works Outing", a Holmesian & Doylean trip to seven countries, will take place from 27th July to 3rd August (details from "The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On Saturday 17th August, the **Irregular Special Railway Company** will explore Baker Street and then travel by Underground to Southall Railway Centre (Antony J. Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB).

Periodicals received. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal*** summer 1996 *(*features the first in a series taking a fresh look at classic works in our field: Catherine Cooke examines* In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes *by Michael Harrison*).* ***The Baker Street Journal*** June 1996 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) *(*includes the essay mentioned above, claiming that Holmes was Jewish — another claiming that he was an Arab, and a spoof stating that he was an Afro-American woman... there's also some fascinating archive material*)*

The Devon County Chronicle April 1996 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn BSI, 2707 South 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA) *(*this issue was delayed by Bob Hahn's recovery from surgery; it's good to know that all went well*).* ***The Petrel Flyer*** summer 1996 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada V7C 3C6) *(*Michael Higgs has been travelling again, and brings back fascinating Holmesian memories from Slovenia*).*

The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter no. 17 (Antony J. Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB) *(*the ISRC has officially undergone privatisation*).* ***The New Baker Street Pillar Box*** no. 17 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, "The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) *(*features the first in a series taking a fresh look at classic works in our field: John Hall examines* Holmes and Watson: A Miscellany *by S.C. Roberts*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press June 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830; InterNet: pblau@capaccess.org) *(*the senior Sherlockian newsletter, from which I take the following...*).* Varese Sarabande has released a CD called *Sherlock Holmes: Classic Themes from 221B Baker Street*, containing music from films and TV, from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1939) to the Granada series, all newly recorded. $18.98 within USA, $24.98 to Canada, $27.98 elsewhere (credit card orders welcome) from *Scarlet Street*, Box 604, Glen Rock, NJ 07452, USA.

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

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Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

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no. 163 31st August 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton.

The *Daily Telegraph* for 20th August reported that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's archives are at last to be released to the family, which should make things a lot easier for future biographers.

Sherlock Holmes and the Strange Case of the Ruanian Accession by Jim Sperinck (Jasper Publishing, 1 Broad Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 5BW; £3.90) is an exciting full-length (and full-blooded) drama involving assassination, disguise and international politics during the visit of the Crown Prince of Ruania to London. The plot is cleverly worked out, and the various scene changes provide plenty of scope for the designer. *(*Mr Sperinck's one-act comedy Holmes, Sweet Holmes (Jasper; £2.40) is established as a festival/competition play.*)*

The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes: The Musgrave Ritual (Calabash Press, Ashcroft, 2 Abbottsford Drive, Penyffordd, Chester CH4 0JG; hbk £16.99 + £2.00 p&p; pbk £10.99 + £1.75 p&p) is a fine collection of essays. John Hall dates the case — and Roger Matthews, with equally sound reasoning, finds a different date. Catherine Cooke, Richard Lancelyn Green and Owen Dudley Edwards look at ACD's inspirations. Dixon Smith surveys the illustrations, and Barbara Roden the dramatisations. David Stuart Davies considers the Holmes and Musgrave. Frank Darlington sets Brunton in the tradition of smart servants, and John Hall identifies the butler's *real* accomplice. It's comprehensively introduced by Christopher Roden, and produced to Calabash's very high standards. I look forward to more.

Christopher Roden alerts me to *Sherlock Holmes in Cornwall* by Kelvin I. Jones, a 28-page booklet containing the *Strand* publication of "The Devil's Foot", with four pages on the identity of *Radix Pedis Diaboli* and the location of Tredannick Wartha and Tredannick Wollas, and two on Holmes's use of drugs. The brochure is aimed at the visitor to Cornwall rather than the Holmesian, but it's pleasant and interesting — though the *Strand* illustrations are coarsely reproduced. (Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB [phone 01736 51769]; £2.50 + postage. Cheques should be payable to Kelvin I. Jones.)

Anyone interested in collecting Holmesiana should have a copy of Charles Hall's excellent book *Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective and His Creator*, a splendidly illustrated hardback covering the whole gamut. It's available from Mr Hall at £10.95 + postage, and worth every penny. (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW, Scotland.)

Volume 6 of *The Shoso-in Bulletin* is out, maintaining the series' high reputation, with contributions from the USA, Japan, India, Sweden, France, Australia, Switzerland, Germany — and the UK (our own Eric Monahan and Philip Weller). The 162 strongly bound pages contain a delightful variety of scholarship, fantasy, humour and extrapolation, nicely edited by Mel Hughes for **The Men with the Twisted Konjo** (Stu Shiffman's cover shows a marvellously Japanese Holmes and Watson in a Japanese Baker Street sitting-room). European readers can get copies for £7.50, including postage, from John Hall, 20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR, England (cheques payable to John Hall). North Americans should contact Jennie C. Paton, 206 Loblolly Lane, Statesboro, GA 30458, USA.

The Sherlock Holmes Gazette no. 16 is the first under David Stuart Davies's editorship. Michael Cox continues his personal account of the making of Granada TV's Sherlock Holmes series. Maria Hayzen reports on activities in Paris. Catherine Cooke surveys Baker Street. Barbara Roden examines "The Bully of Brocas Court". Roger Grimshaw answers your questions. Richard Lancelyn Green, A.L. Blake and David Stuart Davies discourse on aspects of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Martin Pallant visits Rupert Books. "The Other Detectives" looks at Albert Campion, and "Collectors' Corner" considers lapel pins and badges. Plus news, reviews and the expanding "Societies Forum". Retail price is £2.25; subscriptions: UK £14.00, Europe £18.00, North America £21.00/$35.00, rest of world £22.00 (*The Sherlock Holmes Gazette*, 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR, England). The US representatives are Classic Specialties, P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA.

*(*It's nearly a year since **Jeremy Brett** died. Donations in his memory are welcomed by the Manic Depressive Fellowship, 8-10 High Street, Kingston-on-Thames KT1 1EY.*)*

Mike Ashley is preparing *The Mammoth Book of Sherlock Holmes* for publication by Robinson Books next spring. "The book will contain a continuing narrative which records the exploits of Holmes, identifying the original stories by Doyle in their correct sequence (subject to dispute!), but not reprinting them, and then will fill in the gaps between these cases by presenting the hitherto unrecorded cases of Sherlock Holmes. As they will be published in their correct sequence it will not only present these cases in their proper context, it will also throw new light on the original canon and bring an extra dimension to the Holmes stories."

Two books by Val Andrews are due next month from Breese Books Ltd (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER): *Sherlock Holmes and the Greyfriars School Mystery* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Man Who Lost Himself* (both £5.99). Also *A Study in Scarlet* will be published as a

Penguin Popular Classic at £1.00 (Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ).

New catalogues (in ascending order of Holmes/Doyle interest) are available from: **Ming Books** (10 Hartcran House, Gibbs Couch, Carpenders Park, Watford WD1 5EZ) *(*no Holmes or Doyle at all*)*, **Crime in Store** (14 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HE), **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE) *(*I understand that the Holmes & Doyle material will be moving across the way to 25 Cecil Court*)*, and **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) *(*the British Holmes & Doyle specialists*).*

Random House Audiobooks (20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) have re-released Christopher Lee's abridged reading of *The Valley of Fear*. With his recent recordings Mr Lee has had the chance to demonstrate his great vocal versatility, rarely apparent in his movies. Here, he differentiates subtly but clearly between characters; the various English and American accents, Mr Mac's Aberdonian, Jack McMurdo's Irish, Jacob and Ettie Shafter's Swedish — it's splendidly done. This best of the Sherlock Holmes long stories is a baffling detective story coupled with a gripping thriller, and Mr Lee does it full justice. The price of the double cassette is a more than reasonable £5.99.

Next month, Leopard Audio (Leopard Books, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) will release, er, a recording of *The Valley of Fear*. Whitaker's BookBank says it's a double cassette priced at £4.25. In October comes a 6-cassette pack, *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (Hodder Headline Audiobooks, 338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH; £17.00). In November, Penguin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) will release both *Black Peter and Other Sherlock Holmes Stories* read by Douglas Wilmer (£7.99), and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* read by Freddie Jones (£6.99) *(*marketed as a Children's Classic*).*

Philip J. Attwell points out that the BBC Radio 3 schools broadcast *Sherlock Holmes and the Rogues Gallery* (music education for ages 9-12, transmitted 20th September to 29th November 3 am - 3.20 am) can be had on cassette for £2.00 by phoning 0181-746 1111 for an order form. There are also teacher's notes, pupils' books and "termly songs and accompaniments". BBC Schools TV is currently covering the Victorians, and various materials are available.

The long-awaited BBC video *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes*, containing "The Speckled Band" and "The Illustrious Client" is in the shops now. It's good to have one's memories of the mid-60s TV series confirmed. Mr Douglas Wilmer was a great Holmes, well partnered by Nigel Stock. The series was seriously under-funded in comparison to Granada's, but sheer style and dedication overcame such problems. Felix Felton can't quite match Jeremy Kemp as Dr Roylott, but Peter Wyngarde's wonderfully vicious Baron Gruner has even Anthony Valentine's fine performance beat. The visual quality is vastly better than I'd expected. It costs £14.99 in the shops, and is worth every penny. Buy it, and persuade the BBC that there's a market for further releases.

The CD *Sherlock Holmes: Classic Themes from 221B Baker Street* (Varese Sarabande, VSD5692) is distributed in Britain by Pinnacle and "available from all good record stores or from Magpie Direct Music, tel. 01784 242224".

Tim Heath's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's*, with Miles Richardson and Andrew Bridgmont, is currently on tour. Holmes and Watson re-enact a couple of classic early cases, and then find themselves effectively plunged back into one of them. A list of venues can be had from Desmond Maurer, Stage One Theatre Company, 34 Jasmine Grove, London SE20 8JW (phone 0181-778 5213).

Douglas Warren sends information that Leslie Bricusse's musical *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* will run at Stourbridge Town Hall, Worcestershire, from 20th - 26th October. Phone 01384 277398 for tickets. (Douglas also notes that from 1st to 3rd November at Urchfont Manor College [Urchfont, Devizes, Wilts. SN10 4RG; phone 01380 840495] Ernie Richards will hold a course called *Elementary, My Dear Watson.*)

At Mark Hall Library in Harlow, at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 16th October, I shall give an illustrated talk on *Sherlock Holmes: Fact & Fiction.* Entrance is free, by ticket (phone

New from Royal Doulton (Minton House, London Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7QD) are Holmes and Watson book-ends, priced at £69.95 each or £130.00 the pair.

A reminder of the **Grayshott Literary Festival**, 20th - 22nd September. Tickets from Grayshott Bookshop, The Square, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6LQ (01428 604798).

Our own Society's next meeting will be the weekend in Cambridge with the **Dorothy L. Sayers Society**. On 14th-15th September the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and the **East Anglian Dancing Men (and Women)** will hold a Victorian Reading Party in Southend-on-Sea (details from 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors'** Dartmoor Day will be on Saturday the 21st September, taking in the Prison Museum, the High Moorland Centre and much else besides (£3.00 per person, not including lunch; H. Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). On the 22nd there's the **Priory Scholars** video afternoon (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

Periodicals received. ***The Striking (T)Rifles*** Juni and August 1996 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) *(*all in German, and very interesting*).* ***The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication*** nos 164 & 165 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) *(*Ben notes that Dominica has issued a $1.00 depicting Basil Rathbone as Holmes; he may still have 9-stamp sheetlets available at US$7.50*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press July 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) *(*the Sherlockian newsletter, from which I draw the following*):-*

"Chinese Box Mysteries: Sherlock Holmes" by Dan Kilcup (Allen Wayne Ltd, 5404-A Port Royal Road, Springfield VA 22151, USA; $24.00 post-paid) offers two pastiches involving an elderly Sherlock Holmes and a young John S. Watson (son of the doctor), and a third featuring the ghost of Sherlock Holmes."

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

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no. 164 5th October 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Please note that dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Our Society has published *Studies in Sherlock Holmes* by Dorothy L. Sayers: her four contributions to the higher criticism, brought together for the first time in a single volume, with a foreword by Richard Lancelyn Green. Only 100 copies of this luxury edition are for sale. Cost post-paid is: UK £21.00; Europe £22.00; USA $45.00; elsewhere £23.00 or equivalent. Orders to Mrs E.M. Godden, Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE. Cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

It's a pleasure to welcome Kelvin I. Jones back to the Holmesian scene. Besides his booklet *Sherlock Holmes in Cornwall* (reviewed in DM 163), he has reprinted his 1981 brochure *Thank You, Watson — The Matches*, a study of Holmes and tobacco (£3.00 + £1.00 postage), and this month publishes *The Mythic Hound* (£3.50 + 50p postage), a sequel to *The Mythology of The Hound* (reprinted at £2.50 + £1.00). These works can be ordered from Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB. *(*It's worth seeking out a little book called* ***Mr Holmes in Cornwall: A Critical Explanation of the Late Dr Watson's Narrative Entitled "The Devil's Foot"*** *by Percy Trevelyan, still available, according to Whitaker's, at 70p plus postage from the Institute of Cornish Studies, Trevithick Centre, Trevenson Road, Pool, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 3PL.*)*

David Stuart Davies has two books due on 1st November. *The Annals of Skelington Bones no. 3: The Ghoulie from the Globe* (£4.00 or $8.00, payable to D.S. Davies) sees Bones *in* "his most chilling, his most blood-curdling and his most ridiculous adventure yet". If you enjoyed the first two cases, you'll love this one. (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). More substantial is *Bending the Willow: Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* (Calabash Press, Ashcroft, 2 Abbottsford Drive, Penyffordd, Chester CH4 0JG). This major work will be launched on 23rd October at Crime in Store. It can be ordered from the publishers at £19.99 (US$29.99, Canada $39.99) plus postage.

Hugh Scullion of Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) has issued a pleasant 1997 *Sherlock Holmes Desk Diary*, spiral-bound at £8.50 or $14.00, or filofax at £8.00 or $13.00. A5 format (8.25"x 5.875"). Significant dates are picked out, each week has a Canonical quotation, and there are 27 illustrations. Cheques payable to Cadds; dollar checks payable to H. Scullion.

Michael Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Armagh, Northern Ireland BT61 8EZ) has a few items unsold from his last list: *The Strange Case of the End of Civilization as We Know It* by John Cleese, Jack Hobbs & Joe McGrath (fine at £4.00; VG/fine at £3.00); *The Musgrave Papers* 6 & 7 (£2.50 each); *The Ritual* 11-15 (£1.50 each). Don't send money with your order as cash is on receipt of item/s, with postage at cost.

The Pleasant Places of Florida have published their 13th round-robin pastiche, *The Bourbon Bullion Bafflement*, at $6.00 post-paid (within USA — I don't know what overseas rates would be). Orders to Dr Benton Wood, PO Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA — checks payable to Benton Wood.

The Fall Price List of the Battered Silicon Dispatch Box has a lot of good things: *"Dr Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes": The Adventures of Young Stamford & Other Sherlockiana* by Richard M. Caplan; *The Parlour Games of Sherlock Holmes* and *Five Sherlockian Walks in London*, by William S. Dorn; *An Annotated Collector's Guide: The 100 Most Important Critical Studies and Association Items to the Sherlock Holmes Canon* by Carl William Thiel; *The Sherlockian Star Chamber* by Steven Clarkson; *The Chronicles of Addington Peace*, the elusive detective stories by Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and much more. Contact George A. Vanderburgh, PO Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada (fax 519 925-3482; e-mail gav@gbd.com).

"Some Knowledge of Baritsu" by Hirayama Yuichi & John Hall is Musgrave Monograph no. 7, due on 1st December. Orders are being taken now at pre-publication prices, post-paid: UK £5.00; USA $10.00 airmail; Canada $11.00 airmail; elsewhere $12.00. Cheques should be payable to The Northern Musgraves, and orders sent to John Addy, 23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU.

Leopard Books (Random House UK Ltd, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) have released yet another edition of Christopher Lee's splendid abridged reading of *The Valley of Fear*. The price on the liner card is £9.99, but Leopard's catalogue says: *"published price £8.99 inc. VAT, bargain price £4.99 inc. VAT"*. Presumably the latter is what you can expect to pay in a shop. Be careful, though — exactly the same excellent recording is still available at £5.99 as a Random House Audiobook! *(*Reviewed in DM 163.*)*.

Leopard have also issued what appears from their catalogue to be a very nice hardback edition of the Canon at the remarkably low price of £2.99 each for *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Sign of Four* and *The Valley of Fear* and £3.99 each for the other six volumes. These are reprints of the 1974 John Murray/Jonathan Cape editions. Bracken Books (also a division of Random House UK) have published *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* as a £5.99 paperback

Other new and forthcoming titles. Last month Altamont Publishing, Italy (c/o Amalgamated Book Services Ltd, Suite 1, Royal Star Arcade, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1JL) issued *Sherlock Holmes Draco Draconis* by Brett Spencer & Dorian David, at £14.99. *A Study in Scarlet* is due

as a Penguin Popular Classic in December; *The Hound of the Baskervilles* follows in January (Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £1.00 each). Michael Coren's *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* will be published in paperback next month by Bloomsbury Publishing PLC (2 Soho Square, London W1V 6HB; £6.99).

One I missed at the time: *Lestrade and the Devil's Own* by M.J. Trow was published in June at £15.99 (Constable & Co. Ltd, 3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) *(*I'm astonished that the witty and ingenious Lestrade novels haven't appeared in paperback.*)*

Richard Dalby has alerted me to the fact that EU copyright in the works of Arthur Conan Doyle is in the hands of Lady Duncan and her daughter Andrea Reynolds. Aitken & Stone are agents for the revived copyright. *(*This is not to be confused with the rights of Dame Jean Conan Doyle in her father's creations.*)*

The latest production by Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) is a set of five pewter miniatures, each about an inch high. One is a bust, in deerstalker and cape, one is a character jug, and one, I think, is a thimble; one is a teapot, with the nose as the spout, and the last is a pipe. All are delightfully idiosyncratic and superbly made, and a bargain at £9.50 the set, including postage. *(*Mark Hunter-Purvis reminds me that Charles Hall's book* ***Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh*** *is still available at £4.50 post-paid. It's full of fascinating information and splendid illustrations.*)*

The play *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's* makes for a grand evening's entertainment. Miles Richardson is an admirable Holmes, well supported by the rest of the cast and by Tim Heath's clever script. The national tour continues. The play will be at the Warehouse Theatre in Croydon for 3 weeks, from 30th October to 17th November (box office 0181 680 4060). For details of other venues, contact Desmond Maurer, Stage One Theatre Company, 34 Jasmine Grove, London SE20 8JW (0181 778 5213).

