The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 218 2nd February 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

At the annual dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** on 11 January, Wiggins awarded the following investitures: **Henry Boote** ('Meyers, Toronto'), **Marilyn McKay** ('Violet de Merville'), **Enrico Solito** ('Gennaro Lucca'), **Christopher Roden** ('Sir Henry Baskerville'), **Michael Dirda** ('Langdale Pike'), **Mark Gagen** ('Sir James Damery'), **Bob Schul**tz ('The *Gloria Scott*'), **Mary Campbell** ('Brenda Tregennis'), **Pasquale Accardo** ('Gorgiano'), and **Dick Sveum** ('Dr Hill Barton'). The Two Shilling Award was presented to Susan Rice. Congratulations to all!

Richard Dalby notes that **Jane Welsh** died aged 96 on 27 November. Seventy years ago she starred with Arthur Wontner & Ian Fleming in both *The Sleeping Cardinal* and *The Missing Rembrandt.*

Sherlock Holmes on Screen by Alan Barnes (Reynolds & Hearn Ltd,61A Priory Road, Kew Gardens, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3DH; 5 February; £17.95) was originally announced for last August, but it was worth waiting for. Visually the book can't compare with David Stuart Davies's gorgeous *Starring Sherlock Holmes* but the text is much fuller, covering each film or TV play individually and giving cast details. Mr Barnes is known as a film expert rather than a Sherlockian, but he clearly knows his Canon and he knows the characters of Holmes and Watson. He has strong and often wittily expressed opinions about the films and the performances (in Granada's *Hound*, 'the scenes of Watson's arrival at Baskerville Hall are so somnolently acted and directed they seem like some kind of underwater ballet'). The entries are alphabetical, though there is a chronology at the end of the book, but as there are brief references to minor films that don't get individual coverage (*Sherlock Jr, Der Mann der Sherlock Holmes War* and others) an index would have been useful. *Sherlock Holmes on Screen* is likely to replace the similarly titled 1977 volume *Sherlock Holmes on the Screen* as my standard reference source. Highly recommended.

The latest and most eagerly-awaited volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library* is *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, edited and annotated by Leslie S Klinger (Gasogene Books, PO Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; $22.95), with an enthusiastic introduction by Nicholas Meyer. The notes are full, informative and accurate, drawing on the whole range of scholarship that this greatest of the chronicles of Sherlock Holmes has inspired. There's an overview of the candidates for Baskerville Hall, and a summary of the chronologists' findings. Gasogene have done their usual nice job in producing a strong, attractive soft-cover volume, and the result is a worthy continuation of a most important and stimulating project.

Also from Gasogene is *A Deep Game: The Travelers' Companion to the London of Sherlock Holmes* by David L Hammer ($22.95). As always, Mr Hammer is an amiably opinionated guide,.but his new book is not, alas, wholly reliable. It wasn't University College Hospital that was known as 'Godless Gower Street' but University College itself — the original 'University of London'; the Clermont Club is not at Lansdowne House, which was partly demolished in 1934, the residue now housing the Lansdowne Club; the steeple of St George's Hanover Square does indeed support a weathervane rather than a cross, but this is usual in older English churches ... and do any British people really pronounce 'Thames' as 'Tims'? *A Deep Game* is a jolly read, but the Sherlockian who wants an accurate guide may prefer Arthur M Alexander's *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* (reviewed in DM 196).

Bill Paxton has followed *The Hidden Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with a second volume unsurprisingly called *The Hidden Adventures of Sherlock Holmes II* (Omnibus Enterprises Ltd, 12907 East 36th Street Terrace, Independence, MO 64055, USA; $25.00 plus postage). The Watson style is deceptively difficult to capture, and Mr Paxton has not, I think, really managed it, but his wide-ranging historical knowledge and his affection for Conan Doyle's great creation are very evident. The book contains two short stories and a novel, 'The Stolen Treasure of the Knights of Malta', whose narrative also includes the history of Islam. Like the first volume, this is a strongly bound and attractive hardback book.

The first two volumes in the Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series, edited by Leslie Klinger, are well worth a look. Most of us will be interested in *The Hound of the Baskervilles, Chapter XI* which reproduces the only surviving complete chapter of the novel, with a transcript of the text and nine essays by Donald Redmond, Richard Lancelyn Green, Lloyd Rose, Michael Dirda and others. *Angels of Darkness: A Drama in Three Acts* is a previously unpublished play of curious significance to the Sherlockian, and of course to the Doylean. The books, handsomely presented in hard covers, cost $35.00 each, plus postage ($8.00 for one, $9.50 for both within North America; $9.50 for one, $12.00 for both elsewhere) and can be ordered from the Baker Street Irregulars, 2029 Century Park East, Suite 3290, Los Angeles, CA 90067, USA; or www.bakerstreetjournal.com.

Recent catalogues are out from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE) and **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; sales@rupert-books.co.uk). Rupert's catalogue is also online at www.rupert-books.co.uk. MC Black notes that **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN) offer *Good Old Index: The Sherlock Holmes Handbook* by Thomas Ross at £4.00 (originally £19.99). If you place an order or ask for a free catalogue, please quote reference 1045.

The first three video releases of classic TV drama from BBC Learning are of extraordinary interest. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, adapted by John Osborne, features John Gielgud as Lord Henry and Jeremy Brett as Basil Hallward, both of whom easily outclass Peter Firth's rather awkward Dorian (oh, to have JB's 1963 performance as Dorian!). *Count Dracula* is a splendid version of Stoker's novel, with Louis Jourdan's menacing Count and Frank Finlay's stalwart Van Helsing beautifully matched. But what we're *really* interested in is *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, dramatised by Hugh Leonard. I've said it before and no doubt will say it again — this is the best screen version of *The Hound*. The Dartmoor locations are effectively used, the direction is brisk and exciting, the colour photography is excellent, the script is both faithful and suspenseful, the casting splendid — for the first time we get the true Beryl Stapleton and the real Dr Mortimer ... and in Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock we have a great Holmes and Watson at the peak of their form. And there's one delicious subtle joke: the Baskerville coat of arms bears the motto *Cave Canem Nocte*. This *Hound* is a genuine classic.

The films are available on PAL format video and multi-region DVD, and they're available at £19.99 each, plus postage (in the UK) of £1.50 for one video and £2.50 for two or three. Or buy two of the three titles for £35.00 post-paid, from Video Offer, BBC Learning, Room A3022, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT. Cheques or postal

orders should be payable to BBC Worldwide. Or e-mail Gavin Collinson at gavin.collinson@bbc.co.uk with credit card details. If these releases are successful, it's probable that the rest of the 1968 Cushing series will follow, and perhaps more BBC Holmes.

In issue 46 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* David Stuart Davies concludes his memories of Jeremy Brett; Bob Byrne contributes a neat variant on 'How Watson Learned the Trick'; there's Alan Perry on married couples in detective fiction; Martin Edwards on Cyril Hare's sleuth Francis Pettigrew; Paul Chapman on Holmes's place in society; David Stuart Davies on *The Royal Scandal*, the third TV movie with Matt Frewer and Kenneth Welsh as Holmes and Watson; Calum McLeod on the crime novels of Peter Robinson; and Brian Pugh on **Gerard's Hussars**; plus a new Holmes story by David Stuart Davies, and contributions from Roger Forsdyke, John Hall, Pat Ward, Mike Ripley, Moriarty and me. The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or $6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Donald Cooksley kindly sent me the January issue of *Devon Life* (Colour Works Publishing, Parragon House, Ford Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5LQ; £2.00 + postage), containing 22 well-illustrated pages about Sherlock Holmes, several written by Philip Weller, who knows his Holmes and his Dartmoor.

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Bert Coules, with Clive Merrison and Andrew Sachs as Holmes and Watson, began transmission on BBC Radio 4 at 2.15pm last Wednesday. Four of the plays are out on cassette from BBC Worldwide (80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT). Less heralded was the reading of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in eight 15-minute episodes by Hugh Laurie on Radio 2 at 9.15pm on Fridays, now nearly halfway through.

In a couple of days' time Verglas Music (no address to hand) will release a music CD of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, written and performed by Clive Nolan & Oliver Wakeman, with Bob Catley, Ashley Holt, Peter Banks, Tony Fernandez and other musicians. Robert Powell, who has played Holmes on stage and radio, narrates as Dr Watson. The CD will be available from **The Sherlock Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7486 1426; e-mail sales@shmc.demon.co.uk).

Recordings of Joe Bevilacqua's radio series *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes* are still available, and people should contact him at cdsforsale@comedyorama.com.

At least three new Holmes TV films are in the offing. Christopher Roden passes on news of another version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and Charles Prepolec tells of *A Case of Evil*, which seems to combine elements of *Young Sherlock Holmes*, *Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother* and *Basil the Great Mouse Detective*. More on these in the next issue. And Matt Frewer and Kenneth Welsh are working on *The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire* ...

After the death of Morse late last year, I'm pleased to report that his fellow bloodhound Sherlock is happily living with a family on Mersea Island after being made redundant by Essex Police.

The Braintree engineering firm Finch Seaman Enfield, which cast John Doubleday's statues of Sherlock Holmes, is in financial difficulties. MD Rod Seaman says, 'Hopefully we will be able to come out of administration in a relatively short time and continue trading as normal after the restructuring.'

93 year old Murray Shaw, author of the *Match Wits with Sherlock Holmes* books for youngsters, is joint winner of the Love of Learning award in the 2001 Arizona Blue Cross Blue Shield 'Ageless Heroes' award programme. Congratulations, Murray!

Roy Upton Holder of **The Deerstalkers of Welshpool** (Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA) tells me that Roger Llewellyn has accepted the post of president of the Deerstalkers.

Our Society's informal Club Nights continue at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, on the first Friday of each month from 6.00pm to 9.00pm. Dates for spring are 1 March, 5 April and 3 May, 7 June and 5 July. All members, prospective members and guests are welcome. On 20 March at the Savage Club, Sir Richard Parsons will talk to the Society about 'Sherlock Holmes on Her Majesty's Service.'

The topic at **The Northern Musgraves** lunch on 9 February will be *The Valley of Fear* (secretary Anne Jordan has moved to Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will discuss 'The Three Garridebs' on 11 February (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA; their new website address is www.geocities.com/soundofthebaskervilles). **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will hold the 12th running of the Wessex Cup at Tampa Bay Downs on 16 February (David McCallister, 8142 Quail Hollow Blvd, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544, USA). The same day **The Illustrious Clients** will consider 'The Abbey Grange' (Steven T. Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). **The Crew of the SS Mayday** (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP) will celebrate their 10th anniversary on 1 March with a special Sailing (as their meetings are called). Happy birthday!