Several people have sent more information about the tour, ending at Burton upon Trent on 13th December, of the Lip Service production *Move Over Moriarty*. This "hilarious genre spoof achieves epic results with two performers and a set. A classic music hall murder mystery with women playing men playing women, and a series of impossible scene changes..." It sounds like great fun. To find out when it will be in your area, call Nick Sweeting on 0171 978 4200.

Geoffrey Stavert sends word that BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night Is Music Night* is scheduled to come from Portsmouth later this month. The interval talk by Miles Kington is expected to cover Conan Doyle's connection with the city. Check your *Radio Times*.

The *Sherlock Holmes* public house and restaurant at 10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2 5DA, has a new manager, Michael Phillips. He and his staff are keen to maintain the pub's high reputation as a shrine for Holmesians world-wide. Needless to say, it remains a great place to eat and drink. Just nearby, in the Arches under Charing Cross Station, is the **Players' Theatre**, which celebrates its Diamond Jubilee this year. Dinner at the *Sherlock Holmes* followed by Victorian Music Hall at the Players' makes for a memorable night out (box office 0171 839 1134). This year's pantomime is *Robin Hood, or The Foresters' Fête* by F.C. Burnand, first performed in 1862.

Good Food and Cakes (21A Market Street, Wellingborough, Northants. — phone 01933 227100) offer a Sherlock Holmes Celebration Cake: "a luxury 2lb Victorian fruit cake with brandy, marzipan and icing, featuring a Sherlock Holmes silhouette plaque". Cost is £19.50, and it can be delivered anywhere in the country. Philip Attwell says the cakes are delicious — his wife Sue and her partner Enid make them!

Wonderful Victorian (and other) Christmas presents can be had from **Past Times**, who have 60 shops and a mail order service. Call 01993 770440 for a catalogue. **Hawkin & Co.** (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0PJ; phone 01986 782536) stock all sorts of toys and things you didn't know were still made. The 1996-1997 catalogue is out now.

Our Society's next meeting is the Annual Film Evening on 23rd October, when David Stuart Davies presents a varied programme at the Museum of London. **The Baskerville Hounds'** Annual Pack Meet on Dartmoor is on 11th-13th ("The Kennel Maid", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 26th October **Baker Street Branch Lines** will visit Swindon ("Bradshaw", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Northern Musgraves** will be in Manchester on 26th & 27th for their "Write On Sherlock" weekend (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). **The Irregular Special Railway Company** has a "Holmes in Retirement & Bluebell Weekend" in Sussex over 2nd & 3rd November (Antony Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Glades of the New Forest** have their Dr Watson Day on 10th November ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** hold their AGM & Christmas Lunch at the Grand Hotel in Torquay on 7th December (Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW).

Periodicals received. ***Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*** no. 18 (163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB). ***The Musgrave Papers*** no. 9 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). ***The Torr*** no. 9 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). ***The School Report*** no. 26 (**The Priory Scholars of Leicester**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Cormorant's Ring*** Sept. 1996 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA). ***The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication*** nos. 166 & 167 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA). ***The Parallelogram*** Sept. 1996 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). And finally: ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*** August & September 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 165 7th November 1996

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Fraser Smyth, a friend of great personality and kindness who gave much to the Society's meetings and publications, died last month after a long illness. His fascination with the character of Mary Morstan resulted in *The Diaries of Mrs John H. Watson* (privately published, 1995). Our thoughts are with Anna and their family.

Despite mistaken obits, **Vassily Livanov** (Russian TV's Holmes) is still alive and working, according to Peter Blau's *Scuttlebutt*.

Sherlock Holmes: "Draco, Draconis" is published at £14.99 by Altamont Publishing, Italy (distributed by Amalgamated Book Services Ltd, Suite 1, Royal Star Arcade, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1JL). This complex and clever Holmes adventure is credited to Brett Spencer Altamont and Dorian David Altamont, which are certainly pseudonyms. (The publisher is our Italian friend Laura Altomonte.) It's a lovely book, graced with nearly 50 photos from the Granada TV series, most not published before.

Michael Atkinson's *The Secret Marriage of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Eccentric Readings* (University of Michigan Press, PO Box 1104, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1104, USA; $29.95 or £19.95) takes an off-centre look at 9 of the stories, reading each in an appropriate way. He approaches "A Scandal in Bohemia" as classic romance, follows the theme of the snake in "The Speckled Band" and psychoanalyses *A Study in Scarlet.* This is literary criticism that actually adds to the reader's appreciation of the text. Highly recommended. (The British distributor is Trevor Brown Associates, 114-115 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0BY.)

Marcus Geisser says: There are various circumstances that make the publication of *5 Neue Sherlock Holmes Story's* special. Martin Hasler, the author of these short Holmes pastiches (the 5th is a mystery in itself!) is a very young but very promising Sherlockian at just 11 years old. The book, in German, is the first Holmesian publication from one of Europe's smallest countries, the Fuerstentum Liechtenstein. *5 Neue Sherlock Holmes Story's* is privately printed by Klaus Woerner in an edition of 50 numbered copies of 30 pages. Price including postage is $8.00 or £5.00 (cash only). Orders to Martin K. Hasler, Dorfstrasse 59, FL-9495 Triesen, Fuerstentum Liechtenstein, Europe.

The Littlewood Press (32 Belson Street, Malvern East, Victoria 3145, Australia; fax 03 9576 1950) publishes *You Bastard Moriarty* by Derham Groves BSI: "a consideration of the collectability of Sherlock Holmes ephemera, together with a detailed description of the life of John Bennett Shaw and his 57 years of collecting". This richly illustrated limited edition of 100 numbered & signed copies is hand printed and sectionally sewn, with endpapers from the Holmes, Watson and Moriarty pages of the telephone directories. The standard version (90 copies) costs $75.00, and the 10 deluxe copies, bound in kangaroo leather, are $450.00. There's also a souvenir of the book's launch: an illustrated 8-page octavo booklet: *The Coming Out of Holmes & Watson*. Copies 1 - 10, with more than 40 relevant autographs, are priced at $75.00; copies 11 - 50 are $50.00 each. *(*These prices are in **Australian** dollars.*)*

Kelvin I. Jones (Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB) has reissued his 1980 monograph *Sherlock Holmes & the South Eastern* at £2.50 + 50p postage (cheques payable to K.I. Jones). He plans *The Psychology of **The Hound*** (£3.50) for the spring, and a guide to the Dartmoor locations of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for the summer.

The December catalogue from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) will include the film scripts of *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother, The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1939), *The Seven-per-cent Solution* and *Young Sherlock Holmes*, each at £25.00. Jeremy Paul's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes* is back in print from Ian Henry at £5.95.

There are full and exciting new catalogues available from **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; phone 01954 781861); **Forbes Gibb** (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ; phone 0141 339 3752); and **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219). That last, *The Sherlockian Times, 1996-97*, lists *The Life and Times of Mr Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, MD, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Other Notable Personages* by Leslie S. Klinger ($10.00), *I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere* by Joe Kruth ($5.00), *Fixed Point — The Audio* by David Stuart Davies ($7.95), and more new to me.

Tangled Web Audio (1063 King Street West, Suite 133, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 1L8, Canada) has released two more sets of unabridged readings by Edward Hardwicke. *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Betrayal* has "A Scandal in Bohemia", "Silver Blaze" & "The Copper Beeches"; *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Avarice* has "The Red-Headed League", "The Blue Carbuncle" & "The Priory School". Recording and production are impeccable; Hardwicke proves again that there's no better interpreter of Conan Doyle. Marvellous stuff! Each double cassette costs US$16.95 or Can.$19.95. Tangled Web takes direct orders, and Rupert Books, Classic Specialties and selected bookstores carry these tapes.

Peter Blau says: The first 8 audiocassettes in the series *More New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* from the fine 1946-47 radio series that starred Tom Conway & Nigel Bruce are still available ($9.95 each) from Brilliance Audio, Box 481, Grand Haven, MI 49417; more cassettes are due in the shops in November.

Phil Attwell notes that the Audio Book Collection (Freepost [BA 1686/1], Bath BA2 3SZ) offers a complete reading by Terrence Hardiman of Colin Dexter's book *Morse's Greatest Mystery*, which includes his good revisionist Holmes story "A Case of Mis-identity". The special price is £9.95.

Other recent titles: *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Andre Deutsch, 106 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LJ; £4.99); *Sherlock Holmes: The Original Illustrated **Strand** Edition* (Wordsworth Editions, 88 East Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9HJ;

£3.99); *Sherlock Holmes & The Red Demon* by Larry Millett (Viking/Penguin Books USA Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014 $22.95); *Canonical Crime Scenes & Investigations, vol. 1* by William H. & Linda L. Conway (Classic Specialties, Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; $17.95); *Chinese Box Mysteries: Sherlock Holmes* by Dan Kilcup (Allen Wayne, 5404A Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22151, USA; $24.00).

Holmes for the Holidays, a new anthology edited by Martin H. Greenberg, Jon L. Lellenberg & Carol-Lynn Waugh (Berkley Publishing Corp., 15 E. 26th Street, New York, NY 10010, USA; $21.95); *Sherlock Holmes: Travels in the Canadian West* by Ronald C. Weyman (Simon & Pierre Ltd, PO Box 280, Adelaide Street Postal Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2J4, Canada); *The Herpetological Holmes* by Donald Girard Jewell (Pinchin Lane Press, 4685 Geeting Road, Westminster, MD 21185, USA; $12.95); *The Armchair Baskerville Tour* by Brad Keefauver (Magico, Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA; $27.00). Due in March from Virgin (33-34 Grand Union Centre, 332 Ladbroke Grove, London W10 5AH) is *The Man Who Became Sherlock Holmes: The Torment of Jeremy Brett* by Terry Manners.

Cindy Stevens notes two Holmesian jigsaw puzzles from Bits & Pieces (UK) Ltd (Harrington Dock, Liverpool L70 1AX): *The Adventures of the Fellow Lodgers* and *The Phantom of Sorrel House*. They're £7.95 each or £12.95 for both. Kevin Jacklin tells me that Electronic Arts plan a sequel to their PC-based adventure game *The Case of the Serrated Scalpel*, provisionally entitled *The Case of the Rose Tattoo*. "On the boardgame front, John N. Hansen Co., Inc. of Millbrae, California, has released an addition to its *221B Baker Street* range. This is *Sherlock Holmes & the Time Machine*, wherein Holmes is challenged by H.G. Wells to solve some baffling unsolved cases of the 20th century. Available from games stores, priced around $35.00."

Julie Sharples makes Victorian and Edwardian costumes to order. Contact her at Budds Farm, Gibbs Lane, Barrington, Somerset (phone 01460 57266).

Forthcoming on BBC TV is *Nightmare: The Birth of Horror*, "a series exploring horror myths". John ("Bergerac") Nettles plays Holmes in extracts from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. *(*Did anyone record BBC 1's* ***The Bookworm*** *on Sunday 3rd November, when Griff Rhys Jones looked at the origins of Sherlock Holmes? [And can anyone lend or sell me a recording of ITV's* ***Cadfael****: A Morbid Taste for Bones?]*)*

Catherine Cooke sends news of a production of *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* by Leslie Bricusse, at the Barn Theatre, Oxted, 18th - 23rd November. Tickets from Ibbett Mosely, Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey (phone 01883 712241).

Michael Phillips, the manager of *The Sherlock Holmes* public house & restaurant at 10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA (just off Trafalgar Square), tells us that the pub is now on the InterNet. The homepage is www.users.dircon.co.uk/-sherlock/ and e-mail sherlock@popmail.dircon .co.uk.

Peter ("Holy") Horrocks has moved chambers from Lincoln's Inn to a more Canonical address: 1 Garden Court, Temple, London EC4Y 9BJ (phone 0171 797 7900; fax 0171 610 4331).

The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment has conducted a world-wide survey on the 1996 **Sherlock Holmes Festival**, and come up with some positive suggestions for future events. Contact the Curator, Malcolm Payne (4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST), or the Assistant Curator, Brian Pugh (20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN).

Stage One Theatre Company (34 Jasmine Grove, London SE20 8JW), who mounted Tim Heath's stimulating and enjoyable play *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's*, have a limited number of collectible items for sale: copies of the script, programmes, posters, leaflets, photos — all signed — and various official props: the two letters, Violet Jones's visiting card, the Opera House programme, the benefit soirée programme, and the railway ticket. This sort of souvenir is pretty well unique in my experience.

The 29th issue of the excellent magazine *CADS* (Crime And Detective Stories) is available from Geoff Bradley (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA). Less bulky than the 80-page *CADS* is issue 1 of *Tangled Web*, a new magazine devoted to crime & detective fiction edited by Andrew Osmond (69 Holm Oak Park, Watford Herts. WD1 8TH; £2.95 in UK, £3.95 elsewhere). It was issued in June, but has only just come to my attention. Nothing overtly Holmesian in this first issue, but contributions are welcome.

Our Society's next meeting is *John H. Watson, This Is Your Life*, on the 26th November. The **Glades of the New Forest** and the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company will** have their Dr Watson Day on the 10th (details from "The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU — or from Jane Weller at the same address). The **Priory Scholars** plan their AGM and Christmas Social for 1st December, in Leicester (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). On 7th December, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will hold their AGM and Christmas Lunch at the Grand Hotel in Torquay (Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW), and the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** plans its own AGM and Christmas Social for the same day in Oxford ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", address as above).

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, September 1996 (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) *(*published by* ***The Baker Street Irregulars****, the BSJ is available to all; outstanding pieces in this issue are S.E. Fry's "The Influence of Mr Sherlock Holmes on 20th Century Arctic Exploration" and W.A. Vail's "Premature Burial: New in the Annals of Crime?"*).* ***The Parallelogram*** (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) *(*features a good piece by Dave Schlatter on "The Golden Pince-Nez"*).* ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles***, September/ August 1996 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*lively accounts of the activities of a lively society*).* ***The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Annual Report 1996: The Lady Contract*** ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", address above) *(*a dozen articles on a rather neglected case; those by Juan Requena, Jose Errazquin, Antonio Iriarte, M.C. Black and Jane Weller are particularly interesting — the last covers some of the same ground as W.A. Vail's in* ***The Baker Street Journal*****).* ***Llama Droppings*** no. 4 (**The Head Llamas**, Alan & Catherine Saunders, 12 Booth Drive, Laleham, Staines, Middlesex TW18 1PR) *(*the first issue in two years, because of upheaval caused by the growth of the Saunders household; Alan writes a good piece about Ramón Cabrera, a possible original of the Tiger of San Pedro; the next meeting of the Head Llamas won't be until 14th September 1997!*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, October 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA), from which the following: the manuscripts of *The White Company* and *The Sign of Four* will be auctioned at Sotheby's in New York on 4th December. The latter is expected to fetch $250,000-$300,000...

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

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William Rushton — cartoonist, novelist, actor, satirist, comedian, wit and one of the nicest and funniest people in the business — died last Wednesday aged 59. His novel *W.G. Grace's Last Case*, which teams Dr Grace with Dr Watson during the Great Hiatus, is an outrageously funny sideways look at the world of Holmes and Watson. Talk of a sequel seems to have come to nothing. Francine Swift passes on the news that **Ben Wolf**, a distinguished artist, teacher and critic, died recently aged of 82. He was invested a Baker Street Irregular in 1964 as "Vernet the French Artist".

Jon L. Lellenberg points out that the situation regarding EU copyright in Arthur Conan Doyle's published work is actually very fuzzy. Despite Andrea Reynolds' statement to Nigel Dempster in *The Daily Mail*, it's not at all certain that she has any legal claim.

The Whitechapel Horrors by Edward B. Hanna — as the title suggests — pits Holmes & Watson against Jack the Ripper (Carroll & Graf, Worldwide Media Services, c/o Biblios Publishers' Distribution Services Ltd, Star Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8LD; £9.99). It's not a new idea, and there isn't a new identification for the murderer. (Mr Hanna chooses a real person whom most serious criminologists have dismissed; he gets around the historical difficulties with great ingenuity.) The literary and the factual aspects of the book are very well researched, as the extensive footnotes attest. Unusually, the story is told in the third person, so the reader isn't distracted by any failure to capture the Watsonian voice. *The Whitechapel Horrors* makes for a gripping read; it's certainly the best novelistic attempt yet to match Holmes and the Ripper.

A less ambitious venture is Tony Lumb's latest Sherlock Holmes story, *Sherlock Holmes and the Study of Death* (Briton Press, 21 Albert Street, Featherstone, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF7 5EX; £2.50 plus postage). On their third visit to Featherstone, Holmes & Watson are confronted with a complex locked-room mystery: there have been two deaths in the study at Purston Hall — suicide or murder? Mr Lumb's deep knowledge of his home town is evident throughout, and he treats the detective and the doctor with respect. The result is a very pleasant 48-page booklet that would make a good Christmas gift for a friend — or for yourself.

Two new booklets from William S. Dorn, published by The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (P.O. Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada), are no less desirable. In *The Parlour Games of Sherlock Holmes (Exercises in Logic)* Mr Dorn gives a clear explanation of the three types of logic used by Holmes: deduction, induction and retroduction. He illustrates each with several examples from the Canon, and then challenges the reader to follow Holmes's reasoning in half a dozen classic cases. *Five Sherlockian Walks in London* comes with a recommendation from David L. Hammer, and doesn't disappoint after such a good start. Mr Dorn takes us along Baker Street, along the Strand, and on the trail of three seminal cases: "A Scandal in Bohemia", "The Red-Headed League" and "The Blue Carbuncle", pointing out places of Canonical interest on the way. He scrupulously notes possible alternative sites, and acknowledges his predecessors. The booklets bear the author's likeness by Jean-Pierre Cagnat, and *Five Sherlockian Walks* is illustrated with photos and maps. These booklets are excellent aids to exploring more deeply Holmes's world. Each costs US$8.00/Can.$10.00/£5.00 + postage.

I'm reminded that David Stuart Davies's funny and affectionate *The Annals of Skelington Bones no. 3: The Ghoulie from the Globe* (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER; £4.00 or $8.00) is particularly apt for the season, being, as the author calls it, "a Christmas story *with* slush"!

Following my note in DM 163, I learn that Charles Hall's excellent book *Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective and His Creator* is now out of print, but copies may still be available from Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). Charles's *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh*, however, is still in print, and can be bought for £4.50 from him at 12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW. *(*He has produced some nice Christmas cards featuring Sherlock Pig, the Farmyard Detective and The Bacon Street Irregulars. Sherlock Pig is among the numerous white metal miniatures that Charles Hall makes and sells. Write to Charles for details, and remember to enclose postage for a reply.*)*

Phil Attwell notes that *Mr Holmes in Cornwall: A Critical Explanation of the Late Dr Watson's Narrative Entitled "The Devil's Foot"* by "Percy Trevelyan" is no longer available from the Institute of Cornish Studies, but can be had from the author, Prof. Charles Thomas (Lambessow St Clement, Truro, Cornwall TR1 1TB), priced at £2.00 post-paid. It's an exceptionally clever, attractive and useful booklet. Phil passes on the current Preview catalogue from TSP — The Softback Preview — which includes an exclusive edition of the Canon at £22.98 for all 9 volumes, or £14.99 for the first 5 and £12.99 for the last 4. Details from The Softback Preview, P.O. Box 415, Uxbridge UB11 1DZ.

Musgrave Monograph no. 7 is *Some Knowledge of Baritsu: An Investigation of the Japanese System of Wrestling Used by Sherlock Holmes*. In its 52 pages Hirayama Yuichi and John Hall produce a thorough and engrossing study that experts may well hail as the last word upon the subject. The book costs, post-paid: UK £9.50; Europe £11.00; elsewhere US$25.00. Cheques and checks should be payable to **The Northern Musgraves**. (Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4DN.)

Issue 17 of *Sherlock Holmes Gazette & Classic Detective Magazine* (46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR) contains the 3rd part of Michael Cox's compelling account of the making of Granada TV's Holmes series; an interview with Colin Dexter, creator of Inspector Morse; Catherine Cooke's search for the real 221B Baker Street; a look at Sherlockian greeting cards by Jean Upton; a good piece by Barbara Roden on

Conan Doyle's unpublished play *Angels of Darkness*; a critique of the movie *The Seven-per-Cent Solution* — and much more. *(*I'd still like to hear from you for the **Gazette's** "Societies Forum" department.*)*

New catalogues are available from **Richard Beaton** (11a St John's Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2DL) *(*Mr Beaton specialises in 19th century fiction*);* **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB); **Crime In Store** (14 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HE); **Robert C. Hess** (559 Potter Blvd, Brightwaters, NY 11718, USA); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE).

Ian Henry Publications issued last month a mystery novel called *"After You, Holmes..."* by Douglas Moreton (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £9.95). Due next year from Constable & Co. (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) are *Sherlock Holmes and the Man from Hell* by Barrie Roberts and *The Secret Notebooks of Sherlock Holmes* by June Thomson.

M.C. Black recommends *The Forest Guide to Smoking in London* by James Leavey (Quiller Press Ltd, 46 Lillie Road, London W6 1TN; £7.95) as useful for smokers and non-smokers alike, since it states the policy of numerous establishments in London. There are 8 pages on the London of Sherlock Holmes.

Richard Greep, Treasurer of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, says that plans are afoot for the 1997 Sherlock Holmes Festival. Some souvenirs from this year's festival are available from Richard at Limes, Eridge Road, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2SL. There's a limited edition of a postcard showing Crowborough Cross in 1900 and postmarked for the 1st day of the Festival (£5.00 each, including £2.00 to the ACD Statue Fund); programmes from the cricket match between the Holmes XI and the Moriarty XI, signed by the President of Crowborough Cricket Club (£2.00); and T-shirts with the legend *Doyle the Sportsman* and seven of Charles Hall's cartoons depicting ACD as cricketer, boxer, golfer, skier, balloonist, footballer and billiard-player (1 medium, 5 large & 2 extra large; all at £12.50 including postage and £5.00 to the Statue Fund).

Richard also notes that on 6 November Guernsey issued a set of 5 postage stamps marking 100 years of cinema: each depicts a movie detective, with the 35p showing Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes. Sets and first day covers can be had from Guernsey Post Office, Postal Headquarters, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1AA. (More first day covers are available from Maurice Tanner, 180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA.) The Commonwealth of Dominica has had the same idea: in July it issued 11 stamps of cinematic detectives, including a $1.00 Sherlock Holmes (Rathbone again). *(*On 13 May, Royal Mail will issue a set of stamps on the theme of Horror, including The Hound of the Baskervilles.*)*

Claire Wightman sends an ad for *Sherlock Holmes on American Radio*, "an audio documentary of the great man's adventures". This one-hour cassette costs $20.00, from Lawrence Nepodahl, 1230 Vienna Blvd, DeKalb, IL 60115, U.S.A. *(*If you can't find Sherlockian recordings in your local shop, you could try Talking Tapes Direct, P.O. Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW.*)*

David Stuart Davies passes on the news that in March the Victoria Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, will stage Christopher Martin's play *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Our Society's next meeting will be the Annual Dinner at the House of Commons on Saturday 4th January, with a get-together at the Falkland Arms the next day. Celebrations in New York will take place the following weekend, with the *Martha Hudson Breakfast*, the *William Gillette Memorial Luncheon*, the *Baskerville Bash* and the *Baker Street Irregulars' Annual Dinner* on Friday 10th; on Saturday there's the Merchants' Room, and the Annual Reception for all Sherlockians and their friends.

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company's *Disjecta Membra VII* on the 4th January takes in visits to London rail termini and the London Transport Museum, with lunch at the Great Western Hotel (details from the Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). The 25th sees the **Northern Musgraves'** Birthday Party at the Huddersfield Hotel, which celebrates the theme of *The British Empire* — appropriate for the centenary of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Cost is £15.00. (Details from Mark Hunter-Purvis, 6 Deer Park Way, Axwell, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD.) The AGM of the **Irregular Special Railway Company** will be held at the Holmes Restaurant, Weybridge, on the 22nd February (The Station Master, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB).

Periodicals received. ***The Ritual*** no. 18 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) *(*a nice essay on "The Sherlockian Higher Criticism" by Richard Lancelyn Green, a symposium on Sherlockian pastiche, a good piece on the original Baskerville hound by Joanna Arthur, an interview with ACD reprinted from **The Idler**, and the usual fine departments — this is David Stuart Davies & Kathryn White's last issue: from no. 19 **The Ritual** will be edited by Paul M. Chapman & John Hall — good luck, chaps! *)*; ***The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication*** no. 168 (Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*more changes: after 20 years as Recorder, the Revd Dr Benton Wood, BSI, has handed over the reins — thanks for all your hard work, Ben!*)*; ***The Petrel Flyer*** November 1996 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) *(*a nice report on the 8th Annual Holmesian Games — long may such friendly silliness continue*)*;.

The New Baker Street Pillar Box no. 28 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants, PO14 3RU) *(*an excellent essay on the search for "the King of Scandinavia" by members of the Swedish Pathological Society, a very interesting comparison by Mark Chadderton of two superficially dissimilar non-Holmesian stories, and a devastating criticism by Jane Weller of Dr Jenny Ward's talk on ACD at Grayshott Literary Festival — a timely warning to anyone tempted to attend a talk by Dr Ward*)*; ***The School Report*** no. 27 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) *(*interesting sidelights on Holmes's contemporary A.J. Raffles, and notes on "Clothes in the Canon" by Jeffrey Thrift*)*; ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles*** November-December 1996 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*intriguing contributions by David Bradley on "Sherlock Holmes on the Web" and on Jeremy Brett*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press November 1996 (Peter E. Blau, 39090 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). Peter notes "The Sussex Vampire" as a one-shot comic-book at $2.95 (Caliber Comics, 225 North Sheldon Road, Plymouth, MI 48170), and *The Floor Plans of Baker Street* by Edwards S. Smith as a 38-page booklet (Box 353, Williston Park, NY 11596; $7.50 post-paid in North America or $9.50 elsewhere).

The Compliments of the Season!

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 167 3rd February 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Over the weekend of the 10th/11th January, Tom Stix announced the following new investitures into the Baker Street Irregulars: **William J. Hyder** ('A Most Remarkable Institution'), **Richard J. Kitts** ('The Battered Tin Dispatch Box'), **Kenneth C. Lanza** ('His Last Bow'), **Theodora Niver** ('Carina'), **Roy E. Pilot** ('The Chemical Laboratory of St Barts'), **Paul G. Singleton** ('Covent Garden'), **Margaret Smedegaard** ('The Criterion Bar') and **Dorothy K. Stix** ('Martha'). Congratulations to all! It was also announced that, after 11 years as head of the BSI, Tom was retiring, and handing over the post and the title of *Wiggins* to Mike Whelan. From now, all correspondence for the BSI *(*not for **The Baker Street Journal***)* should be sent to Michael F. Whelan, **The Baker Street Irregulars**, PO Box 2089, Easton, Maryland 21601-2089, USA.

Christopher & Barbara Roden have moved, so **The Arthur Conan Doyle Society** and the Calabash Press have a new address: P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia V0K 1A0, Canada (from 20th February phone 250 453-2045, fax 250 453-2075)

Just out from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) is *After You, Holmes...* by Douglas Moreton, a collection of four new Sherlock Holmes stories set variously in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Shropshire. This pleasant paperback is enticingly illustrated with late 19th century photographs ('from the collection of John H. Watson, MD'). The author achieves a competent likeness of the Watson style, his characters and locations are engaging, and his plots ingenious. His meticulous historical research compensates for his use of a perhaps over-familiar villain from the Canon. *After You, Holmes...* makes for an enjoyable couple of hours' reading at £9.95 (add 85p if ordering direct from the publisher). Also newly available from Ian Henry are four more film scripts: *The Scarlet Claw*, *The Pearl of Death*, *A Study in Terror* and *Without a Clue* (£25.00 each). Ian has a Spring 1997 catalogue of Sherlock Holmes titles — write for a copy, enclosing return postage.

There are several recent publications from the Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (George A. Vanderburgh, Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada). *Bibliomania* by 'The Engineer's Thumb' is a collection, compiled by Vincent Brosnan, of the columns that Bliss Austin contributed to *The Northumberland Dispatch*, the newsletter of the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers of Pittsburgh, between 1978 and 1981. Austin was one of the great Sherlockian collectors, and he loved to share his fortune and his knowledge. These essays cover the Canon, the *Exploits* and other pastiches, translations and more, all in 50 pages; they're quirky, wise and fascinating — and I can't find a price quoted anywhere! Carl William Thiel has written *The Basic 100: The 100 Most Important Critical Studies and Association Items to the Sherlock Holmes Canon as suggested by John Bennett Shaw* (US$10.00/Can$12.50/ £6.25). The title says it all, really, except that the booklet has 56 pages, Mr Thiel has done his work thoroughly *(*and I have a long way to go to catch up with the 100*)*. Steve Clarkson is known to the members of Watson's Tin Box of Ellicott City, MD, as 'Torquemada'. *The Sherlockian Star Chamber* shows why. There are 69 quizzes here, one for each story in the Canon, plus another six multiple examinations and three quizzes on the apocrypha. All the questions are fair, most are tough, some are very tough indeed. There's a hardback edition (US$30.00/Can$37.50/ £18.75), or two paperbacks: *Questions* (US$12.00/ Can$15.00/£7.50) & *Answers* (US$14.00/ Can$17.50/£8.75). Postage is extra on all the books.

Last month, Kelvin I. Jones published the third booklet in his series on *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. This is *The Psychology of **The Hound***, and it costs £3.50, post-free within the UK (overseas, add 50p per copy or £1.00 for airmail). Sterling cheques should be payable to K & D Jones — no foreign cheques, please. (Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB).

Whitaker's BookBank says that February publications include *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at the Cinema: A Critical Study of the Film Adaptations* by Scott Allen Nollen (McFarland & Co. c/o Shelwing Ltd, 127 Sandgate Road, Folkestone. Kent CT20 2BL; £40.50) and *Good Old Index: A Sherlock Holmes Handbook* by Thomas W. Ross (Camden House Inc., c/o Boydell & Brewer Ltd, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF; £14.95). Due in March is *The Man Who Became Sherlock Holmes: The Tortured Mind of Jeremy Brett* by Terry Manners (Virgin Books, 332 Ladbroke Grove, London W10 5AH; £15.99).

New catalogues are available from **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; tel. 01954 781861) *(*Rupert now has a homepage & InterNet catalogue on:* http://ourworld.compuserve.com//homepages/rupert_books. At Rupert_books@compuserve.com.**)*, orders can be placed by e-mail. **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 and 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE), and **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8HJ; 01273 843066).

Linda M. Jones, Managing Director of Tangled Web Audio (1063 King Street West #133, Hamilton, ON L8S 1L8, Canada) tells me that her company's recordings have received due recognition in 1996. Notably *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Suspense*, read by Edward Hardwicke, won Best New Voice *Audie* award from the USA Audio Publishers' Association, and *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Betrayal* won Best of Mystery *Listen Up* award from *Publishers Weekly*. These and other titles are well worth seeking out.

The Return of Sherlock Holmes, Ernest Dudley's adaptation of the play that Harold Terry & Arthur Rose wrote for Eille

Norwood, will be at the Tyne Theatre & Opera House, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4AG, from Monday 17th to Saturday 22nd March. Michael Cashman and Frederick Pyne are Holmes & Watson, and Nicholas Smith is Lestrade. The director is Harry Landis. The box office number is 0191 232 0899 (fax 0191 261 2488). Rebecca Collis of the theatre's Marketing dept. is keen to organise an evening for Holmes enthusiasts, probably on Friday 21st March. If you're interested, call her on 0191 232 1551 (mobile 0973 693 691). *(*This is a Middle Ground Theatre production — presumably touring, but I've been unable to find an address or phone number for Middle Ground. Does anyone know of other venues and dates?*)*

Alex Stobie put me on to a good article in the February issue of *Stamp & Coin Mart* (Aceville Publications Ltd, 82C East Hill, Colchester CO1 2QW): 'Watching the Detectives' by James Mackay, about the recent Dominica and Guernsey stamps issues featuring cinematic sleuths (see DM 166). Maurice Tanner, 180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA, has issued a handsome first day cover for the Guernsey Sherlock Holmes card, at £9.99 post-paid (overseas £10.99), and two different 'maximum cards' at £6.99 the pair.

The Royal Mail's *Nightmare* stamps will be issued on the 13th May, and A.G. Bradbury (3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA) plans a spectacular first day cover for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. More information in the next DM.

The January 16th issue of *Country Life* (PO Box 666, London E15 1DW) features a brief guide for a Dartmoor walk in the prints of the Hound. The author, David Edelstein, makes use of Philip Weller's *The Dartmoor Locations of* ***The Hound of the Baskervilles***, and scrupulously acknowledges the fact.

The Solar Pons Society of London sends details of extremely impressive black & white prints, portraits of Holmes, Watson, Conan Doyle & Moriarty (and Hercule Poirot), by Tom Rieschick. Each 8½" x 11" print is a reasonable $10.00 (or 3 for $25.00) plus $3.00 postage. He also produces lovely Sherlockian greeting cards. For a brochure, or to order prints or cards, contact Tom at 179 Gold Kettle Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20878, USA; phone 301 330-1893 (e-mail **TRieschick@aol.com**).

Peter Neugebauer has produced two very attractive designs for Sherlockian greeting cards (Holmes watching the *Aurora*, and Holmes with the Dancing Men cipher). A set of six (3 of each) costs £2.00/$3.50 from **Von Herder Airguns**, c/o Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany (add £1.00/$3.00 postage irrespective of the number of sets ordered). Cheques and checks should be payable to Anke van Hasenhorst.

Jean Upton and I, with Joyce Allingham and Barry Pike, are helping to set up a **Margery Allingham Room** at the new Maldon Museum (opening, all being well, in April). Among other things we are looking out for is a shop-window dummy, to represent Albert Campion. Offers and suggestions will be *very* welcome.

A major event this spring will be *L'affaire de l'Hôtel du Louvre*, to which the **Société Sherlock Holmes de France** has invited Holmesians from all over the world. The hotel, which features in 'The Bruce-Partington Plans', has become the official rendezvous of Parisian Holmesians. The events of 8th-11th May will include the unveiling of a plaque at the hotel, an exhibition of reconstructions of a dozen Holmesian scenes, and the launch of a Sherlock Holmes suite — recreating the Baker Street sitting-room. The SSHF is one of the most active and exciting Sherlock Holmes societies in the world. For information, please contact the *Société Sherlock Holmes de France*, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France (tel. 33 01 43 55 96 76; fax 33 01 43 38 58 07).

In sending out the invitations, the SSHF has also celebrated the recently issued postage stamp, which features Holmes's great French rival Arsène Lupin.

On Saturday 8th February, the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and the **Glades of the New Forest** will hold their joint Museum Day, visiting an arms collection and Doylean sites from Havant (details from 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Irregular Special Railway Company** will hold its Annual General Meeting and lunch on Saturday 22nd February at the Holmes Restaurant, 20 Baker Street, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8AU. This will follow coffee and an informal talk on forensic science (by Dr Roger Berrett) at Oatlands Park Hotel. After lunch there will be a visit to Brooklands and tea at Silvermere Golf Club. (Details from Antony Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB.)

Periodicals received. First a welcome to ***The Serpentine Muse***, winter 1996 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, Apt 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) *(*because of illness and death among the Adventuresses, there was a very long hiatus since the last issue, and a good part of this new issue properly pays tribute to the original editor, Pat Moran, and two more ASH who have died since: Marlene Aig and John Bennett Shaw; there's much more, of course, in this always lively journal*).* ***The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*** no. 19 (Antony Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB) *(*contains reports on the Company's autumn events that make me even more disappointed that I couldn't be there*).*

The Cormorant's Ring, December 1996 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA) *(*has a good piece about John McMurdo and the Scowrers by Michael J. Brady and an announcement that Jim Coffin has set up a Sherlockian correspondence group for percussionists!*).* ***The Parallelogram***, January 1997 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) *(*features a controversially Freudian analysis of 'The Speckled Band' by Pasquale Accardo and good basic detail on 'The Missing Three-Quarter' and 'The Abbey Grange'*).*

Pleasant Places of Florida Communication, no. 160 (The Papers on the Sundial, c/o 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*the first under the editorship of Wanda and Jeff Dow, who are maintaining Ben Wood's tradition, striking a balance between the light and the serious*).* ***The Petrel Flyer***, Jan./Feb. 1997 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada) *(*Michael Higgs on 'Watson's Military Mannerisms' and tunnels in the Canon — and more*).*

The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In, no. 21 and ***The Striking (T)rifles*** November 1996 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, c/o Stefan Weishaupt, Bruchof 18, 32457 Porta Westfalica, Germany) *(*from this issue, '****The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In*** *is published biannually, with 64 pages of articles, reports and stories from members of Germany's leading Sherlock Holmes Society, fully illustrated'; this issue contains a grand variety of articles and some fascinating illustrations, old and new*).*

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 168 20th March 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Ronald Howard, who died last month aged 78, seems destined to be remembered as 'the son of Leslie Howard'. In the early 50s he played Sherlock Holmes in 39 short films for American TV, with an excellent Watson in H. Marion Crawford. Often a long way after Conan Doyle, the films are never less than entertaining.