Periodicals received. ***The Illustrious Clients News***, December 2001 and January 2002 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T. Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2001 and January 2002, and ***Beeman's Christmas Annual 2001: Canonical Locales*** (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Stan Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Communication***, November/December 2001, Special Advertising Issue 2001, and January/February 2002 (***The Pleasant Places of Florida***, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Musgrave Papers 2001: 'A hound it was ...'*** (**The Northern Musgraves** (John Addy,184 Bradford Road, Otley, West Yorks. LS21 3LT). ***The School Report***, Winter Term 2001 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, December 2001 (Sherlock Holmes Collections, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Friends of the Library***, Winter 2001-2002 (499 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0414, USA). ***Sherlockiana***, no. 2, 2001 and no. 3, 2001 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Bjarne Nielsen, Sherlock Holmes Museet, Algade 3, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark). ***The Whaling News***, October, November and December 2001 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

Practice Notes, December 2001 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2001 and Winter 2002 (Steve Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA**; The Baker Street Irregulars**, Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2001 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, Spring 2001 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia). ***The Soft-Nosed Bullet-in***, no. 29, & ***Striking (T)Rifles***, 2001 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Jan Kipping, Wiesendamm 17A, 22305 Hamburg, Germany). ***Interim Report 2000: The Devil's Foot Contract Reviewed*** (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Ineffable Twaddle, February 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Tonga Times***, Winter 2002 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E. 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, February2002 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63028, USA). ***Interim Newsletter***, January 2002 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*** (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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 219 10th March 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Within the last few weeks we have suffered several losses.

Stratford Johns will be remembered as Charlie Barlow in *Z Cars*, *Softly Softly*, *Barlow at Large* and the *Jack the Ripper* special that inspired the Sherlock Holmes movie *Murder by Decree*. He also played the Chief Commissioner in John Cleese's spoof *The Strange Case of the End of Civilisation as We Know It*. **Eve Titus** wrote the delightful *Basil of Baker Street* stories, which inspired one of the best Disney cartoons of the past twenty years; in 1993 she was invested into the Baker Street Irregulars as 'Young Master Rucastle'.

Barry Foster was another great detective for British TV, Nicholas Freeling's Van der Valk, and he played Sherlock Holmes in a good BBC radio series in 1978, with David Buck as Watson. Foster wryly attributed much of his success to being frequently mistaken for Jon Pertwee, Keith Barron and **John Thaw** — and with a precious irony Thaw died just ten days later, aged only 60. He also achieved fame as a TV detective, or rather two: Jack Regan of *The Sweeney*, and Detective Chief Inspector Endeavour Morse. And of course he was a superb Jonathan Small in Granada's production of *The Sign of Four*.

Chuck Jones was one of the great masters of movie animation, directing classic exploits of Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, the Road Runner, Wile E. Coyote, and Tom & Jerry. Peter Blau notes that the Academy Award tribute at the presentation of his fourth Oscar in 1996 included a clip from his Sherlockian parody *Deduce You Say!* Finally, **Spike Milligan** was a man who truly deserved the title of Comic Genius. A regular character in his long-running and hugely influential radio series *The Goon Show* was a seedy incompetent villain named Moriarty, and his '*Q*' series for BBC TV included a typically loony Holmes parody. Four years ago he sent up Holmes's greatest case something rotten in *The Hound of the Baskervilles According to Spike Milligan*, which made up for his part in Peter Cook & Dudley Moore's movie travesty of the story.

In reporting the awards made at the BSI dinner in January I neglected to mention the unique Silver Penguin Award (a 1930s cocktail shaker) presented to **Jon L Lellenberg** for his superb *Baker Street Irregulars History Series*. *(*I confess with shame to not recognising Jon at the dinner, though we've been friends for over 30 years — he's shaved off his moustache and looks quite different!*)*

The Northern Musgraves honoured me with the Northern Musgrave Crown at last month's birthday lunch in Huddersfield — the sixth Crown, I think, to be awarded.

The March issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* (43-45 St Mary's Road, Ealing, London W5 5RQ; £3.00) features a very good 17-page article by Norman Wright & David Ashford about *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The writers had help from Phil Woolley of the **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE).

Nick Utechin has seen Alan Barnes's excellent *Sherlock Holmes on Screen* (see DM 218) priced at £9.95 in a chain called British Bookshops & Sussex Stationers. That's a saving of £8.00!

There are recent catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), and **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; sales@rupert-books.co.uk).Rupert's catalogue is also online at www.rupert-books.co.uk.

Those who have ordered the BBC video of the Peter Cushing *Hound of the Baskervilles* will have realised that there's some delay in sending copies out. Unfortunately I've been unable to get any response from Gavin Collinson to find out what's happening! My apologies for that — I'll keep trying, as I think the video and DVD will be worth the wait.

Meanwhile you should check www.the-mausoleum-club.org.uk, a website devoted to British archive TV — shows that deserve to be repeated or released on video. Both the Peter Cushing series and the preceding series with Douglas Wilmer receive a gratifying amount of coverage, in the form of perceptive reviews, transmission details and scans from contemporary issues of the *Radio Times*. It's quite fascinating.

John Hine Studios (2 Hillside Road, Eggars Hill, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 3NB) make a series of attractive miniature buildings of Victorian London, and as accessories they've issued various tiny figures designed by Bob Russell & Andrew C. Stadden. One set of these *London by Gaslight* figures consists of Jack the Ripper, Holmes & Watson and Woman with Bottle. Very good they are too.

The Hound of the Baskervilles (Verglas Music, PO Box 19, Virginia Water, Surrey GU25 4YE) is a new CD in the tradition of Jeff Wayne's *War of the Worlds*, a second collaboration by Clive Nolan & Oliver Wakeman, following their successful 1999 Jabberwocky. The spoken narration by the excellent Robert Powell paraphrases and condenses sections of Conan Doyle's text, and the atmospheric songs are well performed by the likes of Ashley Holt, Bob Catley, Paul Allison and Tracy Hitchings. The backing band, led by Nolan & Wakeman, is equally distinguished. I've sometimes wondered what a rock music take on Sherlock Holmes would sound like, and I'm glad to say that it's pretty damn' good!

Look out for a recently completed CD recording of *Silver Blaze* from One Voice productions, which should soon be available from Amazon.com and other sources. The one voice is that of David Ian Davies, an English actor long resident in the United States, whose vocal versatility is very evident in his exciting reading of one of Sherlock Holmes's greatest cases. *(*David Ian Davies is, as far as I know, no relation to David Stuart Davies, though he was born in Huddersfield.*)*

Four of the five *Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* recently broadcast on BBC Radio 4, are available on a double cassette, but as I haven't yet seen a copy I can't tell you which four. What I can say is that they're all powerful tales whose characters reveal the depths and the heights of humanity. Non-Canonical Holmes stories are something fairly new to British radio, though they're long established in America. Bert Coules's writing and the acting of Clive Merrison, his new Watson Andrew Sachs, and the distinguished supporting casts raise these dramas to a higher level than the enjoyable puzzles that Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce encountered.

Listen2books (Jersey JE1 1LB; www.listen2books.co.uk) offers a mail order service to those who can't by audiobooks locally. The current catalogue includes *The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes* read

by Christopher Lee, and the four-volume *Best of Sherlock Holmes* — the radio series with John Gielgud & Ralph Richardson.

Nick Utechin reports finding at Murder One a video from Orbit Media (no address to hand) featuring two episodes from the 1954-5 TV series with Ronald Howard & Howard Marion-Crawford as Holmes & Watson: *The Case of the Violent Suitor* and *The Case of the Impromptu Performance*. The 60-minute video costs £10.99.

New at **The Sherlock Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7486 1426; e-mail sales@shmc.demon.co.uk) is the first in a superb set of hand-made and hand-painted statuettes by Jonathan Dewar, limited to 250 copies. 'Awaiting the Hound' is a 12½" figure of Sherlock Holmes on Dartmoor. By the time this reaches you the second figure, the Hound itself, will probably be ready. Eventually there'll be half a dozen figures whose bases fit together, making a dramatic whole. They'll be available either in bronze effect or fully coloured — my preference is for the latter. They don't come cheap, but they are rather beautiful.

The Sherlock Memorabilia Company also stocks Clive Nolan & Oliver Wakeman's *Hound of the Baskervilles* CD.

Ian R Thomson has painted a striking picture called 'Teller of Tales', which, rather than being a straightforward portrait of Arthur Conan Doyle, features his photograph, on a desk with various of his books, pictures of his family, and the tools of his trade. 'Teller of Tales' is available as a numbered limited-edition print at £45.00 each ($64.00 or 73 euros) from Great Scot, 278 Holburn Street, Aberdeen AB10 6DD. Cheques should be payable to Great Scot.

At the Helmsley Arts Centre (phone 01439 771700), about 20 miles north of York, on Saturday 20 April, you can see Roger Llewellyn as Holmes in David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* Critics have said: 'This is the finest, most fully realised one man show I've ever seen,' 'Davies' script is barbed and witty, flecked like marble with poignant insight,' and 'The finest interpretation of Doyle's hero.' I'm in full agreement: both play and actor are superb. If you can't get to Helmsley, do look out for *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* near you.

Our Swiss friend Marcus Geisser is still working for the International Red Cross, and has recently relocated from Burma to Siam — sorry, from Myanmar to Thailand. He is interested in contacting Sherlockians in that country who would like to help found a Sherlock Holmes Society of Thailand. He adds: 'Moreover, material about Thai translation is also most welcome.' Sherlockian residents of Thailand should contact Marcus Geisser at ICRC, 36 Sirimangkalajarn Road, Soi 11, Tambon Suthep, Muang District, Chiang Mai 50200, Thailand — marcus_geisser@hotmail.com.

Two of France's, and the world's, leading Sherlockians, Alexis Barquin and Thierry Saint-Joanis, have launched an independent website, *The Who's Who of the Sherlock Holmes Societies*. 'So far more than 550 photos are available from more than 344 active societies from 23 different countries. There are the society contacts, a short history, address, the contact e-mail and the website URL. It is hoped this site will help Sherlockians and Holmesians put faces to names.' You'll find the *Who's Who* site at www.sh-whoswho.com.

Following the successful game against the Wodehousians in June, **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** has plans for a number of weekend cricket matches next summer, to be played to 1895 rules. *(*Challenges have been made by the Gentlemen of Essex CID and by the Old Dagonians, alumni of the school where Martin Dakin taught.*)* Prospective players should please contact Peter Horrocks at minuetter@aol.com.

Sir Richard Parsons will talk about 'Sherlock Holmes On Her Majesty's Service' at our own society's next meeting on 20 March.

It's not strictly Sherlockian, but we have it on George MacDonald Fraser's authority that Holmes and Flashman's paths crossed — the AGM of **The Flashman Society** will be held at the Falstaff Hotel, Leamington Spa on 16 March. The days events will commence at 11.00 am and continue till late! (Get details from Max Wormald at m.wormald@ntlworld.com.

The Sound of the Baskervilles will meet on 11 March to discuss 'The Three Garridebs' (contact the group via David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA;website www.geocities.com/soundofthebaskervilles). The topic at the 16 March meeting of **The Sydney Passengers** will be 'Wisteria Lodge' (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia). On 30 March **The Three Garridebs** will discuss *The Valley of Fear* (Dante M. Torrese, 11 Chestnut Street, Ardsley, NY 10502-1001, USA).

Our society's next informal club night will be on 5 April at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue — very near the Sherlock Holmes pub. All members, prospective members and guests are welcome (the next will be on 3 May). **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** plan a formal dinner that same day to celebrate Holmes's return after the hiatus (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). Roger Llewellyn has accepted the post of president of **The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, the first Sherlockian society in Wales; the meeting on 6 April will precede a talk by Brian Pugh, Curator of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment (Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA). Happy birthday to **The Occupants of the Empty House**, who'll celebrate their Silver Jubilee on 12-13 April in Carbondale, Illinois, with a host of events including the John Bennett Shaw Memorial Library Raffle (Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).