Camden House Inc. (Drawer 2025, Columbia, SC 29202, USA) has published *Good Old Index: the Sherlock Holmes Handbook* by Thomas W. Ross, a 182-page paperback costing $25.95 or £14.95, which is actually a very idiosyncratic dictionary or encyclopaedia. Mr Ross gives a minimum of information in his entries ('**chianti:** Sholto offers SIGN'; '**Holborn:** restaurant STUD'), but he shows evidence of a pawky sense of humour ('**cross-dresser:** Adler, who dons her "walking clothes" to pose as a male youth SCAN'). However, his complaint that Holmes's reference to a sawn-off shotgun as a 'truncated fowling-piece' is ponderous suggests that the humour isn't strong. He gives a little information that previous lexicographers missed, though his notion that Blackheath was Watson's public school is plain wrong. The publisher's claim that 'This volume fills a unique void in the literature on Doyle and his famous detective' hardly stands up. It's better presented than Orlando Park's *Sherlock Holmes Encyclopedia* and has fewer errors than Matthew Bunson's *Sherlock Holmes Encyclopedia*, but none of them can hold a candle to Jack Tracy's *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana*. The British distributors are Boydell & Brewer Ltd, PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF. *(*Mr Ross's book is not to be confused with **Good Old Index** by William Goodrich or **A Sherlock Holmes Handbook** by Christopher Redmond.*)*

M.C. Black sends the most welcome news that Tracy's book is to be reprinted as *The Ultimate Sherlock Holmes Encyclopaedia*. Bibliophile Books, a well-respected mail-order company, will stock the book at the very low price of £7.00. For details, contact Bibliophile at 5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN (phone 0171 515 9222; fax 0171 538 4115). Please quote reference MCB001045.

Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective, Volume I: The Early Years by Kelvin I Jones is a 52-page A4 booklet packed with observation and research but rather primitively produced — more so than Kelvin's *The Psychology of **The Hound*** (see DM 167). In all, there will be three instalments of this 'first full length biography of Holmes to appear for some years'. *(*But what of June Thomson's **Holmes and Watson**?*).* Volume 1 is £3.95, post-paid, from Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB. Cheques should be payable to K.I. Jones. (Volume 2, just out, runs to 72 pages and costs £4.75.)

Sherlock Holmes: From Victorian Sleuth to Modern Hero, edited by Charles R. Putney, Sally Sugarman and Joseph A. Cutshall King (Scarecrow Press Inc., 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706, USA) is a collection of papers presented at a conference of the Baker Street Breakfast Club at Bennington College in 1994. The book costs $34.50, and has had very favourable reviews.

Issue no. 18 of *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette* contains part 4 of *A Study in Celluloid*, Michael Cox's unique account of the Granada TV series. Here he considers 'The Dancing Men' and 'The Crooked Man' *(*I have a fondness for 'The Crooked Man'. Michael's team did justice to a story that's much better than he believes. This is not to downplay the excellent production of 'The Dancing Men'.*)* John Hall looks at Dr Watson, Catherine Cooke at T.S. Eliot, and Paul M. Chapman at Joseph Bell. Gaynor Coules surveys the novels of Lindsey Davis. Christopher Roden interviews Linda Jones of Tangled Web Audio. 'Collectors Corner' discovers theatre memorabilia. And, of course, there's much, much more. Annual subscriptions are: UK £14.00; Europe £18.00; North America US$35.00/£21.00; elsewhere £22.00. (46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR — U.S. representative: Classic Specialties, P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA.)

Bert Coules sends the good news that his script of *The Valley of Fear* was recorded a couple of weeks ago. 'Messrs Merrison and Williams slipped back into their roles with an ease which belied the fact that they last played Holmes and Watson in November 1994.' The cast also includes Iain Glen, Mark Bonnar, Timothy Bateson, Constantine Gregory and Ronald Pickup. The director-producer is Enyd Williams. The play will be broadcast in two parts on BBC Radio 4, on Sunday 23 and 30 March at 2.30 pm, repeated Friday 28 March and 4 April at 2.02 pm. Bert adds, 'The first five episodes of *The Casebook* are currently scheduled for a Saturday evening repeat, starting on 19 April.'

Middle Ground Theatre Company's production of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* is currently in rehearsal. Michael Cashman & Frederick Pyne are Holmes & Watson and Nicholas Smith plays Charles Augustus Milverton (not Lestrade as announced in the Tyne Theatre's brochure). The tour starts at **Tyne Theatre**, Newcastle on 17th March, then 24th at **North Wales Theatre**, Llandudno; April 7th at **Everyman Theatre**, Cheltenham; 14th at **Devonshire Park**, Eastbourne; 21st at **Southport Art Centre**; 28th at **Poole Art Centre**; in May on 5th at **Key Theatre**, Peterborough; 12th at **Rothes Halls**, Glen Rothes; 26th at **Yvonne Arnaud Theatre**, Guildford; in June on 2nd at **Theatre Royal**, Brighton, 9th at **Swan Theatre**, High Wycombe; 16th at **Theatre Royal**, Lincoln; 23rd at **Marlowe Theatre**, Canterbury; then July 7th at **Theatre Royal**, Bath. *(*There may be changes or additions to this itinerary, so check details with your local paper or tourist office.*)* The production promises to be a cracker.

The **New Victoria Theatre** (Etruria Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs. ST5 0JG; ticket office 01782 717962) commissioned Chris Martin to dramatise *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The play opened on 5 March, running until 15 March, and again from 1 to 12 April. Roger Llewellyn and Lennox Greaves play Holmes & Watson, and the Canadian Mark Renton is Sir Henry. Chris Martin's previous Holmes plays, *The Valley of Fear* and *A Study in Scarlet* were very successful, and *The Hound* will be no less so. Ticket prices range from £4.75 for Saturday matinees to £10.40 for the best seats on Saturday evenings. A snip!

Richard Dalby notes that the movie *Fairytale — A True Story*, with Paul McGann, Harvey Keitel and Peter O'Toole (as Arthur Conan Doyle!) is scheduled for release on 19 December. Does

anyone know the situation with the TV film *Photographing Fairies*, in which Edward Hardwicke is rather more plausibly cast as ACD?

Mr K. Holland (23A Gravenhurst Road, Campton, Beds. SG17 5NY; phone 01462 816435) is looking for a video recording of *Murder by Decree*. If you can help, please contact him direct. *(*Can anyone sell me a recording of the recent Poirot episode, **Dumb Witness**? I managed to miss the broadcast!*)*

A.G. Bradbury 3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA) has designed splendid first day covers for the Royal Mail's stamps, issued 13 May, marking the centenary of *Dracula*. Under the overall title *Tales of Terror*, the stamps feature the four novels covered in Christopher Frayling's BBC TV series *Nightmare*. That devoted to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* uses Paget illustrations and is postmarked in Princetown, Dartmoor. The FDC with just the Hound stamp is £5.00; that with all four stamps is £10.00. A limited number of these are signed by Edward Hardwicke (£12.50) or by Tom Baker (£12.50). Cheques should be payable to A.G. Bradbury, and overseas orders should add £1.00. Philip Attwell points out that the Royal Mail offers a 1997 stamp album designed for the year's special issues. Pick up a leaflet at your Post Office.

Patrick Kirkby says that there will be a Veterans' Reunion & Display at Netley on 14 May 1998, to mark the centenary of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the 20th anniversary of the closure of Netley Hospital. 14 May is also the 100th anniversary of Queen Victoria's visit to present two VCs for courage in the Tirah Campaign in India. Admirers of John H. Watson who are interested in attending should contact Patrick at 2 Colson Road, Winnall, Winchester SO23 0EX. Events at Netley this year include *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, performed on 5th July. (Details from the Park Office, Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley, Southampton SO31 5GA; phone 01703 455157.)

News from other literary societies. **The Daphne du Maurier Festival of Arts & Literature** will run from 9 to 18 May, based at Fowey in Cornwall. Details from Daphne du Maurier Festival, c/o B.E. Arthur, Director Economic & Community Development, Restormel Borough Council, 39 Penwinnick Road, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 5DR (information line 01726 74324). **The George Eliot Fellowship** and Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council offer guided tours of George Eliot country, and a series of events including lectures, readings and a George Eliot Day on the 17 May. Details from the Marketing Division, Town Hall, Coton Road, Nuneaton, Warwicks. CV11 5AA (phone 01203 376490).

The new address for **The Baker Street Irregulars** is: **P.O. Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA** (rather than P.O. Box 2089 as given in DM 167). This will reach Michael F. Whelan, the new Wiggins.

An annual subscription to *Baker Street West 1* (three issues) costs $9.00. Details from 110 South El Nido, #41, Pasadena, CA 91107, U.S.A. The magazine has announced a short story competition. 'In 2000 words or less, recreate the master detective as he and Dr Watson solve yet another baffling mystery. Our grand prizewinner will receive a framed original William Gillette signature dated 1906. All submissions will receive a postcard portrait of Mr Gillette. In addition to the framed prize, the winning article will be published in the January 1998 issue of BSW1. All other entries will be considered for future publication. Writing deadline is October 15, 1997, and will be judged by our editors. Entries will not be returned. Include your name, address and phone number with your, typed, double-spaced entry.'

Our Society's next meeting is at Over-Seas House on 26th March, when the subject will be Victorian headgear. On the 23rd, the **Priory Scholars** hold their Annual Case Study, presenting papers on 'Thor Bridge' (details from Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). The Moor Meet, 28th-31st March, will be a joint event of the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, the **Baskerville Hounds** and **Gerard's Hussars** (FMHC, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Marcus Geisser tells me that **The Reichenbach Irregulars** will hold the first *Swiss Sherlock Holmes Symposium* from 12 to 14 September at the Castle of Wartensee, near Rorschach on Lake Constance. The society hopes to welcome speakers from Switzerland, Germany and England, and there will be particular emphasis on the Swiss detective Wachtmeiser Studer, whose creator, Friedrich Glauser, lived near Rorschach. For details, contact Marcus at 40 av. de la Gare, CH-1003 Lausanne, Switzerland (e-mail mgeisser@access.ch).

To mark their 25th anniversary, **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will host *The Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium* **I** over the weekend 2 - 4 May at the Dolphin Beach Resort in St Pete Beach, Florida. Details from Carl Heifetz, 5490 Salem Sq. Dr. S., Palm Harbor, FL 34685, U.S.A. Also celebrating a Silver Anniversary are **The Bootmakers of Toronto**, with *Lasting Impressions*, a weekend symposium at the Arts & Letters Club in Toronto, 26 - 29 June. Details from *Lasting Impressions*, #210, 30 Elm Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4W 1N5, Canada (e-mail lasting@syndesis.com).

Periodicals received: ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal*** winter 1996. *(*Outstanding is Wladimir Bogomoletz's paper 'The Odessa File: Sherlock Holmes and Imperial Russia' — a tour de force!*)* From **The Priory Scholars** (Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) ***The School Report*** no. 28 *(*John Moule completes his survey of the year 1904*).* From **The Pleasant Places of Florida** (The Papers on the Sundial, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) ***Communication #170*** *(*contains a clever parody-pastiche by Tom Takach*).* From **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** (Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles*** Jan./Feb. 1997 *(*great account of fun in New York*).* From **Von Herder Airguns Ltd** (Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany) ***The Striking (T)****Rifles* Feb. 1997.

Three highly individual publications from **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** (26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France): ***Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser*** no. 13, ***The Army Medical Corps Gazette of the Franco-Midland Health Dpt*** no. 3, and ***Billy's Page 3*** *(*Philip Weller reminds us that this admirable society has no connection at all with his own Franco-Midland Hardware Company*).* ***Interim Report 1996: The Lady Contract Reviewed*** **and** ***The New Baker Street Pillar Box*** no. 29 (both from **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) *(*the **Report** includes some very stimulating essays, notably those by Donald Redmond, John Weber, Carol Whitlam and Philip Weller; the NSPB has good articles by various writers on Dr Watson and one by Philip Weller on aspects of **The Hound***).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press Jan. & Feb. 1997 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). Peter keeps an up-to-date list of Sherlock Holmes societies world-wide, and is happy to respond by postcard to inquiries about which is your nearest. The full 76-page list will cost $3.80 to US & Canada, and $9.53 (airmail) or $4.99 (surface mail) overseas. The list is also on the World Wide Web at Willis G. Frick's home page at http://www.kaiwan.com/~sherlock/ stron 1.html.

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 169 29th April 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Helene Hanff died on the 9th April, aged 80. Before the unexpected success of *84 Charing Cross Road*, her most popular contribution was to the *Ellery Queen* television series of the 1950s, but her love affair with a London bookshop epitomised the literate American's fascination with literary London.

Our Society has commissioned a First Day Cover for the 'Tales of Terror' postage stamps, issued 13th May. It features a rare *Strand Magazine* advertisement of 1901 and is franked with our logo. Members' prices are: set of stamps £9.50; signed by Tom Baker, Edward Hardwicke or Christopher Frayling £12.50; *Hound* stamp only £3.50; signed £5.50 (all plus postage: 50p UK, £1.50 overseas). They're available only from Steven Scott (Philatelists), 77 Strand, London WC2R 0DE (phone 0171 836 2341; fax 0171 240 5419).

The Man Who Became Sherlock Holmes: The Tortured Mind of Jeremy Brett by Terry Manners (Virgin Books, 332 Ladbroke Grove, London W10 5AH; £16.99) has a great title. Shame about the sub-title and the contents. We must judge by what we know, and we know that there have never been 'more than 50,000 members of the Sherlock Holmes Society' in Britain alone, so we have a right to be wary of Mr Manners' other 'facts'. His acknowledgements really acknowledge nobody: *So many people have helped me to write this book. But to those who, for reasons best known to themselves, did not contribute to remembering Jeremy, I say thank you. You made me even more determined to tell his true story. A special thanks, however, to Linda Pritchard.* Much of this account of JB's life and career is cobbled together from various published accounts, notably in *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette* and Robert Stephens' autobiography. And seeing how he has trivialised the reminiscences he's lifted from published sources, I sympathise with those who preferred not to confide in him. There'll eventually be an authoritative biography, but this one is barely adequate. For Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes, David Stuart Davies's *Bending the Willow* is the book to read.

Magico Magazine (P.O. Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA) has issued a new edition of *'The Date Being — ?': A Compendium of Chronological Data* by Andrew Jay Peck & Leslie S. Klinger. This standard guide to the chronologists has been revised to mid-1996, and covers just about everything from Bell and Blakeney to Hall and Thomson. The 'Additional Chronological Scholarship' will be particularly helpful to scholars. The book is nicely produced in hardback, but I can't find a price anywhere.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has published another useful and unusual reference book, *On Stage Sherlock Holmes: Comedy, Drama and Musicals: A Guide to Sherlock Holmes Theatre Productions* by Charles Hall & Peter Blythe. 'The book, which consists of synopses of varying length, coupled with some comment on the performance where appropriate, is intended for both collectors of Sherlock Holmes material and for amateur theatre companies who will be able to assess the style and complexity of the material available to them.' 70 plays are covered in all. This first, limited edition of 150 copies is issued as a tribute to the late Peter Blythe. It comes as two attractive A5 booklets, totalling 112 pages, a bargain at £6.00 including postage. (Buy this book and you can have the equally recommended *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* for only £2.50.)

Several authors have written of present-day detectives putting the principles of Sherlock Holmes into practice. Raymond Kay Lyon comes pretty near the top with *The Sherlock Effect* (Alibi Books, 40 High Street, Orwell, Royston, Herts. SG8 5QN; £6.50). Christopher Sherlock Webster follows the destiny of his middle name, setting up The Baskerville Agency, just off Baker Street. These are thoroughly modern cases, featuring rock music, animal rights, UFOs, a pornographer, a stalker and more. The thought of Sherl Webster carrying out his commissions in full Victorian dress boggles the mind a bit, and 'Mr Christopher Sherlock Webster Esq.' shouldn't have got into print, but these are minor distractions from a very enjoyable read.

It's nearly a year since Eric Monahan's first Holmes story. He follows it with a 40-page booklet containing two pastiches: *The Tower Bridge Affair and The Case of the Surplus Sovereigns*. Both are well written, with a knowledge of the period and an affectionate respect for the subject. Copies can be had from Eric Monahan (Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) at £5.00 including postage within the UK, or from Otto Penzler's Mysterious Bookshops (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, and 8763 Beverly Boulevard, West Hollywood, CA 90048), at $9.95 + postage. Otto also has *The Man with the Shaven Scalp* at $8.95 + postage.

Lynne Godden (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE) has for sale *Papers Presented to the Joint Conference of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London and the Dorothy L. Sayers Society* held last year in Cambridge, at: UK £3.75; Europe £4.35; USA $10.25; elsewhere £5.35 (all post-paid). Contributors include Richard Lancelyn Green and Auberon Redfearn. Cheques should be payable to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

Another double-cassette of readings by Douglas Wilmer is due in July from Penguin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £7.99). Unlike the first two, the contents of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* have been abridged, by Neville Teller.

Due in 1997 from The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (PO Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada) are *Lasting Impressions: The 25th Anniversary of The Bootmakers of Toronto* ($32.00); *An Irregular Sherlockian Pictionary* by Chris Redmond, illustrated by Paul Churchill; *The Sherlock Holmes Old Time Radio Show Companion* by Edith Meiser & others; *Shades of Sherlock* by Patrick Campbell; *The Practical Handbook of Bee Culture* by Sherlock Holmes ($36.00); *The Adventures of Addington Peace, and The Trail of the Dead* by B. Fletcher Robinson & Malcolm Fraser ($25.00); *Personæ Dramatis in ludis Sherlociensibus: The Characters in the Canon* by Gary L. Heiselberg; *The Final Adventures of Solar*

Pons by August Derleth; *The Solar Pons Encyclopedia* by Robert Brooks. Prices are in US dollars. Payment can be accepted by check in US, Canadian and UK funds: US$10.00 = Can.$12.50 = £6.25. (Bliss Austin's *Bibliomania* [recommended in DM 167] costs $8.00.)