Looking ahead a bit, the annual Birthday Lunch of **The Margery Allingham Society** will be held on 18 May at the University Women's Club in Mayfair; the guest speaker this year will be the distinguished novelist Andrew Taylor (Pamela Bruxner, 2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex. TN36 4HB). The Annual General Meeting of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** on 22 May — Sir Arthur's birthday — will follow the laying of a wreath at Montargis Terrace in Crowborough (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN).

Periodicals received. ***The Serpentine Muse,*** Spring 2002 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***Communication,*** January/February 2002 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Camden House Journal,*** February 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles,*** November 2001/January 2002 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA).

The School Report, Spring Term 2002 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***Ineffable Twaddle,*** March 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Sherlockiana,*** no. 1, 2002 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe, Hellebækgade 19, 3.tv. 2200 Kobenhaven N, Denmark) *(*Mia Stampe will bring a group of Danish Sherlockians to London from 23 to 26 May, and they will attend our society's meeting on 23 May. If you would like to join them on their activities, please contact Mia at stampe@dsri.dk or Peter Horrocks at minuetter@aol.com*).* ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal,*** Winter 2001 — worth waiting for.

And of course the invaluable newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2001, January 2002, and February 2002 (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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 220 14th April 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

It can hardly have escaped anyone's notice that **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother** died on 30 March, at the remarkable age of 101. If anyone in the past century deserves to be remembered as 'a certain gracious lady' it is she. And there have been other losses. On 27 March **Billy Wilder** died, aged 95. He made greater movies (*Some Like It Hot, Sunset Boulevard, Ace in the Hole*), but he earned his place in the Sherlockian pantheon with that brilliant, wayward comedy *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* — and contrary to received wisdom he was happy to talk about the film, and would have loved to see it restored to its original four-hour state. And on 31 March we lost the writer and comedian **Barry Took**. The scripts he and Marty Feldman wrote for the classic BBC radio show *Round the Horne* included a Sherlockian parody ('The private investigator affected a Sherlock Holmes hat, a Sherlock Holmes cape, and smoked a Sherlock Holmes pipe. His name, as you have probably guessed, was Gladys Lustgirdle, a pseudonym which fools nobody, except, we hope, the executors of the late Arthur Conan Doyle.'), and he was the amiable, knowledgeable and highly entertaining guest of honour at our Society's annual dinner in 1995.

There's a couple of splendid new releases from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ). It's always a pleasure to listen to the mellow voice of David Timson, who has already recorded twelve of the short stories. Now he reads *A Study in Scarlet*, unabridged. His pacing is impeccable, his characterisation superb, and, as ever, the recording is enhanced by well-chosen music — this time by Dvorak and Hubert Parry — chosen from the Naxos catalogue by the producer Nicolas Soames. This excellent unabridged reading is available on four cassettes (£11.99) or four CDs (£16.99), with informative sleeve notes by David Timson.

Equally highly recommended is *Pygmalion* by Bernard Shaw. The characters of Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering in this, Shaw's most enjoyable comedy, are so clearly influenced by Holmes and Watson that I have no hesitation in including this brief review. If you want more Sherlockian connections, Pickering is played by Geoffrey Palmer (Holmes in *The Mask of Moriarty*), Doolittle by David Burke (Jeremy Brett's first Watson), and Mrs Higgins by Hannah Gordon (the second wife to Michael Williams's Watson). The play is deliciously performed, especially by Lucy Whybrow as Eliza and Anton Lesser — not always a favourite of mine — as Higgins, and John Tydeman's direction keeps it moving at just the right pace. Thank heaven, Mr Tydeman and his cast respect the artistic and psychological rightness of Shaw's ending, so crassly perverted by Alan Jay Lerner (and by Pascal in the generally excellent 1938 movie): Eliza does *not* come back to Higgins. As Shaw said, that would be 'a revolting tragedy'. Shaw gave his reasons in a fascinating epilogue to the play, here read in its entirety by Denys Hawthorne, who also provides brief narrative links taken from Shaw's stage directions. This *Pygmalion*, on three cassettes (£9.99) or three CDs (£13.99), is simply delightful.

David Ian Davies's reading of *Silver Blaze*, recommended in DM 219, is now available on CD from One Voice Recordings (16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail ddavies@aol.com). This nice recording of a classic mystery read by a most accomplished actor is the first in the Sherlock Holmes One Voice series — look out next for *The Sussex Vampire*.

Those who ordered the BBC's *Hound of the Baskervilles* on video or DVD should have received them by now. Despite the delays at the distribution centre, thanks to the hard work put in by Gavin Collinson, we now have access to an unjustly neglected classic production of this classic adventure. *The Hound*, *Count Dracula* and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* are available on PAL format video and multi-region DVD at £19.99 each, plus postage (in the UK) of £1.50 for one video and £2.50 for two or three, from BBC Special Interests, Room A3040, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT. Cheques or postal orders should be payable to BBC Worldwide. The website is at www.bbcworldwide.com/vet/specialinterests.

Michael Doyle has kindly sent a copy of *'It Commenced with Two....' The Story of Mary Ann Doyle, First Companion of Catherine McAuley* by Bonaventure Brennan, RSM (Sisters of Mercy, Northern Province, 2 St Brigid's Court, Athboy, Co. Meath, Ireland). Catherine McAuley and Mary Ann Doyle were the founders of the internationally known Roman Catholic order the Sisters of Mercy, and Mary Ann was the great-aunt of Arthur Conan Doyle! One of her brothers, John, was the famous artist 'HB', but Mary Ann was not alone in entering the church. Her story brings home to one how drastic for the family was Arthur's break with Catholicism. This fascinating new look at the Doyle family costs £15.00 (Irish, I presume?) or 19.05 Euros. It can be bought direct from Sister Brennan at the above address.

Bill Barnes (19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) alerts us to the publication of *The Hounds' Collection: Volume 7* — seventy-four pages of wit, scholarship, pastiche and artwork, most of it new, from members of **The Hounds of the Internet**. The cost is £6.00, US$10.00, Cdn$15.00, Au$12.00 or 10 Euros, including airmail postage. Payment is currency or via PayPal to bbarnes@ozemail.com.au is preferred, but personal checks are acceptable. Bill also has copies of volumes 4, 5 and 6 available.

More new and forthcoming books. In February, John Murray (50 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4BD) issued Jamyang Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* in paperback at £9.99. In March, *Sherlock Holmes's Great Cases* appeared from Orion (Orion House, 5 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EA) in hardback at £16.99 and paperback at £6.99; the book contains the twelve *Adventures* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Also in March, Young Hippo Books (Scholastic Ltd, Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU) published two Sherlock Hound books for young children at £3.99 each: *The Case of the Howling Armour* and *The Case of the Disappearing Necklace*. A third, *The Case of the Giant Burping Bluebells*, is due in June. A new paperback of *The Adventures and Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* is out this month from the Modern Library (Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA; £11.99).

I have no idea whether they're really Sherlockian, but in June Boosey & Hawkes (295 Regent Street, London W1B 2JH) will publish the two volumes, each with a CD, of *Singing Sherlock: A Singing Resource for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2* by Val Whitlock, each priced at £29.75.

And coming in January 2004 from Weidenfeld & Nicolson (Orion House, 5 Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EA; £25.00) is

Arthur Conan Doyle, a biography by Owen Dudley Edwards (the paperback is due a year later from Gollancz, at £10.99).

Bill Paxton (Omnibus Enterprises Ltd, 12907 East 36th Street Terrace, Independence, MO 64055, USA) tells me that his two collections *The Hidden Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Hidden Adventures of Sherlock Holmes II* ($25.00 each plus postage) are available through www.amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, Borders and other US bookstores, as well as direct from Omnibus.

Christie's at the Rockefeller Center in New York is the place to be on Wednesday, 17 April, for the first of three auctions of the Detective Fiction Library of Richard M Lackritz, MD, focussing on books published before 1920. As well as a good amount of Conan Doyle, the lots include works by Poe, Wilkie Collins, Anna Katherine Green, and R Austin Freeman. The sale starts at 10.00 am. Christie's website is at www.christies.com.

A message passed on by Heather Owen: Pat Rigby wants to sell volumes 1-6 of *The Strand Magazine*, containing the complete *Adventures* and *Memoirs*. Offers to parigby@aol.com, please.

Michael E Bragg has forwarded the latest newsletter from **The Big Sleep** bookstore in St Louis, MO — the meeting place for **The Parallel Case of St Louis**. The latest catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) includes the deluxe edition of *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Centenary, 1859-1959*, with ACD's signature tipped in. It's priced at £1,800.

Issue 47 of the magazine now entitled simply *Sherlock* has a much less cluttered and more stylish appearance than its predecessors (which were called *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine*). The standouts for me are Bert Coules's account of recording his radio series *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, with Clive Merrison & Andrew Sachs, and Gavin Collinson's of preparing the Peter Cushing-Nigel Stock *Hound of the Baskervilles* for video release. But there's plenty more, including the first part of Julian Rathbone's Baz Holmes story 'The Lion of Draksville'; Alan Perry on modern crime novels set in the 20s and 30s; Mike Ashley on Algernon Blackwood's psychic sleuth John Silence; Paul Chapman on Samuel Spade; Bob Byrne on Sherlock Holmes as a hard-boiled detective; Calum McLeod on the crime novels of Priscilla Masters; and Trish & Jay Pearlman on **The Mini-Tonga Society**. The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or $6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). *(*I was delighted to see that Ottakar's bookshop in Chelmsford now stocks the magazine.*)*

2.00 pm on Saturday 20 April sees the first Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture at the Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto. This annual commemoration of the founder and first curator of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection begins with a talk by Isaac Gewirtz, curator of the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library — which includes the only complete MS chapter of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Admission to the lecture is free.

Those interested in Holmes on the radio — or in radio drama generally — should consider a subscription to **ORCA**, the Old-time Radio Collectors Association (John Wolstenholme, PO Box 1922, Dronfield, Sheffield S18 8XA).

Bjarne Nielsen has notified me that as of tomorrow his **Sherlock Holmes Museet** and his second-hand book business will move to Egebjergvej 210, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark. Bjarne's catalogues are on the Internet at www.sherlockiana.net. You can e-mail him at sherlock@sherlockiana.net.

EC Jones has kindly sent a copy of an article from *The London Railway Record* for January 2002: 'Sherlock Holmes and Others' by DW Winkworth. It's a brief but interesting piece about the Metropolitan Railway's named locomotives, including, of course *Sherlock Holmes*, whose post-war nameplates were presented by our Society and were returned to us in 1961.

The Society's next informal Club Night will be on Friday 3 May, at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue — very near the Sherlock Holmes pub. All members, prospective members and guests are welcome (the next will be on 7 June). The AGM at the Savage Club on 23 May will precede a talk on 'Sherlock Holmes and Tobacco'.

On 14 July the Sherlock Holmes Society of London will again play **The PG Wodehouse Society** at cricket (to 1895 rules), and again the match will be held at the picturesque West Wycombe Cricket Club ground. There are proposals also to take on the Old Dagonians on 24 July, and the Gentlemen of Essex CID on 31 July. If you're interested in playing, or know someone who is, please contact Peter Horrocks!