Just published is *Sherlock Holmes, Dr Watson and Victorian Medicine: A Medical Review and Critique for the New Sherlockian* by James E. Anthony (Minerva Press, Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 6RB; £4.99). Then there are: *The Secret Notebooks of Sherlock Holmes* by June Thomson (May: Constable & Co. Ltd, 3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER; £15.99); *The Secret Cases of Sherlock Holmes* by Donald Thomas (June: Macmillan London, Cavaye Place, London SW10 9PG; £15.99); *Buster Keaton's 'Sherlock Jr.'* by Andrew Horton (August: Cambridge University Press, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP; £30.00 and £10.95); *Sherlock Holmes and the Man from Hell* by Barrie Roberts (October: Constable & Co.; £15.99); *His Last Bow* by Arthur Conan Doyle (August: Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £1.00).

New catalogues are available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 and 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE), **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH), **Bibliotective** (Box 47347, Oak Park, Michigan 48237, USA) and **Gravesend Books** (Box 235 Pocono Pines, PA 18350, USA).

Bedlam Theatre Company is touring Hampshire and Dorset in June and July with Jeremy Paul's play *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*. Dates are: 13 June **Phoenix Arts Centre**, Bordon (01420 472664); 20 June **Forest Arts Centre**, New Milton (01425 612393); 21 June **Medina Theatre**, Newport, IOW (01983 527020); 27 June **Ashcroft Arts Centre**, Fareham (01329 310600); 5 July **Royal Victoria Country Park**, Netley (01703 455157); 9 July **Tower Arts Centre**, Winchester (01962 868725); 24-26 July **Portsmouth City Museums** (01705 827261). Holmes is played by Rob Thrush (of the Poor Folk Upon The Moors), and Watson by David Head. This is the first amateur production of the play.

NatWest Theatre Company are putting on Tim Kelly's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at the **Steiner Theatre** (near Baker Street Station), 25th-27th June. Tickets are £7.50, from Janet Hough, H.R. Services, Group Central Services, 3rd Floor, York House, 207 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ (0171 239 8501).

Sherlock Holmes: 'Draco Draconis' by Brett Spencer & Dorian David Altamont, published last October (see DM 165), is to be 'launched' at Granada Studios in Manchester on the 1st June. Tickets at £10.00 are on sale at the Sherlock Holmes Shop on the Baker Street set, or by post from Charlie Saia, Altamont Publishing, 83B Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 4TW.

Jill Paton Walsh will give the 1997 **Dorothy L. Sayers Lecture** at Witham Library on Wednesday the 21st May at 7.30 pm. The title is *'Thrones, Dominations': A Question of Inheritance*. Tickets cost £1.00, including refreshments, from Witham Library, 18 Newland Street, Witham, Essex CM8 2AQ (phone 01376 519625). Please enclose return postage. *(*The library is two doors from DLS's house and just opposite her statue by John Doubleday.*)*

Fantasticon UK, the fantasy & science-fiction convention held at Harrogate over the weekend of 24th-26th May, will feature some Holmesian content. Engagements permitting, two great Watsons will be there: Edward Hardwicke and Michael Williams. Details are available from Catherine Richardson, 38 Planetree Avenue, Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 9TH.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's next meeting will be the AGM on Tuesday the 13th May, at Over-Seas House. After the formal business, Richard Lancelyn Green will give a talk entitled 'New Light on the Hound of the Baskervilles'. Earlier that same evening, and very near at hand, the **Irregular Special Railway Company** will visit the long-closed Down Street Underground Station, used during the Blitz as a subterranean citadel. The cost of £10.00 is that charged by London Transport, and £6.00 goes to the charity Children in Need. (Details from Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX.) *(*Antony notes that you can comfortably attend both meetings, if you haven't booked for dinner before the Sherlock Holmes Society's AGM.*)*

From 9th-11th May, the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** takes its 'works outing', visiting Norfolk sites associated with 'The Dancing Men' (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). The 22nd May is Arthur Conan Doyle's birthday, and the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and the **Glades of the New Forest's** 'ACD Day': they visit Conan Doyle's grave and other New Forest sites (address as above). On the 24th May the **Grimpen Post Office** visit the Postal Museum in Bath (Maggie & Brian Sutton, 3 Raleigh Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 4HG).

Periodicals received. ***The Striking (T)Rifles***, April 1997 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany) *(*Von Herder Airguns plan a packed weekend in Hanover, 27th to 29th June. Contact Michael for details*).* ***The Petrel Flyer***, March-April 1997 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) *(*a lively issue, containing Michael Higgs's identification of Leopold II of Belgium and Cléo de Mérode as the King of Bohemia and Irene Adler*).* ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles***, March-April 1997 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*I can't comment on this, as my copy was severely damaged in the post; can I please have a replacement, chaps? And if there's anything I can do for you...*).*

The Parallelogram, March 1997 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) *(*I like Judy Mold's notion: 'Sometimes, I think, when we get caught up in "playing the game" - in trying to make the characters real, in substantiating details. . . we risk losing the basic mystery value of the stories.'*).* ***The Devon County Chronicle***, December 1996 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707, South 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA) *(*has a delightful report on the 8th Canonical Convocation and Caper*).* ***Pleasant Places of Florida Communication***, April-May 1997 (Jeff & Wanda Dow, The Papers on the Sundial, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*has a neat account in verse of Dave Scott's first encounter with Holmes*).* ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 1997 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, Apt 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) *(*contains some great dog-oriented papers from January's 'Baskerville Bash'*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, March 1997 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). Peter notes that David Kahn's *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (1967), the best book about codes and ciphers and those who deal with them (including Sherlock Holmes and the dancing men cipher) is re-issued in a 30th-anniversary edition (New York: Scribner, 1997; $65.00). **Penelope Wallace** died on the 13th January. Daughter of Edgar, she was founder of the Edgar Wallace Society, and the first woman to be Chairman of the Press Club and Chairman of the Crime Writers' Association.

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 170 4th June 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Malcolm Payne, a founder and the main driving force of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, died on the 30th May, after a long illness borne with fortitude and humour. His father, aunt and uncle all worked for Sir Arthur at Windlesham. Thanks to Malcolm's hard work, the name of Conan Doyle is holding its own in East Sussex against that of Sherlock Holmes. He had already passed his responsibilities as Curator to his deputy, Brian Pugh, and correspondence should now be addressed to Brian at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN.

Our Society's Functions Secretary, Pam Bruxner, has moved to 2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB (phone 01797 222132). Paula Brown, of the Noble West Enders, has moved to 132 7th Street, Ashland, OR 97520-2016, USA.

Sherlock Holmes: Victorian Sleuth to Modern Hero, edited by Charles R. Putney, Joseph A. Cutshall King and Sally Sugarman, (Scarecrow Press Inc., 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706, USA/4 Pleydell Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2DN.; $34.50/ £32.50) is a collection of papers from the 1994 Conference of the Baker Street Breakfast Club at Bennington, Vermont. That sounds terribly academic and inaccessible. In fact the contents are wonderfully varied and readable. You'll find familiar Sherlockian names here, like Philip K. Wilson and Patrick Campbell, alongside Nicholas Meyer and Edward B. Hanna, best-selling novelists who have enlarged on the Holmes saga, and a host of specialists in English literature and social history. All write so engagingly that it must be a pleasure to be taught by them. Subjects range from Holmes's work-ethic and Holmes as the archetypal hero to the influence of Sherlock Holmes on *Star Trek: the Next Generation* and the reasons why no movie has yet measured up to the true Sherlock Holmes. It's a delightful, stimulating collection, and I recommend it to all who are interested in the phenomenon that is Sherlock Holmes.

Constable & Co. Ltd (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) has just published *The Secret Documents of Sherlock Holmes*, the fourth volume of new adventures by June Thomson (not counting her superb biography, *Holmes and Watson*). Miss Thomson is one of the very few writers who can consistently catch the flavour of the best of the original tales, in both style and substance. Apart from the footnotes (which are certainly interesting but may be getting a little intrusive) you could easily think that you were reading original Conan Doyle. It's that good. And besides the seven stories, all derived from Canonical hints, there's an essay identifying the King of Bohemia with — no, I won't spoil it for you. June Thomson ranks among the major Holmesian scholars, and I'm delighted to recommend this new book. It costs £15.99.

Hugh S. Scullion's latest publication is an intriguing 32-page booklet called *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Manual* (Cadds Printing Ltd, 59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL; £6.00 [USA $14.00 — cheques payable to Hugh Scullion; elsewhere £8.00 cash] — prices include postage). Mr Scullion has analysed the Canon and provides a handy list of characters and things for each story. These include places, smoking, drinking, murder details — all of which seem well researched — and a sound selection of quotations. He has also devised a new list of abbreviations (more immediately comprehensible than Prof. Christ's code, though I fancy that the latter will outlast it). The book has much interesting data for the scholar and researcher.

Due on the 23rd June from HarperCollins (77/85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB) is *The Napoleon of Crime*, a biography of Adam Worth (a real-life Moriarty) by Ben MacIntyre.

Calabash Press (PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) has published the second volume of *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes: The Speckled Band*. It's a grand collection of essays on various aspects of the story by the likes of Chris Redmond, Dixon Smith, Owen Dudley Edwards, Catherine Cooke, Kathryn White, David Stuart Davies and Kelvin Jones. It's available in Britain from Rupert Books at £20.50 hardback or £14.50 paperback.

Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; phone 01954 781861) have a new catalogue, full of good things. **Nigel Williams** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE) has a new catalogue of first editions.

Issue 19 of *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette* (46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR; US representative Classic Specialties, PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) continues Michael Cox's fascinating personal account of the Granada TV series. Roger Grimshaw answers readers' questions; Gaynor Coules looks at John Harvey's books; Catherine Cooke examines Sexton Blake; David Stuart Davies meets Clive Merrison & Michael Williams; 'Societies Forum' puts the spotlight on **The Bootmakers of Toronto**; Tim Yarro profiles Val Andrews; Paul Chapman considers Henry Irving; Barbara Roden returns to *The Lost World*... All this and much, much more!

Phil Attwell sends a recent ad for the Folio Society (FREEPOST, 44 Eagle Street, London WC1R 4BR). New members can buy the Society's nice 9-volume edition of the Canon for just £9.95.

Those involved with theatricals should investigate the range of plays in the new catalogue from Jasper Publishing (1 Broad Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 5BW). They include *Holmes, Sweet Holmes* and *The Ruanian Succession*.

A reminder that *Good Old Index: the Sherlock Holmes Handbook* by Thomas W. Ross (Camden House Inc., Drawer 2025, Columbia, SC 29202, USA; $25.95) is distributed in Britain by Boydell & Brewer Ltd (PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF) at £14.95. See the review in DM 168.

Penguin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) have sent review copies of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* volumes I and II. The reader is our Honorary Member Douglas Wilmer, and the producer is our former Chairman Philip Porter, who produced Douglas's earlier recordings. The texts have been sensitively abridged by Neville Teller, who is immensely

experienced in radio production. The promise of quality (need I say?) is fulfilled. These are the first two of three double-cassettes that will include all 12 of *The Adventures* in their published order — part of a larger plan to record the entire Canon. ('The Blue Carbuncle' appears to be the recording previously included in *Black Peter*, but the reading of 'The Speckled Band' is not that featured on *Four Great Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.) The only adverse comment I can make is that Mr Wilmer's Watson sounds less convincing than his Holmes, but the same could be said of Basil Rathbone's readings. Volume I will be in the shops in July and Volume II in October. Volume III is currently being recorded for release in January. These are excellent performances by a great Sherlock Holmes, and our Society can be proud of its connection with them.

Too late for the last DM was news of another First Day Cover for the *Hound of the Baskervilles* stamp. The Cambridge Stamp Centre Ltd (9 Sussex Street, Cambridge CB1 1PA) reproduces stills from the 1931 Gainsborough movie in a very atmospheric design. Covers can be had autographed by Dame Jean Conan Doyle, Christopher Lee, Edward Hardwicke or Bernard Horsfall (there may be further choices) and costs £11.95. Investigate also the covers from A.G. Bradbury (3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA). Our own Society has a cover which features a rare *Strand Magazine* advertisement of 1901 and is franked with our logo. It's available from the Society at £5.00 to members.

The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment now has a badge, showing Arthur Conan Doyle head and shoulders, with the initials ACD above and the name CROWBOROUGH below. The price is £4.00 plus postage (£1.00 to Britain and Europe, £1.50 elsewhere). £1.00 from each sale goes to the Conan Doyle Statue Fund. Payment can be made in UK currency, Postal Orders, bank cheques or Giro cheques. Bank cheques should be payable to B.W. Pugh. Dollar payments can be accepted in US cash only. Write to Brian Pugh at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN. *(*Brian reminds me that Groombridge Place near Crowborough is the 'real' Birlstone Manor. You can get a brochure from The Estate Office, Groombridge Place, Groombridge, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 9QG.*)*

Phil Attwell notes two crime fiction events in Nottingham this month. *Shots on the Page* is this coming weekend (details from Broadswords, c/o JMLS, 24 Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4FY). *Shots in the Dark* runs from the 5th to the 15th (Broadway Media Centre, 14-18 Broad Street, Nottingham NG1 3AL).

Charles Hall sends news of a current exhibition at Lady Stair's Close in Edinburgh: *Arthur Conan Doyle — the Edinburgh Connection*. It sounds like a must-see.

There are two versions of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* on stage this month. Swan Ocean Productions have a new adaptation by John Tully at the **LOST Theatre** (450 Fulham Road, London SW6 1LD) 11th-28th June. For information, contact Swan Ocean Productions, 38 Grange Road, Southall, Middlesex UB1 1BY (phone 0181 574 8513). NatWest Theatre Company have Tim Kelly's version at the **Steiner Theatre** near Baker Street Station, 25th-27th June (Janet Hough, H.R. Services, Group Central Services, 3rd Floor, York House, 207 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ ;0171 239 8501).

There's a very pleasant public house in Northumberland Street, off Trafalgar Square. Formerly known as *The Northumberland Arms*, it was re-opened on 12th December 1957 as *The Sherlock Holmes* and has for nearly 40 years been a shrine for Sherlockian pilgrims. Visitors can now obtain an anniversary booklet, *Forty Years of* ***The Sherlock Holmes***, illustrated by Jean-Pierre Cagnat.

The pub is just a couple of minutes' walk from the famous **Players' Theatre**, which for over 60 years has presented Victorian Music Hall, such as Watson at least would recognise and enjoy. For information about admission or membership (which provides special privileges) contact The Players' Theatre, The Arches, Villiers Street, Strand, London WC2N 6NG (phone 0171 839 1134; fax 0171 839 8067; e-mail theplayers@aol.com; website www.jj15.co.uk/players.

Over the weekend of the 4th-6th July **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will be visiting the various Essex and Suffolk sites connected with 'His Last Bow' and 'The Retired Colourman'. Margaret Bird has compiled and published a 'practical handbook', *An East Wind*, which contains stimulating essays by Godfrey Hunt, Derek Hinrich, Catherine Cooke, Tony Bird, Richard Miller, Nicholas Utechin, Wayne & Francine Swift, Ernst-Harald Mock, David Walsh, Geoffrey Stavert, Grant Eustace, David Hammer, Harald Curjel, Roger Johnson and Bernard Davies. Bernard's identification of Von Bork's house is masterly and probably irrefutable. I have no idea how many copies of *An East Wind* will be available to non-participants, but feel that everybody should be aware of the excellence of the book.

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company will be at the Red House Carriage Museum in Darley Dale over the 6th-8th June, for their *Annual Dinner Weekend*. (Details from 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.) **The Northern Musgraves** will meet at Bingley Grammar School on the 14th June for *Sherlock in Summer*, their annual film event, featuring a tribute to the late Ronald Howard (Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 4DN). On 21st June **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** visit Dunkerton (home of ACD's sister Dodo) and Shoscombe in Somerset (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombesleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR).

The Baker Street Journal for March 1997 (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) is mostly a well deserved tribute to Tom Stix, recently retired as 'Wiggins', the head of **The Baker Street Irregulars**. There are affectionate contributions from many Sherlockian luminaries from both sides of the Atlantic (and the Pacific). The BSJ is published by the BSI but is available to all. — one of the half-dozen must-haves for the dedicated Sherlockian.

The **Irregular Special Railway Company** has a new registered address: 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX (phone 01223 833418) *(*though I'm sure correspondence sent to the Leigh-on-Sea address will reach Antony Richards, the Station Master*)*. The 4th issue of ***The Sherlock Holmes Railway Journal*** is full of meaty material from Wayne Swift, Catherine Cooke, David Walsh, Philip Scowcroft, Bernard Prunet and Kevin O'Doherty. It's available to non-members.

Other periodicals received. ***The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In*** no. 22 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany) is another admirable collection of essays and artwork. Also ***The Striking (T)rifles***, May 1977. ***The Ritual***, Spring 1997 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Paul M. Chapman, Langford, Thirsk Road, Easingwold, North Yorks. TO6 3HL). *(*This first issue under the editorship of Paul Chapman and John Hall.*)* ***The Cormorant's Ring***, April 1997 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA). *(*Now in handy chapbook format and available at $3.00 the issue.*)* ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April & May 1997 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). *(*The invaluable Sherlock Holmes newsletter.*)*

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 171 16th July 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The new phone number given in DM 170 for Pam Bruxner was wrong. The correct address and phone/fax number are: 2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB (01797 222363). Shirley & John Purves have also moved. Their new address is: Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL (phone/fax 01395 232397).

The Poor Folk Upon the Moors have a new Secretary: Richard Streeton (Top Deck, Ridley Hill, Kingswear, Devon TQ6 0BY; phone 01803 752320).

In his engrossing new book *The Napoleon of Crime: The Life and Times of Adam Worth, The Real Moriarty* (HarperCollins, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB; £18.00) Ben Macintyre comes to grips with one of the great Victorian criminals. The tag of 'the real Moriarty' is something of an exaggeration, though Worth may have been one inspiration for the character (others may have been Charles S. Peirce, Simon Newcomb and Alfred Drayson). He was certainly a man of great character who led an extraordinary life. The story of his theft of Gainsborough's portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire is far more interesting than the more recent loss of Goya's Duke of Wellington. The Victorian underworld and *demi-monde* are lightly but authoritatively established for us, and Adam Worth is placed firmly against his proper background. Even without the possible Doylean connection, this book is well worth reading. Worth detested violence, and he seems to have been that rare thing, a major criminal who was not a villain. He did not have Sherlock Holmes as his nemesis, but he did have William Pinkerton.