The Hansom Wheels will host *The Intergalactic Sherlockian Festival* in Columbia, South Carolina, on 26-28 April (contact Robert E. Robinson, 6117 Lakeshore Drive, Columbia, SC 29206, USA). The website's at www.capnbilly.com/hansomwheels.htm. **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will discuss 'How Watson Learned the Trick' on 27 April (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256). On 28 April, **The Crew of the S.S. Mayday** will devote their meeting to games and quizzes (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

The joint celebrations of **The Watsonians** and **The STUD Sherlockian Society** on 3 - 5 May begin with the 'fun(d)raiser' pizza party, continue with the Solar Pons/Fortescue Honours brunch and the annual STUD dinner, and conclude with the 43rd annual running of the 'Silver Blaze' at Hawthorne Race Track. (Allan Devitt & Susan Diamond, 16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; e-mail szdiamond@home.com). The next meeting of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will be the Annual Wreath Throw on 4 May (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). The AGM of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** on 22 May — Sir Arthur's birthday — will follow the laying of a wreath at Montargis Terrace in Crowborough (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN).

Scott Monty has set up a website for ***The Baker Street Journal*** at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. It's well worth a look as it includes information about various BSI and BSJ projects.

Periodicals received. ***The Passengers' Log***, 6 January 2002 *(*the Summer issue*)*, (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, April 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2002 (Sherlock Holmes Collections, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, March 2002 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63108, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, March 2002 (**The Crew of the SS Mayday**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Magic Door***, Winter 2001/2002 (**Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada). ***The Whaling News***, January, February and March 2002 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256). ***Communication***, March/April 2002 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Torr***, Spring 2002 (**The Poor Folk upon the Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). ***Practice Notes***, March 2002, ***The Practice Report***, 2001, and ***The Winning Essays*** [from the Dr John H Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition 2001] (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, March 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 221A 19th May 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Ian Gillies, who died on 13 April, was not a Sherlockian. Rather, his specialism was omniscience, and he was dubbed 'Mycroft' by Robert Robinson during the 30 years when he compiled questions for BBC Radio 4's quiz show *Brain of Britain*.

It's a pleasure to welcome a new booklet by the almost legendary Kelvin I Jones. *The Sherlock Holmes Pharmacopoeia* (Oakmagic Books, PO Box 330, Weston-super-Mare BS 23 2WD; £4.50) gives us 44 pages on drugs and poisons in the Canon, setting the references in their historical context. There are diversions into other aspects of the stories, always interesting and often enlightening (though my reading of 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' is that Kate Whitney was Mary Watson's friend; Watson nowhere indicates that he and Isa Whitney were at all close), and the notes occupy a further eight pages. It's a very useful addition to the Sherlockian's reference shelf. I just can't help thinking that the appearance of Oakmagic's booklets suffers by comparison with Kelvin Jones's earlier monographs, published by Magico and his own Sir Hugo Books. With all the sophisticated computer programs available, the presentation of Oakmagic's publications could be drastically improved.

Richard Howe invites offers for a first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. 'The book is quite sturdy, although it has been reinforced inside in several places with unsightly sticky tape (maybe this can be removed?). One of the picture plates is missing, and possibly a blank end-paper as well.' Contact Mr Howe at richardh1461@yahoo.com, or phone him on 07754 459526 or 0207 607 7250.

A reminder of my play *The Great Detective: The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, which, says *CADS* magazine, 'affectionately presents the essence of Doyle and the Holmes-Watson partnership' In fact it's had universally complimentary reviews from Sherlockians and non-Sherlockians alike. The script can be had from the Pyewacket Press (41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE) for £4.00 or $8.00, post-paid. Please make sterling cheques payable to Roger Johnson and US dollar checks to Jean Upton.

There are recent catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), and **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; sales@rupert-books.co.uk). Rupert's catalogue is also online at www.rupert-books.co.uk.

The admirable recordings by Douglas Wilmer of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, produced by Philip Porter, will be issued on CD in July by Penguin Audiobooks (80 The Strand, London WC2R 0RL), in three volumes.

There are three forthcoming TV movies of interest. *The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire*, a Hallmark presentation starring Matt Frewer and Kenneth Welsh, has a script by the director Rodney Gibbons, which involves 'zealous monks, an expert on vampire bats, a clairvoyant, Guyanese servants and Scotland Yard detectives' as well as 'bats of various types'. You won't be surprised to know that 'Gibbons's script is not based on any of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's writings.'

A Case of Evil purports to be an early adventure of Sherlock Holmes. 'A young man in his early twenties, rather arrogant, self-assured and eager for publicity, he came into the spotlight by killing England's most wanted man — Professor Moriarty, the man who [*sic*] the police have been after for years with no success. However the young genius had allowed himself to be tricked by this shrewd enemy, being overwhelmed with adoration [*sic*]. The no less clever Professor Moriarty fakes his own death, thus having an unbreakable alibi in order to start a new criminal empire — dealing heroine [*sic*], which he invented ...' There's more. Ye gods, there's more. 'With the help of his brother Mycroft, who was subdued with drugs by the evil Professor in his youth, Holmes starts after the "dead" Moriarty again. With sharp wits and his newfound friend Watson, the doctor-inventor [*sic*], at his side, he finally tracks down Moriarty to fight him one last time. It all ends in a lethal ballet of swordfighting, set in the Big Ben clock room — that was still under construction at that time [*sic*]. Moriarty falls to his death through one of the clock's open faces, dropping down into the Thames ...' Why do I get the impression that someone has seen both *Young Sherlock Holmes* and *Basil the Great Mouse Detective*? For the record, Holmes and Watson are played by James D'Arcy and Roger Morlidge. That fine actor Vincent D'Onofrio is a chunky Moriarty, and Richard E Grant is an impossibly willowy Mycroft.

It's a relief after that to note the Tiger Aspect production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for BBC 1, starring Richard Roxburgh and Ian Hart as Holmes and Watson, with John Nettles as Mortimer and Richard E Grant as Stapleton *(*more plausibly cast here than in **A Case of Evil***)*. The script is by Allan Cubitt, whose credits include *Anna Karenina* and *Prime Suspect*, and the Hound is created by members of the *Walking with Dinosaurs* team — so we should at last get a convincing Hound of Hell. The director is David Attwood, and filming is taking place right now , in the Isle of Man, Liverpool and Cumbria *(*wot, no Dartmoor?*)*. Christopher Roden reports one notable departure from the Canon: a séance, as in the 1939 Fox movie. But at least Lestrade is reinstated.

The Times for 19 April carried a good report on the Sherlockian convention in Florence, organised by **Un Studio in Holmes**, in the course of which a splendid bronze bust of the detective by Giancarlo Buratti was unveiled at the Sesto Fiorentino railway station.

*(*My apologies, by the way, to those who asked for copies of the article 'Sherlock Holmes and Others' by DW Winkworth from the January issue of **The London Railway Record**. I'm embarrassed to admit that during the redecoration of my study I mislaid both the article and your enquiries.*)*

Issue 48 of *Sherlock* maintains the stylish appearance of issue 47. The cover this time features John Thaw's Morse, posing with his beloved Jaguar, and the long-running TV series is assessed by David Bishop, author of *The Complete Inspector Morse*, published this month by Reynolds & Hearn *(*it's remarkable how little John Thaw and Kevin Whately changed during the twelve years the series ran*)*. Also in this issue — David Stuart Davies writes about Holmes's friendship for Watson; Mark Campbell interviews Ed McBain; Gavin Collinson views *Dr Watson and the Darkwater*

Hall Mystery; Mike Ripley welcomes new editions of classic crime fiction; Paul M Chapman assesses the movie *From Hell*; Alan Perry investigates *Rumpole of the Bailey*; Julian Rathbone concludes his Baz Holmes mystery 'The Lion of Draksville'; Roger Forsdyke looks at Victorian prison life; Calum McLeod recommends the crime fiction of Joyce Holms; Rod Murphy finds comedy in the Canon; Paul Chapman examines Philip Marlowe and *The Big Sleep*; Simon Brett gives the ABC of Kinsey Millhone; Pat Ward reports from the USA, and Bob Byrne from the Internet; William Adamson explains **The Raymond Chandler Society**; Moriarty mutters ... and the rest! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or $6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Peter Blau notes: '*A Hound it Was* ... is a video compilation produced by Paul Singleton and Maribeau Briggs; it had its world premiere for an enthusiastic audience at the **Footprints of the Hound** conference in Toronto last October, and it was revised and shown again during the birthday festivities in New York in January. Copies of the 65-minute videocassette are available ($20.00 postpaid, $23.00 to Canada) from Maribeau Briggs (On-the-Fly Video Productions, 46 East 29th Street, #3-F, New York, NY 10016). The cassette also is available in formats for other countries; Sherlockians should ask about shipping costs onthefly@peoplepc.com.'

Carol Russell notes that during January 2003 a **Sherlock Holmes Celebration** will take place at the Frank Lloyd Wright Civic Center Library in Marin County, California. 'An exciting variety of events and displays is in the works, thanks to the efforts of volunteers from various societies (particularly **The Scowrers and Molly Maguires**), local authors, county librarians, and mystery lovers of all ages. A key feature in the unique, world-famous government complex that was the last commission of the man many call "America's Greatest Architect", the library housed in Marin County's Civic Center is the only one designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Holding the Celebration there will help publicise the need to ensure that this spectacular landmark is preserved for future generations. Beautiful in its own right (pun intended!), Marin County lies just over the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, en route to the wine country and the Pacific coast. Our local hotels, restaurants and glorious natural and historical attractions are worth a visit on their own.' Contact Carol by phone on (001) 415 499 1653, or by e-mail at carolrussell@ix.netcom.com.

Our Society's Annual General Meeting on 23 May will be held at a new venue, the Lansdowne Club, just near Berkeley Square, and will be followed by a talk on Sherlock Holmes and Tobacco.

The next informal Club Night will be on 7 June, at the Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue — very near the Sherlock Holmes pub. All members, prospective members and guests are welcome. And don't forget the return match against the Gentlemen of the P G Wodehouse Society at West Wycombe on Sunday 14 July.

The Annual Spring Meeting of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** will be held in New York on 1 June *(*Spring — with Midsummer on 24 June?*)*. For information about the always stimulating ASH, contact the Principal Unprincipled Adventuress, Evelyn Herzog, at 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA. The following day **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will be exploring the London connections of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU; e-mail franco.midland@btinternet.com).

On 7 June **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin (Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA) will meet at T S McHugh's on 10 June.

The Parallel Case of St Louis will discuss 'The Red-Headed League' at The Big Sleep Bookstore on 17 June (Joseph J Eckrich of 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63108, USA).