In *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at the Cinema* (McFarland & Co. Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, USA) Scott Allen Nollen surveys the many movies derived from *all* Conan Doyle's work, as well as the occasions on which he himself has featured as a character, and the famous early sound film in which he explains his spiritualist beliefs and says a word or two about Sherlock Holmes. Mr Nollen's opinions are forthright and well expressed. It would have been nice to have a bit more even about such a stinker as the 1960 version of *The Lost World*, but he is to be thanked for pioneering coverage of the non-Holmes movies. The reader should be aware of some irritating errors, however. The hero of the play *Waterloo* is Gregory Brewster, not Napoleon Bonaparte, who was a different corporal altogether. Tonga and Small, in the Eille Norwood film of *the Sign of Four*, did not differ from their literary originals in dumping the Agra treasure in the Thames. The 1931 Gainsborough version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* actually survives complete, as we who have seen it are aware. The 'little chaps' in *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* are not dwarfs but midgets — there is a difference. Despite such careless mistakes, which should not exist in a book retailing at £40.50, I do recommend *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at the Cinema*. The British distributor is Shelwing Ltd, 4 Pleydell Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2DN.

Eddie Maguire's 3rd Sherlock Holmes story is *The Croydon Ghost* (Big House Books, 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ), an entertaining adventure, reminiscent of 'The Red-Headed League' — perhaps deliberately. Who or what is haunting the cottage newly occupied by the pretty Misses Fuller and their aunt? Dr Watson helps Holmes lay the ghost and capture a wanted man. The attractive cover features a Victorian print of Crown Hill and Church Street, in Croydon, with a couple of well-known figures superimposed. The 36-page booklet, a co-operative venture with Croydon Borough Council, costs £3.50, post-paid. Cheques should be payable to E. Maguire.

Buster Keaton's ***Sherlock Jr.***, edited by Andrew Horton, is just out from Cambridge University Press (The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU). I have long held that Keaton was superior to Chaplin, and not just because his movies are actually funny, so I'm happy to recommend this collection of essays. *Sherlock Jr*. is coming to be recognised as one of the greatest film comedies, and equal to Keaton's own *The General*. The writers here explore his vaudeville background, his technical virtuosity, the way in which he parodies the figure of the Great Detective... The film-within-the-film is more than a burlesque: it tells us how audiences of the mid-1920s saw the cinematic Sherlock Holmes. Incidentally, I hadn't noticed that Sherlock's 'sharp assistant' is called Gillette — a nod to both William and King Gillette. *Buster Keaton's* ***Sherlock Jr.*** is in hardback at £30.00 (ISBN 0521481058) and paperback at £10.95 (0521485665).

Rupert Books have gone into publishing, with *A Full Report of a Lecture on Spiritualism Delivered by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* and *The Mystery of the Spot Ball*. The former is a facsimile of ACD's very first spiritualist pamphlet, and the latter an 1893 parody from the Edinburgh *Student*. Both booklets are edited, introduced and signed by our own Chairman, Richard Lancelyn Green, and are issued in a limited edition of 400 copies. The cost of each is £10.00 plus postage (Rupert Books, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). Cheques, including US dollar checks, should be payable to R.D. Smith. *(*Rupert's homepage is at* http://ourworld.compuserve.com.homepages/rupert_books *and the e-mail address is* rupert_books@compuserve.com.**)*

Since the last DM, catalogues have arrived from **Forbes Gibb** (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ); **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB); and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE). Forbes's *Catalogue Drebber* and the Black Cat listing both concentrate on Holmes and Conan Doyle. Nigel Williams has some ACD first editions, including the 1888 book edition of *A Study in Scarlet*, priced at £24,000...

David L. Hammer has produced a fifth Sherlockian travel book: *A Dangerous Game: Being a Travel Guide to the Europe of Sherlock Holmes* (Gasogene Books, Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46256, USA; $19.95). Peter Blau says: 'The book is written with style and humor, and recommended.'

Peter also notes that the Brazilian pastiche *O Xango de Baker Street* by Jô Soares has already been translated into Spanish, German and Italian, with an English language version due in November from Pantheon, as *A Samba for Sherlock*. *(*Cindy Stevens, who's working her way through the Italian translation, tells me that it's **very** odd, and probably not by design.*)*

Also from Peter: '*The Strange Case of Mrs Hudson's Cat: And Other Science Mysteries Solved by Sherlock Holmes*, by Colin Bruce (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1997; 254 pp., $23.00), offers explanations of the more important paradoxes of classical and modern physics (and resolutions for most of them), with a cast of characters that includes Holmes, Watson, Prof. Challenger, Summerlee, Mrs Hudson, and her cat; this is serious science, presented with style and imagination.'

More book news from America. This month Penguin issue a paperback of *Sherlock Holmes and the Red Demon* by Larry Millett. In October Forge will publish *Against the Brotherhood* by Quinn Fawcett, the first in a new series featuring Mycroft Holmes.

Douglas Johnstone reminds me of the audiotape series *More New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, produced by 221A Baker Street Associates from the 1946/47 radio programmes with Nigel Bruce & Tom Conway (PO Box 351453, Los Angeles, CA 90035-998, USA). There are 16 cassettes available, each containing two plays; they're issued by Brilliance Audio and available in Britain through Murder One. The scripts are by Denis Green & Anthony Boucher, responsible for earlier series featuring Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce, and the overall quality is very good. Only six of the 32 plays are directly adapted from the Canon, but they're all clever and entertaining. Tom Conway sounds remarkably like Rathbone. Brilliance Audio is at Box 887, Grand Haven, MI 49417, USA.

Brian Pugh writes to correct the prices given in DM 170 for the new lapel badge issued by the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment. The badge shows Arthur Conan Doyle head and shoulders, with the initials ACD above and the name CROWBOROUGH below. The price is £6.00 in the UK and £7.00 or US$14.00 elsewhere. Any profits go to the ACD Memorial Fund. Payment can be made in UK currency, Postal Orders, bank cheques or Giro cheques. Bank cheques should be payable to B.W. Pugh. Dollar payments can be accepted in US cash only. Write to Brian Pugh at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN.

The second *Sherlock Holmes Festival* at Crowborough was held over the weekend of the 5th & 6th July, while our Society's East Coast Expedition (planned four years ago) was taking place. There was coverage in both The Times and The Guardian. The former quoted the Festival's organiser as complaining that Crowborough gets too little attention compared to Baker Street — whose connection with Sherlock Holmes is merely fictional, whereas Crowborough's is not. Interesting logic! And it raises the question as to why Crowborough is celebrating a fictional character rather than a real author, with real ties to the town.

The **Irregular Special Railway Company** will take a Dunhill Museum and London Walk on Saturday 2nd August (details from Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). On the same day the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **Baker Street Branch Lines** will visit the East Kent Steam Railway (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On the 3rd the FMHC and **The Glades of the New Forest** will tour Holmesian and Doylean sites near Crowborough.

Periodicals received. ***Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*** no. 20 (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) *(*full of information about Holmes and railways, including the news that the Spa Valley Line from Tunbridge Wells to Groombridge should be fully open later this year*).* ***Pleasant Places of Florida Communication***, #172 and #173 (Jeff & Wanda Dow, The Papers on the Sundial, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*highly entertaining reports on the first Sunshine State Sherlockian Scion Symposium, plus good brief pieces on 'The Red Circle' and Holmes as a research scientist*).*

3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles, May/June 1997 (**Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*an illuminating interview with that formidable Canadian scholar Chris Redmond, a report on the annual Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium at Dayton, and more besides*).* ***The Parallelogram***, May 1997 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) *(*an interesting sidelight on 'The Second Stain' by Gordon Speck, and yet more of PJA's awful verses — not so much Nash as M'Gonagall*).*

The FMHC Memo no. 1 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) *(*the Company's new newsletter, covering both its own activities and events in the wider Holmesian world*).* Also ***The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Annual Report 1997: The Dancing Men Contract*** *(*a collection of essays on 'The Dancing Men', covering aspects from the elementary to the profound, the best being Alan Saunders on the coded messages and Philip Weller on the topography; the latter convincingly identifies Ridling Thorpe Manor as The Grange at Bacton, but does not mention that Bernard Davies established this identification as long ago as 1984*).* ***The Torr***, no. 10 (**The Poor Folk Upon the Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7 NW) *(*Eric comes up with yet another likely inspiration for Prof. Moriarty — James T. Saward, alias Jim the Penman; Kevin O'Doherty and Vosper Arthur contribute other good essays*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, June 1997 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). *(*The father of all Sherlockian newsletters*).*

Peter notes *Fairy Tale: A True Story*, starring Peter O'Toole as Conan Doyle and Harvey Keitel as Houdini, is due for release in the autumn from Paramount. 'Viacom hopes it can do for fairies what Universal has done with dinosaurs, and the brand name "Fairies of Cottingley Glen" has been licensed to Playmates Toys, Gibson Greeting Cards and Random House.' *(*You have been warned!*)*

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 172 28th August 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The big news is Martin Booth's biography, *The Doctor, the Detective and Arthur Conan Doyle* (Hodder & Stoughton Publishers, 338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH; £20.00). This is, I think, the first major life of Conan Doyle since Pierre Nordon's (I except Owen Dudley Edwards's and Geoffrey Stavert's superb books, each of which covers just a part of the story). Mr Booth's book isn't perfect: there are no notes to tell us the source of any particular statement, and there's quite a number of errors (Dame Jean's name is actually Jean Lena Annette, not Lena Jean Annette; her mother was Lady Conan Doyle, not Lady Jean). However, the author offers probably as much new material as anyone can until the family papers are made accessible, and he scrupulously distinguishes between fact and informed speculation. He's also careful to acknowledge the work of his predecessors where he makes use of it. Mr Booth's writing is a touch academic but, thank heaven, readable, and he brings home to us again his subject's greatness and great humanity. *The Doctor, the Detective and Arthur Conan Doyle* is a big, strong book (384 pages), and one that I recommend for all who love Sherlock Holmes and his creator.

The Baker Street Companion by Paul Lipari (Ariel Books, Andrews & McMeel, 4900 Main Street, Kansas City, MO 64112, USA; $3.95/ distributed by Powerfresh Ltd, 3 Gray Street, Northampton NN1 3QQ; £2.50) is a hardback, 2½ inches high, 2 inches wide and half an inch thick. In its 128 tiny pages it contains an astonishing amount of (mostly) accurate information about the Sherlock Holmes phenomenon, very attractively presented. Even the serious scholar should find this little book a pleasant curio, and it would make an ideal present for a budding young fan.

The 8th Musgrave Monograph is *Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle and the British Empire: An investigation into Conan Doyle's links with the British Empire as expressed through his Sherlockian and other literature* by Jeffrey Richards (Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 4DN; £4.50 [UK & Europe] or $10 [rest of world] — prices include postage). This 40-page brochure, expanded from the paper Prof. Richards gave at the Northern Musgraves' 1997 birthday party, helps us understand that the Empire really was an ideal, the product of a very different way of thinking from that of a century on. It's important to a proper appreciation of the world of Holmes and his creator.

Different again is *The Moriarty Principle: An Irregular Look at Sherlock Holmes* by Rolf J. Canton (Galde Press, Box 460, Lakeville, MN 55044, USA; $19.95 [airmail postage overseas $10.00]). An actor and a long-time member of **The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, Mr Canton gives us a delightful pot-pourri. There are essays on acting the part of Sherlock Holmes, on the Master's true birthday, on Greece and other subjects; a nicely illustrated 50th birthday tribute to the Norwegian Explorers (one of the busiest and most interesting of the many BSI scion societies; with our own Society, the Explorers erected the memorial plaque at the Reichenbach Falls in 1957); an updated rewrite of 'The Final Problem', influenced by Talbot Mundy, Sax Rohmer and others; a dramatised version as well, and a radio play, 'The Wireless Murders'. *The Moriarty Principle* is a charmingly personal book, which introduces the fortunate reader to an engaging Sherlockian and his friends. These people are *kinsprits*, in Christopher Morley's felicitous phrase. *(*Murder One carries the book and some other British specialists may do as well.*)*

Volume 7 of *The Shoso-in Bulletin* is fuller than ever. **The Men with the Twisted Konjo** have gathered contributions from Hong Kong, the USA, Britain, Germany, Sweden, Australia, France, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and, of course, Japan, in 200 packed pages. Outstanding items picked almost at random include Gary Lovisi on the Tauchnitz editions, Ronald Knapp's sermon on Holmes's religion, J. Whitehouse on the Phoenicians, Alan Olding on Uncle Ralph Smith and Hirayama Yuichi's identification of Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich as the King of Bohemia. There's much else to enjoy in this engrossing annual. *The Shoso-in Bulletin volume 7* is available from John Hall (20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR) at £5.50, or from Mel Hughes (2664 Sam Hardwick Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32246, USA) at $12.00. Prices include postage.

Collins Educational (HarperCollins*Publishers* Ltd, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB) has packaged *The Sherlock Holmes Audio Collection* (reviewed in DM 147) with a 48-page teaching resources file by James Simms. The cassettes contain abridged texts of 'The Final Problem', 'The Red Headed League', 'A Scandal in Bohemia' and 'Silver Blaze', authoritatively read by Basil Rathbone, and should prove an excellent education aid. The price, it has to be said, is pretty steep at £21.35.

William S. Dorn (2120, S. Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210-4935, USA) has produced a *Sherlock Holmes Calendar 1998*, with Canonical and other relevant dates marked (his principal sources are the Zeisler and Christ chronologies) and nice illustrations. The price for this attractive wall calendar is $8.95 within the USA, plus $2.50 postage to the UK. Bill can accept the equivalent in sterling. He has a page on the InterNet, which gives more information about the calendar and the books and cards available from him. Access it at http://members.aol.com/Holmespage. Bill Dorn's *Five Sherlockian Walks Through London* and *The Parlour Games of Sherlock Holmes* were favourably reviewed in DM 166. The third book is the charming *Beeton's Christmas Annual 1987*.

Derham Groves BSI is writing a study of Sherlockian bookplates, to be published in March 1998. He'd like to hear from people who have their own Sherlockian/Holmesian bookplates. Contact him via Robert C. Littlewood, The Littlewood Press, P.O. Box 7, Central Park, Victoria 3145, Australia. Derham adds: 'Any Sherlockian bookplates sent to assist me with this project will be matched by way of exchange with a Sherlockian bookplate signed by the artist and dispatched by return post.'

Shirley Purves & Eric Monahan have edited the second Charles Merriman Monograph for **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**. *Silver Blaze* contains a dozen articles in its 48 pages. It is available to at £4.50 (overseas £5.00) from H. Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR. Prices include postage.

Kelvin I. Jones has published a new edition of his booklet *The Carfax Syndrome, Being a Study of Vampirism in the Sherlock Holmes Stories* (Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB; £3.50). *(*Write to Oakmagic for a list of their Sherlockian and other publications.*)*

Oxford University Press (Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP) has published *Can Jane Eyre Be Happy? — More Puzzles in*

Classic Fiction by John Sutherland. One essay is called 'Wanted: deaf-and-dumb dog feeder' — *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, of course. This stimulating collection costs £4.99 and is well worth the intelligent reader's attention. Catherine Cooke tells me that John Sutherland will give a talk on *Mysteries in the Victorian Novel* on Thursday 11th September at 6.15, at City of Westminster Archives Centre, St Ann's Street, London SW1P 2XR. Admission is free.

Brian Pugh, Curator of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, (20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN) has copies of *Recollections of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by Residents of Crowborough* for sale post-paid at: UK £5.60; USA & Canada £6.60/$13.20 (Sterling cheques payable to Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Fund, please, and US currency in cash — no checks). He's compiling a book of people's reminiscences of his predecessor, the late Malcolm Payne. If you have memories of Malcolm to share, please contact Brian. *(*Brian notes that the 1998 Crowborough Sherlock Holmes Festival will be on the 3rd, 4th & 5th July.*)*

Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; phone 01954 781861) has a new catalogue out. The many good things include the new Calabash Press publication, *The Baker Street File*, edited and introduced by Michael Cox — a specially prepared edition of the file compiled to assist Jeremy Brett and all concerned with making Granada TV's series *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. The book is £11.50 plus postage from Rupert. It's also available from the publishers (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) at $19.95 Canadian.

Penguin Popular Classics (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) have published *His Last Bow* at £1.00. *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures*, edited by Michael Ashley and featuring contributions by David Stuart Davies, Barbara Roden and me, is due next month from Robinson Publishing (7 Kensington Church Court, London W8 4SP) at £6.99. Barrie Roberts's latest novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Man from Hell* comes from Constable & Co. Ltd (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) at £15.99. In June, apparently, Viking (Publishers Marketing Services, 81 Oakleigh Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 5DS) published *Sherlock Holmes and the Red Demon* by 'John H. Watson', price £15.99. And in July, according to Whitaker's BookBank, Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) published *Sherlock Holmes and the Strange Events at the Bank of England* by Graham Avery, price £9.95.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, volume 2, abridged by Neville Teller and read by our own Honorary Member Douglas Wilmer, is due from Penguin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) at £7.99. Phil Attwell tells me that the postal supplier Talking Tapes Direct (P.O. Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW; phone 01733 232800) offers *The Complete Sherlock Holmes Giftpack* — the 16 radio plays starring Gielgud and Richardson — at £27.99.

Allan Smith spotted that several classic early Hammer movies have at last been issued on video. Upon checking, he was told that if sales are good, the others will be released on video, including that great might-have-been, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

I found a gorgeous parody recently on the InterNet: *Young sherlock holmes: the fakts*, in which H.E. Elsom pays appropriate tribute to Arthur Conan Doyle and Geoffrey Willans. You'll find it at http://www.netspace.org/~shalott/holmes/pastiche/fakts.html.

The Players' Theatre, London's original Victorian Music Hall, can be found in the Arches under Charing Cross Station, just 100 or so yards from the *Sherlock Holmes* pub. The restaurant has always offered excellent dinners. It's now open for lunch from 12 noon, Tuesday to Friday (last orders 3.30 pm). For reservations, phone the box office on 0171 839 1134. The theatre is now taking bookings for this year's pantomime *The Babes in the Wood and the Good Little Fairy Birds*, opening on 27th November.

The Sherlock Holmes Gazette no. 20 — a 'special summer tourist issue' — is out now. With John Hall on Dr Watson, Kathryn White on Rathbone vs Brett, Gaynor Coules on Val McDermid's novels, Barbara Roden on Brigadier Gerard, Peter Mason on the Sherlock Holmes Pub, Richard Lancelyn Green on the Sherlock Holmes Society of London — and much more — it's a grand read. The highlight is the latest instalment of Michael Cox's *A Study in Celluloid*, his authoritative account of the making of the Granada TV films. A subscription costs: UK £14.00; Europe £18.00; North America £21.00/$35.00; elsewhere £22.00 (46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR; e-mail pmh@pavilion.co.uk.).

Also just out is the 31st issue of Geoff Bradley's admirable magazine *CADS* (Crime And Detective Stories). Details from Geoff at 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA.

Jim Coffin (6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim, CA 92807, USA) tells me that **The Trained Cormorants** will celebrate their 50th birthday in November. He also notes that his Sherlockian drummers' society is now officially called **The Frenzied Hands**. Congratulations to the Cormorants, and to **The Norwegian Explorers**, who'll be 50 in December.

On 21st September **The Head Llamas** will refight the Battle of Antietam (Cathy & Alan Saunders, 12 Booth Drive, Laleham, Staines, Middlesex TW18 1PR). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** and **The Irregular Special Railway Company** will get together on 27th-28th September for a joint Devonian Railway Weekend (details from H. Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). The School Forum of **The Priory Scholars** takes place on the 28th (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). **The Baskerville Hounds** hold their Annual Pack Meet on Dartmoor from the 17th to 19th October (The Kennel Maid, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

The **ISRC** plans an Inspector Morse Weekend on the 25th & 26th October (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). On 25th **The Northern Musgraves** will hold their 10th Birthday Lunch at the Victoria & Albert Hotel in Manchester (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). The same day **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Baker Street Branch Lines** will tour the Winchester area (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, June 1997 (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) *(*correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael F. Whelan BSI, PO Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA*). The Serpentine Muse*, summer 1997 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog BSI, ASH, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). *The Petrel Flyer*, May-June 1997 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada). *The New Baker Street Pillar Box*, August 1997 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). *The School Report*, Summer Term 1997 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*, May - July 1997 (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). *The Striking (T)Rifles*, August 1997 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany). *The Parallelogram*, August 1997 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, July 1997 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 173 29th September 1997

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Mary Lindsley Jaffee died in April, three years after her husband Irving. Her concrete memorial will be her wickedly funny 'Patience Moran' poems, published as *Have a Little Patience*, and the parodies that she and Irving wrote as *Beyond Baker Street*.

John Rawlins died in June, aged 94. As a film director, he will be remembered for *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* (the first of the 'Universal Rathbones') if for little else.

There are two nice books out this month from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH). Tim Heath's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's* toured the country earlier this year, with Miles Richardson as Holmes heading an invigorating cast. The framing story is clever, but the meat of the play is in the re-enactment, by Holmes, Watson and two admirers, of 'A Scandal in Bohemia' and 'Charles Augustus Milverton'. The script makes very entertaining reading and shows how a well-known narrative can be successfully transformed into pure theatre. I hope that its publication will encourage more productions of the play. *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's* is a large-format 48-page paperback, priced at £6.25. It's jointly published with Players Press Inc. (P.O. Box 1132, Studio City, CA 91614-0132, USA). *(*Ian Henry also plans to publish Julian Harries' gorgeous parody* ***Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Mummy's Tomb****, staged a couple of years ago by Eastern Angles as their Christmas production.*)*

Sherlock Holmes and the Strange Events at the Bank of England by Graham Avery (£9.95) is an ingenious short novel in which Holmes investigates the disappearance of a number of unissued bonds from an apparently inaccessible vault. It's all very cleverly worked out. The chronology is odd, though. The bonds mark the centenary of the 'new Bank of England building, which was opened on 5th June 1800', yet the Prime Minister is Lord Rosebery (1894-95) and other indicators suggest that the time is the early 1880s! Well, this is just the sort of puzzle that we find in the Canon, so no complaints there. I really can't let the consistent use of 'discrete' pass unchallenged, though: the word does *not* mean the same as 'discreet'. And an action can't be effete, if it comes to that; only a living creature can. That said, this is a very enjoyable read, and comes with a bonus in the form of a fascinating history of the Bank, originally delivered as an illustrated lecture in 1920.

The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures was published this month jointly by Robinson Publishing Ltd (7 Kensington Church Court, London W8 4SP; £6.99) and Carroll & Graf Publishers Inc. (19 West 21st Street, Suite 601, New York, NY 10010-6805, USA; $10.95). Mike Ashley has compiled his own chronology of the Canon (about which the experts may wrangle if they wish), and fitted into it the 26 new adventures which comprise the bulk of this very bulky paperback. Most enlarge upon Watson's allusions to unpublished cases. There's Edward D. Hoch on Vittoria, the Circus Belle; David Stuart Davies on the Darlington Substitution Scandal; Denis O. Smith on the Grice Patersons and the Island of Uffa; Barrie Roberts on the Addleton Tragedy; Barbara Roden on the case of Mrs Cecil Forrester... My own contribution is the story of Henry Staunton, whom Holmes helped to hang. Alongside stories from Peter Tremayne, Guy N. Smith, Michael Moorcock, Basil Copper, H.R.F. Keating, David Langford, Amy Myers, L. B. Greenwood and others, it's a delight to read again Michael Doyle's ingenious sequel to 'The Musgrave Ritual'. As Richard Lancelyn Green suggests in his foreword, all these stories have the right touch, helping to fill the aching void left when we've read all 60 Canonical adventures. Pastiche-haters won't agree, but those who appreciate what August Derleth called 'not that ridiculing imitation designed for laughter, the parody, but that fond and admiring one less widely known as the pastiche' will enjoy this book immensely.

A reminder of the second Charles Merriman Monograph, edited by Shirley Purves and Eric Monahan for **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**. *Silver Blaze* contains 11 articles in its 48 pages, admirable investigations into various aspects of the story by the likes of Clare Taylor, F.A.X. Somers, Kevin O'Doherty, Joel Senter, John Weber and Stephen Farrell. If you thought the subject was exhaustively covered in Shirley's *Hound and Horse*, you were wrong! *Silver Blaze* is available at £4.50 (overseas £5.00) from H. Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR. Prices include postage.

Kelvin I Jones has reprinted his 1983 monograph *Upon the Tracing of Footsteps* 'by Sherlock Holmes'. This minor classic of reconstruction costs £3.00 (cheques payable to K.I. Jones) from Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB. *(*Kelvin has also reprinted* ***The Carfax Syndrome: Being a Study of Vampirism in the Canon****, though I don't have a price to hand. Write to Oakmagic for a list of their publications.*)*

Another reminder. The prolific and inventive Val Andrews now has *seven* Sherlock Holmes novels in print from Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER): *Sherlock Holmes and the Egyptian Hall Adventure* (£4.95), *Sherlock Holmes and the Houdini Birthright* (£5.99), *Sherlock Holmes and the Man Who Lost Himself* (£5.99), *Sherlock Holmes and the Greyfriars School Mystery* (£5.99) and *Sherlock Holmes and the Yule-tide Mystery* (£5.99) were recently joined by *Sherlock Holmes and the Theatre of Death* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Dozen* (both £6.25). Breese also publish William Seil's well-reviewed *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy* at £6.50. These

titles should all be available from any good bookshop, but they can be ordered from the publisher. Add postage per book: UK 75p, Europe £1.50, USA £3.00. Payment can be by sterling money order, Visa, Access, Mastercard, registered cash of sterling cheques. *(*Val Andrews also has one title in print from Ian Henry: **Sherlock Holmes and the Eminent Thespian**, priced at £8.95.*)*

Recently published by Danger Publishing (1014 S. Westlake Blvd, Suite 14-155, Westlake Village, CA 91361) is yet another 'Sherlock Holmes meets Jack the Ripper' novel. This one's called *Bloodguilty*. The author is Raymond Thor, and it costs $23.95.

There's a new catalogue of first editions out from **Nigel Williams** (22 and 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE). There's about a page and a half of Conan Doyle, including Doyle-related titles.

Philip J. Attwell (105 Winstanley Road, Wellingborough, Northants. NN8 1JQ) asks if anyone can provide him with a recording of *The Alabama Belle* (the second in a short season of plays called *Accused of Murder*), broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on 12th March and again on 9th August. Phil will pay for copying, postage etc.

On a similar tack, Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) is looking for a video recording of *Nicholas Nickleby* — the Royal Shakespeare Company production, which was televised some dozen years ago. I know that a video was issued in America, but don't recall a British release. Can anyone help, please?

Holmes In Scale is an international group recently established to cater for 'Sherlock Holmes modellers, craftsmen and collectors'. Professionals such as Imrie-Risley and Charles Hall have for some time produced lovely Holmesian figures, mostly at 1/32 scale. Holmes In Scale provides a forum for the enthusiast who wants to paint the models in proper style, incorporate them into an appropriate setting, and even customise them. Holmes In Scale can be contacted via William C. Thomas (9507 E. 65th Street, #407, Tulsa, OK 74133-1420, USA), who also publishes the society's irregular journal, *The Jack-Knife*.

*(*Holmes In Scale will feature — along with the Irregular Special Railway Company, the Watsonians, the Praed Street Irregulars, the Solar Pons Society of London and others — in a guide to unusual hobbies, to be published next year by Robson Books. The author is Stephen Jarvis, and the working title is **The Ultimate Guide to Unusual Leisure**. Mr Jarvis is particularly keen to contact people who indulge in odd sports and games. You can write to him at 50 Walsingham Close, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 0RP, or send an e-mail to eedwards@tv3.com.*)*

Our own Society's next meeting will be on Wednesday the 15th October. We shall visit the National Army Museum in Chelsea, whose current special exhibition features the Indian Army and the British Army in India, up to 1947.

The Baskerville Hounds hold their Annual Pack Meet on Dartmoor from the 17th to 19th October (The Kennel Maid, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

On the 25th **The Northern Musgraves** will hold their 10th Birthday Lunch at the Victoria & Albert Hotel in Manchester (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). The **Irregular Special Railway Company** plans an Inspector Morse Weekend on the 25th & 26th October (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX).

Also on the 25th October **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Baker Street Branch Lines** will tour the Winchester area (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On the 1st November, **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, **The Friends of Dr Watson** and **The Cardboard Boxers** will visit Watsonian sites in London.

The Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn will celebrate their twelfth anniversary with a meeting on the 22nd November. Contact Thom Utecht BSI for details (1676 East 55th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11234-3906, USA). **The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA** will be 50 in November *(*the same age as the Prince of Wales*)***.** Congratulations to both organisations.

Periodicals received. ***The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication*** no. 174 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*the PPoF are planning their fourteenth round robin pastiche — these experiments in 'confused yet competent writing' invariably produce entertaining results*).* ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 1997 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, ASH, BSI, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) *(*a good essay on 'failed and foiled marriages' in the Canon by Joe Moran, and pieces on being a Sherlockian by Delia Vargas and Nora Myers*).*

The Devon County Chronicle, July 1997 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707 S. 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA) *(*contains Bob Hahn's intriguing review of **Sherlock Holmes and the Fall River Tragedy** by Owen Haskell, in which Holmes solves the Lizzie Borden case*).* ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles***, August 1997 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*an interview with the ubiquitous David Stuart Davies, and Jim Hawkins's visit to **The Sherlock Holmes** in Northumberland Street*).*

The Cormorant's Ring, August 1997 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA) *(*includes Mary L. Jaffee's 'Patience Moran and the Hundred Percent Solution', a children's parody by Martin Gardner and an account of Jim's society for Sherlockian percussionists, **The Frenzied Hands***).* ***The Petrel Flyer***, July-August 1997 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) *(*a splendid piece on Opper de Blowitz and **The Times** by Michael Higgs, as well as reports on the Lasting Impressions symposium and other meetings*).*

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, August 1997 (Peter E. Blau, BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) *(*the great Sherlockian newsletter*).*

Jeremy Brett died two years ago. His last public appearance was a broadcast appeal on for the Manic Depression Fellowship. Like other charities, the Fellowship has suffered rather than gained from the existence of the National Lottery, and is always in need of funds. You can send donations (in Jeremy Brett's memory, if you wish) to the Manic Depression Fellowship, 8-10 High Street, Kingston upon Thames KT 1 1EY.

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 174 7th November 1997

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Sherlock Holmes and the Man from Hell is the 3rd new Holmes adventure by Barrie Roberts. The title is sensational but apt: the entrance to the harbour at Port Arthur was known as the Gates of Hell, and the story tells of events arising from the transporting of two innocent boys to Van Dieman's Land and the ill-treatment and bad company they encounter. There are echoes of 'The Gloria Scott' and *The Valley of Fear* in this case of murder, abduction, robbery and blackmail on a west country estate. The philanthropist Lord Backwater has been brutally killed in an attack meant for the mysterious Man from Hell. Sherlock Holmes must find out who he is and why he brings such danger with him. Barrie Roberts has done his homework thoroughly (except for an apparent ignorance of correct titles within the English peerage: a viscount's daughter would be the Honourable Patricia Lisle, not Lady Patricia), and he writes in a very acceptable simulacrum of Watson's style. He remains faithful to the Canon throughout, and the result is a very enjoyable story indeed. The publisher is Constable & Co. Ltd, 3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER. The book costs £16.99.

Our French member Bernard Oudin has kindly sent a copy of his new book, just published by Editions Gallimard (5 rue Sébastien-Bottin, 75328 Paris, France) as no. 333 in their Découvertes Gallimard series. *Enquête sur Sherlock Holmes* is a quite delightful 96-page paperback, heavily illustrated, with excellent printing on high-quality paper. The five sections are headed 'Naissance d'un Personnage', 'L'Impossible Assassinat', 'A la Recherche d'un Visage', 'Le Monde des Holmésiens' and 'Témoignages et Documents'. Within this pocket-sized volume, M. Oudin has managed to pack a great deal of good material. I am charmed to know that the French title of the movie *Without a Clue* is *Elémentaire mon cher... Lock Holmes!* I can't find a price but I do urge you seek out a copy of *Enquête sur Sherlock Holmes*.

Eddie Maguire's next Sherlock Holmes story, provisionally called *The Voice from the Ether*, will be set in and around Maldon in Essex. Eddie, who used to live nearby, has received a small grant towards publishing costs from Maldon District Council. (Big House Books, 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ).

There are tempting new catalogues out from **Jeremiah Vokes** (61 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington DL3 7EH; phone 01325 469449) *(*a very welcome newcomer among British Holmesian specialists*)*; **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, East Sussex BN6 8JH; phone 01273 843066) *(*an established and respected dealer in crime fiction*)*; **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 and 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; phone 0171 836 7757; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) *(*the prices tend to reflect the rarity of the books and the location of the shops*)*; **Bibliotective** (Box 47347, Oak Park, MI 48237, USA; phone [248] 968 2437) *(*a big list of crime & detective fiction, with much Sherlockiana*)*; **Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB; phone 0116 251 2756) *(*a very full list entirely devoted to Holmes and Doyle*)*.

Classic Specialties (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219; phone [513] 281 4757; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com) puts out a catalogue that's a magazine in itself. The 1997/98 issue of *The Sherlockian Times* contains an article about Holmes in India, a brief piece on **The Irregular Special Railway Company**, another on Sherlock Down Under, and much wonderful stuff for sale. There are audio-cassettes from America and Britain (including *Sherlock Holmes on the Rails* produced by the ISRC); 'The Abominable Wife' screen saver; an Instant Sherlockian Costume Kit; a lovely Blue Carbuncle Christmas card; and *The Formidable Scrap-Book of Baker Street*. I'm particularly looking forward to seeing that last item. Classic Specialties has a homepage at http://www.sherlock-holmes.com/books.htm#scrapbook.

Gerit Stenitzer recommends *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories* edited by Mike Ashley (Robinson; £6.99 - see DM 173) and tells me of *Crime through Time: Original Tales of Historical Mystery* edited by Miriam Grace Monfredo and Sharon Newman (Berkley Publications, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, USA; $6.99). This paperback contains Laurie R. King's story 'Mrs Hudson's Case', along with stories by Anne Perry, Edward Hoch, M.J. Trow and others.

Christopher and Barbara Roden's Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) has two new titles for autumn. *Absolute Discretion* is a novel by our own Grant Eustace, chronicling an investigation by an undergraduate who just might be the young Sherlock Holmes. *The Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes* reprints Denis O. Smith's first three excellent Holmes stories, 'The Purple Hand', 'The Zodiac Plate' and 'The Unseen Traveller'. (Price of each book is Canada Cdn$25.80; USA US$23.55; elsewhere £16.85/US$26.55 airmail, £15.05/US$23.65 surface.) Forthcoming are John Hall's *Sidelights on Holmes*, David Stuart Davies's *Sherlock Holmes and the Scroll of the Dead* and *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes: The Dying Detective*. *(*Some readers may not yet be aware that Barbara and Christopher are now the parents of Timothy Paul Roden, born on the 15th September. Congratulations.*)*

From Thumbprints (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) come two titles by David Stuart Davies. *Sherlock Holmes and the Reichenbach Secret* provides 'a stimulating and provoking coda to "The Final Problem" and, indeed, the whole Canon' (prices including postage: UK & Europe £3.50; USA US$8.00; Canada Cdn$11.00). *The Annals of Skelington Bones no. 4: The Curse of Captain Codpiece* will need no recommendation to fans of David's grand humour (UK & Europe £4.00; USA US$8.00; Canada CDN$10.00).

The Sherlock Holmes Gazette is now *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine*, and continues to flourish under the editorship of the ubiquitous David Stuart Davies. The latest issue (no. 21) continues Michael Cox's gripping personal account of the making of Granada's *Sherlock Holmes* series. In addition there's Brian Kennedy on Holmesian cartoon strips, Paul Chapman on the Edinburgh connection, Barbara Roden on vampires, DSD on *A Study in Terror*, Susan Rice on **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Gaynor Coules on the novels of Elizabeth George, a grand new Holmes story by John Hall. And more besides. Subscriptions (from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berkshire RG10 8AR) are: UK £14.00; Europe £18.00; North America £21.00/$35.00; elsewhere £22.00. The US representative is Classic Specialties.

That gloriously funny spoof *Move Over, Moriarty*, written and performed by Lip Service (Maggie Fox and Sue Ryding) is currently touring, in repertoire with *Withering Looks*. MOM will play during November at: **Roses Theatre**, Tewkesbury (7th); **Havant Arts Active** (8th); **Ashcroft Arts Centre**, Fareham (13th);

The Mill, Banbury (15th); **Marina Theatre**, Lowestoft (20th); **Quay Theatre**, Sudbury (21st & 22nd); **Music Hall**, Shrewsbury (26th); **Old Town Hall**, Hemel Hempstead (28th); **Borough Theatre**, Abergavenny (29th). For more information, including spring tour dates, call Rachel Sharman on 01422 360502. This is one to treasure!