At their meeting on 22 June, **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** will discuss 'Charles Augustus Milverton'; they meet at the Sherlock Holmes pub in Nashville on the last Saturday but one each month (Davice Sharpe, 510 Gay Street #1203, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; e-mail sharpe@bigfoot.com). **The Illustrious Clients** plan a picnic for the same day — I hope the weather is kind to them (Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607777, USA). And **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

Periodicals received. ***Friends of the Library***, Spring 2002 (**University of Minnesota, Friends of the Library**, 499 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455-0414, USA). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2002 (Steven Rothman, editor, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; **The Baker Street Irregulars**, Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) *(*one of the two or three essential Sherlockian journals, this issue features an identification of 'Columbine's New-fangled Banner', thoughts on religion and philosophy in 'The Priory School', a piece on death and resurrection in the Canon, a bibliographical re-examination of 'The Dying Detective', and a great deal more*).*

The Illustrious Clients News, April 2002 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA) *(*nice obituary of Billy Wilder, account of a possible revivification of **The Camford Scholars** of Normal/Bloomington ... I'm not making these names up, honest*).* ***The School Report***, Summer Term 2002 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) *(*this is issue 49, and the Scholars are planning for their 50th issue; meanwhile, from this most truly local of local British Sherlockian societies we have a piece on the jewels in **The Sign of the Four**, a comparison of **The Sign of the Four** and **The Picture of Dorian Gray**, a look at hookahs, and others relating to the second published chronicle*).* ***The Camden House Journal***, April and May 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) *(*April's issue celebrates the Occupants' 25th anniversary and contains William Cochrane's suggestion that Sherlock and Mycroft were the children of different mothers; May's has William Gilliland's thesis that Mycroft was Moriarty*).*

Mayday Mayday, April 2002 and May 2002 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP) *(*it's surprising how few non-American Sherlockian newsletters really are newsletters, pure and simple — there's **The District Messenger**, and, er, er ... well, that's what **Mayday Mayday** is, and I welcome it*).* ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, March/April 2002 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) *(*an affectionate farewell to David Bradley, whom I'd like to have known, and a nice account by Billy Fields of January in New York, where one of the bright spots for me was meeting Billy, Jim Hawkins & Marino Alvarez at the Mysterious Bookshop*).* ***Ineffable Twaddle,*** May 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA) *(*the first report I've seen of the Left Coast Crime convention, in which the SOB's David Haugen played a major part*).*

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com) *(*the great 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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 221B 23rd June 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

When you send stamped & self-addressed envelopes, please get the package weighed. Twice recently I've had to pay excess postage and a 'handling fee'. Thanks.

James Hayzen, who died on 6 June, was a modest, quietly affable man, who will be remembered for his unobtrusive helpfulness and his superb photographs. When he joined our Society in the mid 1970s, Jim already had the distinction of being a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, and his artistry is evident in the many pictures he took to record the Society's activities over the years. Jean and I were unable to attend the funeral last Tuesday, but we join with innumerable other friends in extending our deep sympathy to Jim's wife Mary.

The actress **Signe Hasso** died on 7 June at the age of 92. Her long and notable career, in her native Sweden and in America, included starring rôles in *The House on 92nd Street* and *A Double Life*, as well as the small but telling part of Fraülein Reichenbach in the 1976 TV movie *Sherlock Holmes in New York*. **Charles Ede**, who died on 29 May, was, according to Nicholas Barker in the *Independent*, 'a most unclubbable man', but he founded one of the most remarkable and successful clubs in the country, the Folio Society, which has published so many sensuously beautiful editions of classic books — including, of course, the Canon. Peter Blau notes that the stuntman and actor **Terry Walsh** died on 21 April. Among his many credits, he worked on the 1988 movie *Without a Clue*.

The latest publication from the ever-industrious Eric Monahan is a nice 40-page booklet entitled *A Sherlock Holmes Miscellany*, in which you'll find one clever new adventure for Holmes, one brief and very neat parody, two essays on aspects of 'Silver Blaze', one on 'The Engineer's Thumb', and one on a possible, even probable, inspiration for the character of Holmes — Gaboriau's rather obscure detective M. Méchinet, whose one published chronicle contains several features that Conan Doyle would later incorporate into the first Holmes chronicle. You can obtain *A Sherlock Holmes Miscellany* direct from the author at Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW. The price, including postage, is: UK £4.85; USA $9.00; Canada $13.95.

Something a little *recherché* now — 'Holmesians with a taste for history may like to know that, as they approach the *Sherlock Holmes* pub opposite old Scotland Yard, beneath their feet lies the skeleton of the victim of a royal outrage. He was Joseph Sellis, a valet to Prince Ernest, one of George III's sons. Ernest swore that Sellis tried to assassinate him, was foiled, fled to his room, and cut his throat with a razor. A managed inquest declared Sellis a suicide, and at dead of night on 4 June 1810 he was buried with a stake driven through his heart. Newspapers of the day name the site. A team of beadles was paid £6 16s 6d for the task. One newspaper dared to deduce from the evidence that Sellis was not a suicide. Ernest had its editor jailed. But he confessed his guilt to his aide-de-camp; the confession is in the Royal Archives. What was his motive? That and much else is revealed in a new biography, *Wicked Ernest*, by John Wardroper (Shelfmark Books, 60 St Paul's Road, London N1 2QW; £14.95).' Something to think about when you next go to quench your thirst at our favourite pub.

Charles Prepolec tells me that *Curious Incidents: Being a Collection of the Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* has just been published. The 102-page perfect-bound book contains six new stories by Peter H Wood, James R Stefanie, J R Campbell, Kristin Vichich, Gerry Kelly and Bob Byrne, with illustrations by Philip Cornell. It's available from Mad For A Mystery, Suite D308, 3805 Marlborough Drive NE, Calgary, Alberta T2A 5M4, Canada; the price is: UK/Europe/Australia $12.00 (surface) or $14.00 (airmail); USA £10.00 (surface) or $12.00 (airmail). Check the website at www.bakerstreetdozen.com/ciorders.html.

Peter Blau notes that Lloyd Rose BSI is one of the many writers contributing to the ever-expanding list of Doctor Who novels published by BBC Worldwide . Her 2001 title *City of the Dead* has a minor allusion to Sherlock Holmes, and the forthcoming *Camera Obscura* is 'full of Sherlockian references'.

Charles Cowling (Milton Abbey, Blandford, Dorset DT11 0BZ; e-mail charles.cowling@miltonabbey.co.uk; phone 01258 880055) invites offers for 16 volumes of *The Strand Magazine*, all (I understand) containing Sherlock Holmes material.

The latest catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) contains some interesting Conan Doyle material, including a first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* priced at £1,500.

The specialist bookshop **Crime In Store** has moved. As of tomorrow, 24 June, the address is 32 Store Street, London WC1E 7BS. The e-mail address is still crimebks@aol.com.

Bill Dorn offers a CD-ROM, *The Complete Sherlock Holmes and Then Some*, containing the full illustrated Canon, plus 'The Man with the Watches' and 'The Lost Special', in searchable PDF format. The price including postage is: USA $11.45; Canada $12.45; elsewhere $14.45 (William S Dorn, 2045 South Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210, USA).

Bill Barnes tells of *Nicholas Twit*, a new quarterly magazine for children aged 9 to 12. Billed as 'the Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes', Nicholas is a computer whiz, no good at sport, who wants to be a private detective like his hero, Holmes. Besides Nicholas's adventures, there are puzzles and 'Sherlockian Snippets', which, Bill says, are correct and interesting. Volume 1 is out now, with Volume 2 due in September. The cost is Aus$6.00, NZ$7.50, £2.50 or US$4.00. Full details are at www.twit.biz.

Forthcoming dates for Roger Llewellyn as Holmes in *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* by David Stuart Davies: 6 July **Stables Theatre, Hastings** (01424 423221); 13 July **National Film Theatre, London** (020 7928 3232); 24 July **Church Stretton Arts Festival** (send s.a.e. to Gerald Bolton, 13 Oaks Road, Church Stretton,

Shropshire SY6 7AX); 13 Sept **Swan Theatre, Worcester** (01905 27322); 18 Sept **Civic Arts, Doncaster** (01302 342349); 22 Sept **Nuffield Theatre, Southampton** (023 80 671771); 5 Oct **Quay Theatre, Sudbury** (01787 374745); 15 Oct **Town Hall, Hartlepool** (01429 890000); 26 Oct **Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd** (01443 485934); 1 Nov **Charles Cryer Studio, Carshalton** (020 8770 4950); 9 Nov **Campus West Theatre, Welwyn Garden City** (01707 357000); 15-16 Nov **Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead** (01442 228091); 7 Dec **Norden Farm Centre, Maidenhead** (01628 788997). In January and February 2003 Roger will be at the **Kavinoky Theater, Buffalo, NY** for five weeks!

Issue 41 of Geoff Bradley's excellent magazine *CADS* is full of interest as always. There's no specifically Sherlockian content in this issue, but no one who takes pleasure in crime & detective fiction can fail to enjoy it. (G H Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA).

I picked up *Crime Time* no. 26 at Murder One recently, specifically because it's 'The Sherlock Holmes Issue', with contributions by David Stuart Davies, Mark Campbell, Kim Newman. David Pirie and others, as well as Natasha Cooper's 'Confessions of a Holmes-Hater'. The rest of the 208-page annual is impressive too. A four-issue subscription costs £20.00 from *Crime Time* Subscriptions, 18 Coleswood Road, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 1EQ. There's a website at www.crimetime.co.uk.

Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act! won't be the only Sherlockian event at the NFT. Also on 13 July, as part of the **Crime Scene 2002** convention, B J Rahn will lead a Sherlock Holmes Walk at 11.30 am, the Sherlock Awards will be presented at 1.30, David Stuart Davies will talk about *Holmes on Audio* at 2.30, David Pirie and others involved will discuss the *Murder Rooms* series at 4.00, and Gavin Collinson will give a talk on *Holmes and his Habit* at 9.00. On 14 July at 2.45 there'll be a discussion on *The Modernity of Sherlock Holmes*, and at 4.00 the 1921 silent film *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Eille Norwood will be screened.

On 5 August there will be a preview of *Sherlock*, 'a brand new film reinventing the Holmes legend'. From 2 to 31 August all fourteen Rathbone/Bruce movies will be shown twice, twelve of them in restored prints. Over the Sundays that month, all fifteen of the silent shorts in the 1921 series *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with Eille Norwood will be shown, and over the first three Thursdays four of the BBC TV films with Douglas Wilmer and two with Peter Cushing. Finally, on 26 August there'll be the two John Cleese parodies, *Elementary, My Dear Watson* and *The Strange Case of the End of Civilisation as We Know It*. Booking and other information is on the website at www.bfi.org.uk/nft, or phone 020 7928 3232.

Catherine Cooke passes on news of **Capital Offences**, a London-wide promotion of crime fiction. There's a long series of events, mostly panel discussions, mostly based at public libraries, planned for July, August and September. At 6.30 pm on 4 July at Marylebone Library, June Thomson, David Stuart Davies, Joan Lock and Catherine Cooke will answer the question *Is Sherlock Holmes Still Relevant in an Era of Forensics?* Mike Ripley will be in the chair. Admission is free, but tickets are limited to fifty. Contact Linda Tobey on 020 7641 1033. The Sherlock Holmes Collection will be open to the public from 2.00 to 6.00 that day; contact Catherine Cooke on 020 7641 1206.

Did anyone record the BBC Schools broadcast at 3.50 am on 7 June? The programme, in the Drama Workshop series for 9-11 year-olds, was part one of *Climbing in the Dark: Sherlock Holmes and the Screaming Tower*. Presumably there have been subsequent episodes at similar ungodly hours.

A new Sherlock Holmes play is running until 7 July at **Bay Street Theatre** in Sag Harbor, NY. This is *The West End Horror* by Anthony Dodge & Marcia Milgrom Dodge. This theatrical adaptation of Nicholas Meyer's highly theatrical novel (the client is Bernard Shaw, and the suspects include Bram Stoker, Oscar Wilde and Henry Irving) should make for a great evening out. Contact the box office on 631 725 9500 or check the website at www.baystreet.org.

An exhibition called *Honoring William Gillette* opened last weekend at the East Haddam Historical Society Museum at 264 Town Street, East Haddam, Connecticut. The date was chosen to celebrate the re-opening of Gillette Castle State Park after a three-year renovation programme. Gillette, of course, was the actor-dramatist who defined Sherlock Holmes for several generations of theatregoers, and both the exhibition at the museum and the displays at the castle reflect the fact.

Our Society's next meeting will be the informal Club Night at the Royal Commonwealth Society at 18 Northumberland Avenue (a stone's throw from the *Sherlock Holmes* pub) at 6.00 pm on 5 July. Just turn up, have a drink, a bite and a chat. On 14 July, of course, there's the return match against the Gentlemen of the P G Wodehouse Society at West Wycombe Cricket Club, played to the laws of 1895.

The Crew of the SS Mayday plan a Baker Street Barbecue on 30 June. Get details of the Crew from Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP (e-mail: oscarross@hotmail.com). **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** will hold the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Ceremony in Crowborough on 7 July (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** plan a pilgrimage to Plymouth on 12 July (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR).

The annual *Maiwand Luncheon* of **The Friends of Dr Watson** will take place on 27 July at the Caravan Serai Afghan Restaurant in Paddington Street, just off Baker Street (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Hertfordshire SG6 4SZ). On the same day **The Sydney Passengers** will meet to discuss 'Lady Frances Carfax' (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia). 'The Six Napoleons' will be the topic at the 20 July meeting of **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** (Davice Sharpe, 510 Gay Street #1203, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; e-mail sharpe@bigfoot.com).

Looking ahead a bit, **The Crew of the SS May Day** plans to visit London on Tuesday 10 September. As the Crew is based in Belfast, this will mean a very long day, but it should be a rewarding one. And on 14 September **The Cimbrian Friends of Baker Street** invite fellow-Sherlockians to meet in Aalborg, Denmark, for a day of music, movies, discoveries and dinner (Jens Byskov Jensen, Ananasvej 94, 9000 Aalborg, Denmark; e-mail byskovjensen@yahoo.dk).

Periodicals received. ***Communication*** #221 (Special Poetry Issue) and #222 (May/June 2002) (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 173777 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, June 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2002 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA — subscriptions to Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, May 2002 ***The Parallelogram***, March 2002 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63108, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, June 2002 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, May/June 2002 (**The Stormy Petrels**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, June 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA).

And the invaluable ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 223 29th July 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Overseas postal rates went up this month, but for the time being I can absorb the increase.

Peter Blau notes that **Vitaliy Solomin** died on 28 May. His distinguished acting career in Russia and the Soviet Union saw him as a splendid Dr Watson to Vassiliy Livanov's Holmes in five Russian television films in the early 1980s.

Professor **Richard Chorley** also died in May. Jim Ballinger notes in The Independent that Chorley 'pursued Dorothy L Sayers' deduction that Sherlock Holmes had been a student at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge,' developing the idea in a booklet *Sherlock Holmes at Sidney Sussex College, 1871-1873: An Imaginative Reconstruction.*

Christopher Roden reports the death on 8 July of Professor **William A S Sarjeant** of the University of Sakatchewan, aged 66., A noted commentator on crime and detective fiction, Bill Sarjeant's major contribution to our field was the notorious *Ms Holmes of Baker Street*, in which he and C A Bradley 'proved' that Holmes was a woman!

Billy Bunter died on 9 July, in the person of 81-year-old actor **Gerald Campion**, who will forever be identified with the Fat Owl of the Remove, thanks to an immensely popular BBC TV series in the 1950s. His career was much more varied than that, of course, and he made a notable impression as Morse Hudson in Granada's excellent production of *The Six Napoleons*.

Carey Blyton, who died on 13 July aged 70, is best known as the creator of *Bananas in Pyjamas*, but he was a very versatile and prolific composer and writer. Look out for his 1999 CD *Sherlock Holmes Meets Doctor Who* (Upbeat Classics URCD148) which features his 'Sherlock Holmes Suite' along with some of the music he composed for the much-missed BBC TV series *Doctor Who*.

Like Gerald Campion, **Leo McKern** is known to the public at large for just one character — in his case, Horace Rumpole. But McKern, who died at the age of 82 on 23 July, was a versatile and compelling actor, whose career included a very non-canonical Moriarty in Gene Wilder's hit-&-miss 1975 comedy *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother*.

Maurice Denham, who died the following day aged 92, had a huge range of characters and voices (he provided all the voices for the 1954 animated feature film *Animal Farm*), and was convincing in all of them. His performance as the Revd Mr Merridew was one of the good things in Granada's not terribly successful 1993 two-hour film *The Last Vampyre*.

Lin Carter coined the word 'anamundism' for the geographical equivalent of an anachronism. There's rather a lot of both, I'm afraid, in *Curious Incidents: Being a Collection of the Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by J R Campbell & Charles Prepolec. (Mad for a Mystery, Suite D308, 3805 Marlborough Drive N E, Calgary, Alberta, T2A 5M4, Canada; US$8.00 or Cdn$12.00). The six stories, all by different authors, are clever and frequently puzzling in the right way. G M Kelly's 'A Slaying in Suburbia' is well written, and offers an ingenious new twist on the Sebastian Moran conundrum: how does an air rifle become a deadly firearm? 'The Adventure of the Lodger's Secret' by Kristin Vichich, clearly inspired by 'The Red Circle' and 'The Veiled Lodger', is neat and humane, though Holmes and Watson's attitude strikes me as appropriate to the 1990s rather than the 1890s. 'The Case of Vamberry the Wine Merchant' by James R Stefanie and 'The First Mate's Jacket' by J R Campbell both show a lack of understanding of Victorian English mores and procedures, though the plots are clever enough to make me wish I could have had a hand in writing them. (Anyone who orders a pint of bitters in a British pub is in for a shock, as it's the stuff that gives pink gin its flavour and colour. The beer that's evidently meant is called bitter, to distinguish it from the sweeter mild.) Bob Byrne's story 'The Adventure of the Tired Captain' takes an actual puzzle that was presented to Arthur Conan Doyle, introduces William Gillette, and has the two men brazenly adopt the rôles of Holmes and Watson. It's a nice conceit, let down only by some clumsy writing. The best story in this collection is Peter Wood's 'The Case of Lady Sannox', which retells one of Conan Doyle's most horrifying short stories as a Holmes investigation. It's neat, very well written,, thoroughly gripping, and faithful to the original story and to the Canon. But having listened spellbound for an hour or more while Peter Wood told me tales of his childhood home, the Isle of Man, I expected nothing less. *Curious Incidents* is a mixed bag, made coherent by an evident love for Holmes, Watson and Conan Doyle, and by some splendid illustrations from the inspired pen of Philip Cornell.

The first full-length collection of Holmes stories by Gerry Kelly, author of 'A Slaying in Suburbia', is due about now from George Vanderburgh's Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (420 Owen Sound Street, PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, L0N 1S0, Canada). *The Outstanding Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes* is likely to be priced at Cdn$35.00 or £17.00. Contact Gerry for details at 74 Crofton Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire (phone 0161 286 0943; e-mail info@bakerstreetbooks.co.uk), or check his website at www.bakerstreetbooks.co.uk.

More new or forthcoming books. *The Colonial Conan Doyle: British Imperialism, Irish Nationalism, and the Gothic* by Catherine Wynne (August 2002; Greenwood Press, c/o EDS, 3 Henrietta Street, London WC2E 8LU; £51.95). *Sherlock Holmes' Whodunits* by Tom Bullimore (August 2002; Sterling Publishing Co., c/o Littlehampton Book Services Ltd, Centre Warehouse, Columbia Building, Faraday Close, Durrington, Worthing, Sussex BN13 3RB; £3.99). *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes* by Peter Ridgway Watt & Joseph Green (Ashgate, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 3HR; £45.00).

N Fisher of 7 Repton Close, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey SM5 3QG (I think I've read that correctly) invites offers for a copy of *The Complete Short Stories*. 'This is handsomely bound and I believe this to be a limited edition. The pages are edged in gold, and there is a gold 'inlay' around the outer cover. It is approx. 40 years old, and I won this as a first prize in a readers' competition

in the *Eagle* comic. It has been looked after and the binding is intact.'

There are new catalogues available from **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail www.sherlock-holmes.com), **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), and **Janus Books** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; mike@janusbooks.com).

The famous Baker Street sitting-room at the **Sherlock Holmes** public house & restaurant in Northumberland Street, London, recently suffered water damage from flooding on the floor above. The ceiling has been repaired, and I've given the room a pretty thorough spring cleaning. There are some items that need to be repaired or replaced, but fewer than we thought, and none of them especially important. The room is in reasonably good nick now, and we intend to work on it over the next two or three months. Meanwhile, you can get a good look at the room from the corridor, from the patio, or from the restaurant — and the restaurant can always be recommended (10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA; phone 020 7930 2644).

New owners Park Plaza Hotels have spent £9,000,000 on the **Sherlock Holmes Hotel** in Baker Street, which is now described as a 'refurbished elegant boutique hotel'. Get details from the Sherlock Holmes Hotel, 108 Baker Street, London W1U 6LJ; phone 020 7958 5222. Check the website at shh-w1.com.

That unique bastion of Victorian Music Hall, the Players' Theatre, has closed, owing the landlords half a million pounds. The chances of the club surviving seem to be pretty slim, but one can hope.

Those thinking of booking a party entertainer should consider **Sherlock Holmes Mysteries**. 'For your special occasion, Dr Watson performs close-up magic with a Sherlock Holmes theme, ideally suited for a dinner party or restaurant setting. The actor portraying the good doctor is a professional member of Equity and has been a member of the Magic Circle since 1983. The performance can include cameo rôles played by your guests! Perhaps you could play the part of Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard... or Mrs Hudson, the housekeeper of 221B Baker Street... or even the fiendish Professor Moriarty! Sit back and enjoy close-up magic from a bygone age that will add a sparkle to your party video as the biographer of Sherlock Holmes takes you back in time to Victorian London... Imagine the fog, horse-drawn cabs and the gaslights flickering in Baker Street. For you convenience in the modern age, Dr Watson is pleased to accept Visa, MasterCard, Switch and American Express.' For details phone 01582 416116 or e-mail AmazingMagic@talk21.com.

Our honorary member John Doubleday has turned his talents to sculpture of a different sort. He iced the four-foot tall cake for the wedding of his son James to Pesheya Ndhlovu, which took place at St Peter's church, Great Totham, on Saturday last!

Sherlock, the 'brand new film reinventing the Holmes legend' which will be previewed at the National Film Theatre on Monday 5 August, is the same film that was originally announced as *A Case of Evil* — see DM 221A. Booking and other information is on the NFT website at www.bfi.org.uk/nft, or phone 020 7928 3232.

According to Whitaker's *LibWeb* site, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* read by Douglas Wilmer was released last Thursday on three double CDs at £8.50 each (Penguin Audiobooks, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL) — but the price may not be wholly accurate.