Interested parties *may* still be in time to acquire a video copy of the famously rare 1937 German film *Der Hund von Baskerville*, starring Bruno Güttner. Uwe Sommerlad has found a print and arranged with the copyright holder for 100 copies, to be distributed world-wide by Michael Ross's Baskerville Bücher (Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany; e-mail Baskerville-Buecher@bigfoot.de). The videos will be in VHS-PAL format. Prices including postage are: Germany DM52.90; Europe DM61.90 or £23.50; rest of world DM64.90 or $38.50. British and US cheques should be payable to Anke von Hasenhorst.

You can find out about the range of material offered by Baskerville on www.sis-online.com/cgi-local/hp/Baskerville, Michael Ross's homepage.

If you haven't bought a copy of *The Sherlock Holmes Video*, then you should — for yourself or for the friend who's always asking you what you see in this rather strange hobby. This 'excellent, affectionate and knowledgeable documentary' *(*I quote myself, but what the hell*)* can be had post-paid for: UK £13.99 for VHS PAL; North America US$35.00 for VHS NTSC; Japan 3,000 Yen plus US$5.00. Cheques should be payable to Martin Hesp, Countryside TV Productions, Higher Haynes, The Old Mineral Line, Watchet, Somerset TR23 0RN.

Brian Pugh sends information about the 1998 *Sherlock Holmes Festival*, to be held in Crowborough over the week from the 3rd to the 10th July (again clashing with our own Society's summer weekend, which next year is based in Truro and exploring 'Devil's Foot' country). **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** will organise the following: an illustrated talk by Philip Weller on Friday the 3rd July, called *The World of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*; a stall in the street market on Saturday the 4th; the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Ceremony at Terrace Montargis at 10.30 am on Sunday the 5th, and on the same day a five-mile 'Walk with Sir Arthur' in and around the town.

Brian asks if anyone can provide him with a recording of the recent Radio 4 broadcast *The Airmen Who Would Not Die*. He will pay costs. (20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN.) *(*Can anyone please help me with recordings of the recent plays from John Dickson Carr's novels: **The House in Gallows Lane** and **To Wake the Dead**?*)*

Cindy Stevens tells me that Bits & Pieces has a number of Sherlockian items in its new catalogue — including '*Nesting Sherlock Holmes & Associates*: 14 cm tall, 5 nesting figures include Holmes, Watson, Inspector Lestrade, the evil Moriarty and the mysterious Hound of the Baskervilles', priced at £5.95! (Bits & Pieces [UK] Ltd, P.O. Box 3, Diss, Norfolk IP22 3HH; phone 01379 649 629). *(*I phoned a couple of weeks ago and ordered a catalogue. No sign of it yet...*)*

The famous *Sherlock Holmes* public house and restaurant (10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA; phone 0171 930 2644/0410; e-mail sherlock@popmail.dircon.co.uk) is gearing up for Christmas. It will be open every day over the festive season, and booking for the restaurant is advised. Besides the usual range of souvenirs and gifts a 1998 calendar will shortly be available. The pub's homepage is at www.users.dircon.co.uk/-sherlock/.

Our Society's next meeting will be the Annual Film Evening at the Museum of London on the 26th November, when David Stuart Davies will present the famously rare silent *Sherlock Holmes*, with John Barrymore as Holmes, Roland Young as Watson and Gustav von Seiffertitz as Moriarty. This restored print has never been shown outside North America before.

The Annual Dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** (Michael F. Whelan, 'Wiggins', P.O. Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA) will be held on Friday the 9th January, and the Annual Dinner of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** on Saturday the 17th January. The Guest of Honour at the latter event will be Colin Dexter, creator of Chief Inspector Morse. The 17th January also sees the dinner of **The Pleasant Places of Florida** (Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA).

At the time of writing the date for the Master's Dinner of **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** (Fran Martin, at 10662, 129 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3T 3H4, Canada) is not settled — it will probably be on the 10th January.

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company (contact The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) will hold its Christmas Social Meeting in Oxford on the 6th December. At the annual *Disjecta Membra* event on the 3rd January the Company will explore some of the London railway termini associated with the Canon. The AGM of **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will **also** be on the 6th (H. Vosper Arthur, 'Spynishlake', Doddiscombesleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). **The Priory Scholars of Leicester** will hold their Annual General Meeting and Christmas Social on the 7th December (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

Mark Chadderton has sent copies of ***The Cerebral Tentacle***, the very nicely produced newsletter/magazine of **The Arthur Conan Doyle Study Group,** a branch office of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. The magazines are very lively and contain worthwhile articles by Philip Weller and (especially) the late Malcolm Payne, along with facsimiles of some most interesting documents relating to ACD. Mark welcomes enquiries at 32B Watcombe Road, Bournemouth BH6 3LU.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, September 1997 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331) *(*the BSJ is published by the Baker Street Irregulars and is available to members and non-members alike; the editor is Donald Pollock, 19 Putnam Street, Buffalo, NY 14213, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should be addressed to Michael F. Whelan, 'Wiggins', P.O. Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA*).*

The Musgrave Papers, 1997 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). ***The Parallelogram*** November 1997 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). ***Communication*** October 1997 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer*** Sept./Oct. 1997 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada).

The School Report Autumn Term 1997 (**The Priory Scholars,** Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Devon County Chronicle* September 1997 (**The Merripit House Guests,** Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707, South 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*** September 1997 (**The Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press September & October 1997 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830) *(*the father of all Sherlockian newsletters; I'd intended to quote a number of reports from these issues, but the clock seems to have beaten us — and if you recognise that reference then you're old, baby!*).*

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

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To renew your subscription send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The death of **Dame Jean Conan Doyle** on the 18th November marks the end of an era, severing the last direct link with Sir Arthur. She had coped with Parkinson's disease and cataracts for some years, and finally succumbed to cancer. Dame Jean was the only one of Sir Arthur's five children to equal his own achievements, though in a quite different field. She entered the ATS in 1938, transferred to the new WAAF in 1940, and rose to become Director of its successor, the Women's Royal Air Force. Her title was not inherited: it was a personal honour, awarded in 1963, when she became an honorary ADC to the Queen. She took her duties to her father's estate seriously, always recognising that he wrote to entertain and enlighten. She was a great friend and supporter of our Society. During one of our Swiss Pilgrimages she observed: *'My father would have been delighted to see you all having such fun!'* and when Jean and I were married, she told a fellow-guest, *'My father would have loved this.'* In 1991 she was the first woman to be invested into the Baker Street Irregulars with all rights and privileges. Her investiture, appropriately, was 'A Certain Gracious Lady'. Those who were honoured to know her feel her loss keenly.

Two days later, we lost one of our senior members, **Freddie Bryan-Brown**, a scholar in the true sense of the word. (I characterised him in a report for the SHJ as a 'tonsured pedagogue' - fortunately he had a grand sense of humour as well.) His impeccably reasoned and presented papers graced our meetings and publications for many years.

Robert G. Harris died in September. Invested into **The Baker Street Irregulars** in 1952 as 'The Creeping Man', he was a founder of **The Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit** and a link to the days when the BSI met at the Murray Hill Hotel. Pilgrims to Switzerland in 1978 will remember him as Jabez Wilson, with an outrageous bright red wig. **James Cuthbertson**, who died in August, rarely attended our Society's meetings, but in 1989 he published a first-rate monograph, *A Study in Banking: An Investigation of the Relationship of Mr Sherlock Holmes with His Bank.* That wasn't quite the last word on the subject: five years later he contributed an equally excellent article, 'The Banking Connection: 1894-1994', to the Society's book *Back to Baker Street.*

A new book on the subject should be ready before Christmas. Eric Monahan's *Banking and Finance in the Canon, with Some Notes on the History and Canonical Connections of the Capital and Counties Bank* doesn't replace *A Study in Banking*, but complements it. There's been much surmise about Holmes and Watson's finances, but little solid research. James Cuthbertson and Eric Monahan have put that right. This 24-page A5 brochure, with card wrappers and full-colour illustrations, is published at £5.50 or $9.75, including postage, by Parallel Publications (14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). Cheques should be payable to Eric Monahan.

Just out from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) is *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* by Julian Harries (£6.25). This clever, affectionate and delightfully funny spoof was written and presented as Eastern Angles' Christmas entertainment in 1994 (see my review in the SHJ, Summer 1995). The play's publication gives many more people the chance to enjoy it; I hope, too, that it will lead to more productions. Archaeology, murder, illicit romance, theft, a secret cult and a love-lorn mummy named Otis all play their part, along with neat detective work and a cartload of jokes. It's an ideal Christmas present - go on, treat yourself!

Ian Wilkes passes on news of a pastiche spotted at the Frankfurt Book Fair: *Sherlock Holmes und der Schrecken von Sumatra* by Jörg Kastner (Verlag Thomas Tilsner, Postfach 1829, 83637 Bad Tölz, Germany; DM36). Baron Maupertuis and H.G. Wells are featured. Ian also notes that early in the new year Ian Henry will have a new printing of Jack Tracy's superb *Encyclopædia Sherlockiana*, at £15.99 + 73p postage.

Richard Dalby notes that Tor Books have issued *Seance for a Vampire* by Fred Saberhagen, price $6.00. 'When Sherlock Holmes is kidnapped by a vampire Dr Watson must contact Holmes' cousin Prince Dracula, to help track the master detective...'

There are new catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE); and **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). The 3rd and 4th Rupert Books Monographs are now available, at £10.00 each. No. 3 is *The New Revelation (The London Spiritualist Alliance Speech of 1917)*, with an afterword by Richard Lancelyn Green *(*this is not the text of ACD's speech, but a previously unrecorded pamphlet reporting on it in full*).* No. 4 is *Remembering Jeremy Brett* by Michael Cox and R. Dixon Smith, being six articles collected from various Sherlockian and other periodicals. Rupert has a homepage at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/rupert_books.

Otto Penzler's famous **Mysterious Bookshop** now has a branch in London. The address is 82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE. It's just a couple of minutes' walk from Baker Street.

Geoffrey Stavert passes on a flyer for *Sherlock Holmes: The Missing Stories*, 'an interactive book containing six original short stories including *The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant'* by Stanley Graham. There's a note that 'This program requires a computer running Windows and a mouse'. It costs £5.00, post-paid, from Stanley Graham, 148 Silk more Lane, Stafford ST17 4JD. *(*Not a CD-ROM at that price, surely? Presumably a floppy disc, then. Sounds like fun, anyway.*)*

Issue 22 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* (the magazine formerly known as *The Sherlock Holmes Gazette*) continues the improvement in presentation that has been apparent of late. Michael Cox's marvellous series 'A Study in Celluloid' brings the story of the Granada TV films up to the beginning of *The Return* and the introduction of Edward Hardwicke as Watson. Paul Chapman surveys the early history of *A Study in Scarlet*. Gaynor Coules looks at the works of Peter Lovesey *(*will the great Granada series **Cribb** ever be repeated, I wonder?*).* David Stuart Davies examines my favourite Rathbone movie, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Catherine Cooke begins a musical tour of Holmes's London. A.L. Blake considers one of the classic 'rivals of Sherlock Holmes' - Dr John Thorndyke. Jean Upton's 'Collectors' Corner' offers suggestions for seasonal gifts. All this and more - including a new Holmes adventure by Denis O. Smith (reprinted from *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures*.) This is the fifth issue of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* for 1997; next year there will be six! A four-issue subscription costs £14.00 from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The American representatives are Classic Specialties, P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA.

Recent and forthcoming books include *Sherlock's Men: Masculinity, Conan Doyle and Cultural History* by Joseph Kestner (September 1997: Scolar Press; £40.00); *The Adventure of the Detected Detective: Sherlock Holmes in James Joyce's **Finnegan's Wake*** by

William D. Jenkins (February 1998: Greenwood Press; £36.50); *Shadows of Sherlock Holmes* edited by David Stuart Davies (April 1998: Wordsworth Editions; £1.00); *Shelley Holmes, Ace Detective* by Michaela Morgan (January 1998: Oxford University Press; £2.99); and *The British Campaign in France and Flanders, 1914-1918* by Arthur Conan Doyle (December 1997: Danowski Press; £9,999.00) *(*that price is not a misprint - at least, not on my part*).*

The third volume of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, read by our Honorary Member Douglas Wilmer and produced by our former Chairman Philip Porter, is due from Penguin Audiobooks in January. This 2-cassette pack costs £7.99. In February HarperCollins Audio will release *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* read by Christopher Lee, at £8.99 (no indication as to content). From the BBC Radio Collection in March comes *The Valley of Fear* with Bert Coules's grand script; it's followed in June by *A Study in Scarlet*.

Out now is *Sherlock Holmes on the Rails, volume 1*, released by the Irregular Special Press (170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). Miles Richardson, an outstanding Holmes in *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's*, reads unabridged 'The Bruce-Partington Plans' (my favourite of the Canonical short stories) and 'The Wealden Pullman Theft' (a clever and knowledgeable tale by Kidenin Kohl and Richard Stannoy - the latter name is an anagram, and the former must surely be). There are a few grammatical infelicities in the pastiche, but the story flows very convincingly; there are also some minor fluffs in the reading which should have been corrected, but they are very minor. Besides, Miles Richardson reads excellently and individualises his characters; he also has a voice that's sheer delight to listen to, whatever he says. The production quality is splendid. *Sherlock Holmes on the Rails, volume 1* costs £9.00, post-paid within the UK, and is worth every penny. Cheques should be payable to the Irregular Special Railway Company. (The ISRC has quite a range of goods for sale. Drop the Company a line, or check out its homepage at http://mesmsgl.me.ic.ac.uk/sherlock)

Eddie Maguire's Big House Books (63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ) has prepared two handsome sets of greeting cards, featuring Paget illustrations to 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' and 'The Blue Carbuncle', printed in dark sepia on ivory; the insides are blank for your own message. They're sold in packs of ten (five of each design), with envelopes, priced at £4.25 including postage.

The Hound of the Baskervilles is to be broadcast on Channel 5 at 2.50 a.m. on the 29th December. This is the laughably bad 1972 Universal movie with a miscast Stewart Granger and Bernard Fox as Holmes and Watson. Worth seeing once, just so you'll believe it.

*(*Can anyone please lend or sell me a video recording of the recent 'Inspector Morse' episode, **Death Is Now My Neighbour**, which we managed to miss?*)*

Currently at the Royal Academy (Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS) is a wonderful exhibition of *Victorian Fairy Painting*, including a number by ACD's uncle Dickie Doyle and one by his father Charles. *(*Which reminds me: does anyone know when Edward Gardner died? He was the Theosophist who 'discovered' the Cottingley fairies.*)*

About the only place these days that you can experience a real Victorian pantomime, with rhyming couplets and wonderfully awful puns, is **The Players' Theatre** in London. It's situated in The Arches under Charing Cross Station. This year's panto is *The Babes in the Wood and the Good Little Fairy Birds* by H.J. Byron, first performed in 1859. The old story is given a Shakespearean twist, being reinterpreted as The Scottish Play! Check with the box office on 0171 829 1134 (there's a website at www.theplayers.co.uk). The theatre's just along from the *Sherlock Holmes* pub in Northumberland Street, where the Baker Street study has been decorated for the season (by Dr Watson and Mrs Hudson, presumably). The pub is well worth a visit anyway, and serves excellent lunches and dinners. Phone 0171 839 5864 (and check the website on www.users.dircon.co.uk/~sherlock/).

A reminder of the proposal to erect a statue of Sherlock Holmes in Baker Street (where better for the first such monument in England?) John Doubleday's design is widely admired, the site outside Baker Street Station has official approval, and the main task now is to raise the necessary money. Donations of any amount are welcomed by Elaine Hamill, Treasurer to the Sherlock Holmes Statue Company Ltd. Cheques, payable to the Company, should be sent to The Appeal Fund, The Sherlock Holmes Statue Company Ltd, 16 Kirton Close, Chiswick, London W4 5UU. For further details, contact Elaine at the same address.

The Guest of Honour at our Society's Annual Dinner on the 17th January is Colin Dexter. There'll be the customary informal get-together in Bloomsbury the following day. The Annual Dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** in New York is on Friday the 9th January, and there are the usual associated festivities. (Information about the BSI can be had from Michael F. Whelan, 'Wiggins', P.O. Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, U.S.A.)

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company's annual *Disjecta Membra* event on the 3rd January, arranged in collaboration with **The Baker Street Branch Lines**, explores Canonical London railway termini, and celebrates Sherlock Holmes's birthday over lunch (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). The Master's Dinner of **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** is on the 10th (Fran Martin, at 10662, 129 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3T 3H4, Canada), and the 17th sees the dinner of **The Pleasant Places of Florida** (contact Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA). On the 31st, **The Northern Musgraves** hold their Birthday Lunch in Huddersfield (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER).

Periodicals received. ***The Torr***, Autumn 1997 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) *(*somehow this one got left out of DM 174; sorry*).* ***The Ritual***, Autumn 1997 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Paul M. Chapman, Langford, Thirsk Road, Easingwold, North Yorks. YO6 3HL). ***The FMHC Memo***, November 1997, and ***Interim Report 1997: The Dancing Men Contract Renewed*** (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). ***The School Report***, Winter Term 1997 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Striking (T)Rifles***, Oktober 1997, and ***The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In***, Herbst 1997 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, D-47906 Kempen, Germany). ***The Log of the Canonical Hams***, January 1994 - June 1997 *(*sic!*)* (**The Sherlock Holmes Wireless Society**, Ron Fish, P.O. Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919-0004, USA). ***Communication***, November 1997 and December 1997 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, November 1997 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). Peter notes that from 7th January to 15th February Paxton Whitehead will star in Hugh Leonard's play *The Mask of Moriarty* at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey - 'a 35-minute drive from New York City'. The box office is at Brookside Drive, Millburn, NJ 07041 (phone 973-376 4343). 'Eve Titus is selling many of her own books and newspaper and magazine articles related to Basil of Baker Street and other Sherlockian matters, and you can have a copy of her sales-list in return for a self-addressed stamped envelope. Her address is 17094 Collins Avenue #A-405, Sunny Isles, FL 33160.' '*The Sherlock Holmes Victorian Cookbook: Favourite Recipes of the Great Detective & Dr Watson* by William Bonnell (Macmillan Canada; Cdn$24.95) offers an interesting look at Victorian cookery, with accompanying discussion of its history.' 'Willis G. Frick has moved his Sherlocktron home pages to a new web-site at http://members.home.net/sherlockl/Sherlocktron html' In *Dr Doyle & Dr Bell: A Victorian Mystery* by Howard Engel (Viking/Penguin; Cdn$19.99) medical student Conan Doyle is involved with Dr Bell in solving an 1879 mystery that prefigures the Oscar Slater case.

The Compliments of the Season to all!

Roger Johnson