Bruce Parker sends news of a website offering almost unlimited suggestions for Canonical-based pseudonyms. You can find it at www.geocities.com/jcsherwood/BakerStreet12.htm.

Torger Kielland has found an on-line store in New York that sells the acclaimed Russian TV film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* on DVD in PAL format, with English subtitles. *(*When I checked the website it appeared to be all in Russian!*)* You'll find it at www.rbcmp3.com/store/product.asp?dept%5Fid=1435&sku=29545.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 49 features a fine still of Peter Cushing as Holmes from the 1968 BBC TV series, the subject of an article by Tony Earnshaw and a review by Paul Chapman. Also in this issue — Paul Chapman writes about the legend of Sherlock Holmes; Calum McLeod looks at the novels of John Connolly; Gavin Collinson views *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*; Jess Nevins examines M. Zenith the Albino; M J Elliott contributes a new Holmes story, 'The Adventure of the Mendicant's Face'; Roger Forsdyke investigates *NCS Manhunt*; Mike Ripley tells of 'Detectives I Have Known'; Martin Edwards recommends the Stephen Ramsay novels of Ann Cleeves; Bob Byrne reports on interesting Internet sites; Susan Z Diamond explains **The Watsonians**; Moriarty mutters ... and the rest! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or $6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The Illustrious Clients will hold their annual Film Festival in Indianapolis on 3 August; get details from Steven T Doyle (540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet in DuQuoin, Illinois, on 9 August (Debbie Tinsley, P O Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). At the meeting of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** in Seattle on 12 August, David Haugen will present a paper entitled 'Holmes Illustrated' (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court N W, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). Between 17 and 26 August **The Footprints of a Gigantic Hound** will make a transit of the three peaks of Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, with all involved presenting talks on *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (write to Michael Mtua at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). The topic for the meeting of **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** in St Charles on 24 August will be 'The Lost Special' (Michael E Bragg, P O Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). On 7 September **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** will hold the third and final running of the Silver Blaze Sweepstakes at Toad Hall, North Vancouver (Len Haffenden at 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6).

Periodicals received. ***The Magic Door***, Summer 2002 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada) *(*welcome to new editor Peter H Wood*).* ***The Illustrious Clients News***, July 2002 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, July 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Whaling News***, April, May and June 2002 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn,** Michael E Bragg, P O Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA)**.**

Ineffable Twaddle, July and August 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court N W, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The Antipodean Holmesian Society Newsletter***, July 2002 (**The Antipodean Holmesian Society**, Ted Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collection***, June 2002 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Research File***, 2002 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

And of course ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Summer 2002.

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 224 31st August 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Peter Bayliss, who died on 29 July aged 80, had a long and distinguished acting career, mainly on the stage. In 1974 he played Watson to Julian Glover's Holmes in the first production of *Sherlock's Last Case* by 'Matthew Lang' (Charles Marowitz).

Peter Blau points out that **Maurice Denham**, who died last month (see DM 223), was also a splendid Josiah Amberley to Douglas Wilmer's Holmes in the grand 1965 BBC TV production of *The Retired Colourman.*

October brings another of Karen Wallace's tales of Sherlock Hound. This is *The Case of the Fiendish Dancing Footsteps* (Young Hippo, Scholastic Children's Books, Commonwealth House, 1—19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU; £3.99).

House of Stratus (Lumley Close, Thirsk Industrial Park, York Road, Thirsk, North Yorks. YO7 3BX) continues to republish books of interest. Due in November are Conan Doyle's *The Surgeon of Gaster Fell*, *The Doings of Raffles Haw* and *The Mystery of Cloomber* (each priced at £6.99).

Also in November, comes the paperback of *Sherlock Holmes and the Running Noose* by Donald Thomas, six tales in which Holmes investigates 'real-life' crimes of his day (Pan Books, 20 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RR; £5.99).

There's a new catalogue from **Calabash Press** (P O Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia, Canada V0K 1A0). *The Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes, Volume Four* is a new collection of stories by the admirable Denis Smith (£19.50, Cdn$42.00, US$31.00 hardback; £13.00, Can$26.00, US$21.00 paperback); David Stuart Davies's acclaimed *Bending the Willow: Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* has been reissued in a revised edition (£25.00, Can$50.00, US$40.00 hardback; £17.50, Can$35.00, US$27.50 paperback); and *The Baker Street File*, compiled by Michael Cox's production team at Granada TV as a guide to the appearance and habits of Holmes and Watson, is reissued in paperback at £10.50, Can$22.00 or US$16.50. There's a great deal of excellent material from the backlist as well, by the likes of John Hall, John Warwick Montgomery, Arthur M Alexander, Grant Eustace and Chris Redmond.

Check the Internet at www.sherlockiana.net for **Bjarne Nielsen's** latest Sherlockian catalogue, the Odd Magnar Syvesen Collection. Bjarne's address is Esgebjergvej 210, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark. **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) also has a new catalogue, of signed and inscribed books and autographed letters. For £4,000 you could have a set of *The Author's Edition of the Works of Arthur Conan Doyle* inscribed by Sir Arthur.

Brian Pugh passes on the news that the bookshop in Crowborough, Simply Read, that stocked a selection of Doyle and Holmes books, has closed. He adds that, like the Red-Headed League, the specialist study group **Gerard's Hussars** is dissolved. Brian also asks me to mention that the Conan Doyle display at nearby Groombridge Place is entirely unconnected with **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, whose own very full collection can be seen at Beacon Community College in Crowborough, open Monday to Friday, admission free. He says: 'There is a new booklet titled *A History of Groombridge Place* by Barbara Maidment, price £3.00, available from The Broadway Bookshop, Crowborough, or Groombridge Place.' *(*Groombridge Place is acknowledged to be the 'real' Birlstone* Manor'.*)

The centenary of Sherlock Holmes's greatest adventure has finally hit the stage. On Tuesday 3 September *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, adapted by Simon Williams and directed by Bob Eaton, will open at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, where it will run until Saturday 21 September (box office 024 7655 3055). Holmes & Watson are played by Julian Forsyth & Daniel Hill; Chris McQuarry is Sir Henry Baskerville; and the hound is created by the respected special effects expert Andrew Deubert. The production will be at the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, 23 — 26 September (01902 429212); and the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham, 30 September — 5 October (01242 572573). A transfer to the West End is promised.

Out in September from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) is *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Volume Five*, which will, as always, be available on CD and cassette. I've no details just now, but I hope to review the recordings when they're released.

Also in September, Cover to Cover Cassettes (P O Box 112, Marlborough, Wilts. SN8 3UG) will issue an unabridged reading by Derek Jacobi of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. And there's an indication of a recording of *The Hound* from Chivers Audiobooks (Windsor Bridge Road, Bath BA2 3AX) the same month.

M C Black reports that Waterstone's bookshop in Gower Street, London, is selling ten of the Rathbone/Bruce *New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* cassettes at £2.99 each — less than half the regular price. *(*I haven't noticed this bargain at my local Waterstone's.*)*

That splendid artist **Charles Hall** (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has a new list of collectibles available. For anyone interested in the Great Detective on stage, Charles's two collaborations with Peter Blythe are essential — and, while stocks last, a considerable bargain. *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* is only £2.50, and the two volume *On Stage Sherlock Holmes: Comedy, Drama and Musicals* is £3.50. Both prices include postage, and with each order you get two of Charles's grand caricature postcards thrown in. As I said, a bargain. Of his many white metal figures, I particularly love the set piece of Holmes, Conan Doyle and the fairies (£6.00), Sherlock Pig the Farmyard Detective (£4.00), and the gorgeous Laurel & Hardy as Holmes & Watson (£9.00 the pair). Then there's the lovely 7-inch high resin model of Conan Doyle's birthplace in Picardy Place, Edinburgh (£18.00). The latest items, due shortly, are miniature wooden jigsaw puzzles, actually made with original Sherlockian postage stamps (no prices on these yet). And besides his own work, Charles has lapel pins, toys, trade cards, theatre flyers and more. Ask him for a copy of the list, and do remember to enclose postage.

Geoff Jeffery has kindly sent a catalogue from **Bear & Company** (PO Box 4385, Gettysburg, PA 17325-4384, USA), featuring Duke the detective bear, a nice little fellow in Inverness and deerstalker. Inevitably there are accessories, including a book (*Duke's First Case*), disguises for Duke, and a good-looking 'child's detective outfit' consisting of Inverness, deerstalker and magnifying glass.

Sue O'Brien of **The Dorothy L Sayers Society** passes on news of a new Internet discussion group, **The Wimsical Sherlockians**, which discusses, says Sandy Kozinn, 'in a fashion sometimes scholarly and sometimes light, the connections that exist between the two bodies of literature' — those of Arthur Conan Doyle and of Dorothy L Sayers. Sayers, of course, was a very important Sherlockian scholar, a leading member of the pre-war Sherlock Holmes Society. You can find the new group at groups.yahoo.com/wimsicalsherlockians. If you need more information, contact Sandy at skozinn@optonline.net.

Thanks to the kindness of Gavin Collinson, I was able to attend the première of the new TV movie *Sherlock* at the National Film Theatre. It takes more liberties with the Canon than almost any film I've seen — the young Holmes beds at least three willing women; Professor Moriarty is widely known to be a master criminal; Holmes and Watson don't meet until 1887, when Watson is working as a police surgeon; Moriarty introduces heroin into England ... I could go on. And yet it's exciting, fast-moving and not unintelligent. The Romanian locations make a very satisfactory Victorian London, helped by computer-generated scenery, and the costumes are good, though many of the men's hairstyles shriek of the 1990s. I don't know when it's likely to turn up on TV here, but when it does I think you'll find *Sherlock* surprisingly entertaining.

I've just had an e-mail from Glenn Carlson of **The One Act Players**: 'My group has just completed our audio theatre adaptation of three Holmes stories. It does not seem that too many Americans of late have attempted adaptations for audio theatre. We submit our work to Holmes fans world-wide and expect no dispensation to be derived from our Yankee heritage! This work is distributed free at: www.mp3.com/oneact. I have also compiled a significant amount of historical data regarding Holmes in all forms of media and wish to extend our gratitude to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London for its truly comprehensive and outstanding information. I have cited the website and our appreciation at www.oneact.org/holmes/holmesinfopg.html. We are proud to participate in the great tradition that is Sherlock Holmes.'

*(*Radio dramatisations of Sherlock Holmes began in the USA in 1930, eight years before the BBC's first venture, but since the mid 1950s Britain has definitely taken the lead. It's good to know that the Internet is encouraging such projects to continue. I haven't had the chance yet to check either of One Act's sites, but hope to give a brief review of the plays in the next DM.*)*

Phil Attwell tells me that from 8 October to 1 November there'll be an exhibition of major 19th century British paintings at Agnew's in Bond Street, London. One of the sixty works on display will be J M W Turner's magnificent painting of *The Great Fall of Reichenbach*, normally housed at the Cecil Higgins Gallery & Museum in Bedford.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 50 — an important landmark in the magazine's history — features a nice still of John Nettles & Daniel Casey in *Midsomer Murders*, the subject of an article by Chris Senior. Also in this issue — Paul Chapman writes about Sherlock Holmes's opponents; Calum McLeod treads the streets of York with John Baker; Gavin Collinson reviews *Sherlock* (the movie) and looks at how Holmes's drug habit has been portrayed on screen; Natasha Cooper considers the problem of the series character; Mark Palmer visits Sherlockian pubs and restaurants; Mark Campbell interviews Michael Connelly; Luther Darke appears in a new story by A L Blake; M J Elliott examines the life and times of Ellery Queen; ; Bob Byrne reports on interesting Internet sites; Michael E Bragg explains **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**; Mike Ripley asks if a crime story must be either a thriller or — well — dull; Moriarty mutters ... and the rest! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (Europe £26.00, rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

About now, **The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7486 1426) should be issuing the first in a series of postcards using the delightful paintings that Jean Upton has created for the Company's ads in *Sherlock*.

On 7 September **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** will hold the third running of the Silver Blaze Sweepstakes at Toad Hall, North Vancouver (get details from Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B C, Canada V7P 3C6. **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will discuss Gypsies in the Canon, either on 7 or 9 September (David Haugen 3606 Harborcrest Court N W, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Crew of the SS May Day** will visit London on Tuesday 10 September; they'll be arriving at the Sherlock Holmes pub in Northumberland Street at 1.30pm for lunch, and they'd be delighted to meet any London-based Sherlockians there (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast, BT5 77RP; e-mail oscarross@hotmail.com). *(*I intend to be there.*)*

On Saturday 14 September **The Cimbrian Friends of Baker Street** will meet in Aalborg, Denmark, for lunch, a violin rendition of the Chopin piece mentioned in *A Study in Scarlet* and Offenbach's 'Hoffmann Barcarolle' and a visit to the house where the 1911 silent Holmes movie *Hotel Thieves* was discovered; the day will conclude with dinner at Restaurant Pascal (Jens Byskov Jensen, Ananasvej 94, 9000 Aalborg, Denmark; e-mail byskovjensen@yahoo.dk). On 16 September **The Parallel Case of St Louis** will talk about 'A Case of Identity' (Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). **The Norwegian Explorers** and **The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections** plan a joint meeting at the Elmer L Andersen Library in Minneapolis on 19 September; the guest speaker will be Steven T Doyle (Julie McKuras, **Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

The Illustrious Clients will discuss their eponymous adventure on 21 September (Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). On 27 September **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will discuss Conan Doyle's play *Angels of Darkness* (Michael E Bragg, P O Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** will visit the Eden Project near St Austell in Cornwall on 28 September (Vosper Arthur at Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). **The Priory Scholars** will meet on Sunday 29 September; their case study this year is *The Sign of Four*, and the meeting is likely to feature a guest speaker or a video presentation — or both (Horace L. Coates of 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

Periodicals received: ***Ineffable Twaddle***, September 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court N W, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The School Report***, Autumn Term 2002 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) *(*the 50th issue of the* ***Report*** *— congratulations, you fellows!*)* . ***Mayday Mayday***, August 2002 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast, BT5 77RP). ***Communication***, July/August 2002 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, August 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, 22 May & 7 August 2002 *('Autumn & Winter issues')* (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2002 (Steven Rothman, editor, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; **The Baker Street Irregulars**, Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). ***The Formulary***, June 2002 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, July 2002 (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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 225 30th September 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Gideon Hill passes on the sad news that **Jeanne Jewell** died on 30 August. Her husband Jim is a long-time member of **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** of Philadelphia, and Jeanne herself founded that society's female counterpart, **The Bitches of the Beeches**. There are further Sherlockian connections in the family: Jeanne and Jim's daughter Susan is married to our good friend Jon Lellenberg.

Joan Littlewood died on 20 September. The most famous creation of her Theatre Workshop, based at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, is certainly *Oh, What a Lovely War!* Few seem aware, however, that James Goldman's play *They Might Be Giants* had its first production there, with Harry H Corbett and Avis Bunnage as 'Holmes' and Watson.

The Baker Street Ghost is something different from the ever-inventive Val Andrews. Scriptwriter Greg Hargreaves, obliged to leave the USA by the unwelcome attentions of Senator McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities, rents a flat in London — in Baker Street to be precise — and finds that there's a resident ghost. But this is not, in the usual sense, a 'ghost story'. The relationship between Hargreaves and Holmes reminds me a little of that between Jeff Randall and the late Marty Hopkirk. The result is a completely fresh view of Sherlock Holmes, a fascinating picture of the British film and TV industry in the early 1950s, a portrait of Orson Welles, and a clever murder mystery. Val Andrews is at his best when writing about the world of entertainment, in which he worked as writer and performer for fifty years. You can hear the port wine and cigars in Welles's dialogue, as the author knew him and worked with him; and I'm sure Val Andrews won't mind my mentioning that the character of Greg Hargreaves was inspired by the late Cy Endfield. This 80-page booklet is priced at £10.00 or $20.00 (cash) post-paid. All copies are signed. Make sterling cheques payable to Val Andrews, and send order to him at: 16 The Firs, Woodbine Close, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3RG.

The *magnum opus* of S Holmes Esq. turns out to be a slim volume of verse and prose, with a distinctly humorous twist. The author of *Nothing Really Serious*...(Tagman Press) is actually Stewart Quentin Holmes, who will be known to patrons of the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company. There's not actually very much of direct Sherlockian relevance here, but it's an attractive little book, and the contents are like the stuff that *Punch* featured in the 1930s — well written and very entertaining. *Nothing Really Serious*... is available only from the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company, 230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT.

Something much more substantial is *Scene of the Crime: A Guide to the Landscapes of British Detective Fiction* by Julian Earwaker & Kathleen Becker (Aurum Press, 25 Bedford Avenue, London WC1B 3AT; £16.99). There have been other topographical guides for the mystery lover, but they have almost invariably been cut-and-paste jobs, based on second-hand research. *Scene of the Crime* is different. It took three years' personal research, travelling throughout Great Britain, reading every book covered, interviewing every living author and corresponding with known authorities on those no longer alive. Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes get their due share of attention, in Edinburgh, Cromer, London, Groombridge Place, Southsea and Dartmoor — but so do over 250 other authors, from Douglas Adams to Israel Zangwill. And geographically the book ranges from Aberdeen to Zennor. It's very handsomely produced — 256 pages in stiff card covers, with 24 colour photos and several hundred in monochrome. It's well written, and above all it's *accurate*. The only fault I've been able to find is that the index gives the wrong page numbers for the colour photos. *Scene of the Crime* establishes itself instantly as the definitive work. Highly recommended.

Our Society's recent visit to Dartmoor naturally gave rise to an anthology of scholarly essays, *Radical Rethinks on Hound and Horse*, edited by Shirley Purves and featuring contributions from Vosper Arthur, Wladimir Bogomoletz, Eric Monahan, Kenneth Ross, Francine Swift and a host of others, with the focus on Bernard Davies's new identifications of Baskerville Hall and the stables in 'Silver Blaze'. *Radical Rethinks on Hound and Horse* is available from the Society's merchandising officer, Lynne Godden (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Kent TN27 8QE) priced at: UK £15.50; USA $31.00; Europe $16.95; elsewhere £19.50. Cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, please. *(*It's a handsome volume, and prices include postage, but it seems unnecessarily expensive to me.*)*

Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) has put out the introductory issue of *Sherlock Holmes News*, edited by the esteemed John Hall. Eddie Maguire tells of the writers who have influenced him; Val Andrews gives his views on Sherlock Holmes; there's an extract from the forthcoming novel *Sherlock Holmes: A Duel with the Devil* by Roger Jaynes; and John contributes the first in a series of Forgotten Classics in crime and detection. The first issue of *Sherlock Holmes News* is available free from Breese Books, and there's a special offer on nineteen of Breese's Sherlock Holmes novels.

There's nothing notably Sherlockian in the new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); it features over 1,000 Collins Crime Club first editions, from 1930 to 1994.

On Saturday next Jean and I will head for our favourite little theatre, the Quay at Sudbury in Suffolk, to see Roger Llewellyn in David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* If there are tickets left, you can get them from the box office on 01787 374745. Other dates on Roger's continuing tour include: 15 October **Town Hall, Hartlepool** (01429 890000); 26 October **Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd** (01443 485934); 1 November **Charles Cryer Studio, Carshalton** (020 8770 4950); 9 November **Campus West Theatre, Welwyn Garden City** (01707 357000); 15-16 November **Old Town Hall, Hemel Hempstead** (01442 228091); 7 December **Norden Farm Centre, Maidenhead** (01628 788997). He also has a booking coming up in **Riyadh**, and he'll be at the **Kavinoky Theater** in **Buffalo, New York** from 9 January to 9 February 2003!

CSA Telltapes (6A Archway Mews, London SW15 2PE) has just released *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Episode 5*, read by Edward Hardwicke. Needless to say, Mr Hardwicke's authoritative yet conversational narration is superb, and so is the production. The stories on this double-cassette pack are 'A Scandal in Bohemia', 'Silver Blaze' and 'The Copper Beeches'. It's a pleasure to sit back and listen. This recording was first released in Canada six years ago by Tangled Web, under the title *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Betrayal*. It's good to have it available over here!

In the last DM I mentioned **The One Act Players** and their audio dramatisation of three Holmes stories, which can be heard free of charge on the Internet at www.mp3.com/oneact. Thanks to the director Glenn Carlson, who also plays Dr Watson, I've been able to listen to *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on CD and can report that I enjoyed the experience. Scot Crisp is a very laid-back Holmes (another reviewer describes his voice as camp, and perhaps there is a touch of it, as there was in Jeremy Brett's), and Glenn Carlson is a nice intelligent Watson. The British accents are generally pretty good. Blanca Florido's 'Goodnight, Mister Sherlock 'Owmes' is redolent of the Dick Van Dyke School of Cockney, but she makes an attractive Irene Adler, and she's a lovely singer. Besides 'A Scandal in Bohemia' the One Act Players have dramatised 'The Speckled Band' and 'The Final Adventure' *(*sic*)*, and it's all available on the Net and on CD. Drop a line to Glenn Carlson at Reel 125, 2570 Ocean Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94132, USA, or check their website at www.oneact.org.

William S Dorn (2045 South Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210, USA) offers a Sherlockian calendar for 2003, with the theme of *The Many Faces of Sherlock Holmes*. There's artwork by Nancy Beiman, and of course significant Sherlockian dates are noted. It costs $16.15 within the US, Cdn$29.39 to Canada, or $20.75 elsewhere. Prices include postage.

The 2002 issue of *The Shoso-in Bulletin* is now available. This most truly international of Sherlockian publications has reached its twelfth volume, and its 212 pages contain scholarship and story from America, France, England, Belgium, Australia, Japan, Russia, Germany, Italy, Denmark and Sweden! The most unexpected contribution, and very welcome too, is Peter Underwood's tribute to his friend Dame Jean Conan Doyle. *The Shoso-in Bulletin* vol. 12 is available in the UK from John Hall (20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR) at £7.50 including postage. Otherwise you can order your copy from Classic Specialties (PO Box 09508, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) for $12.00 plus postage — USA $3.00; Canada $3.10; Europe $7.55 airmail or $3.80 surface. *(*These prices are in US dollars, of course.*)*

Classic Specialties' website is always worth a look. You'll find it at www.sherlock-holmes.com.

Michael Cox and Philip Attwell have both recommended **Good Music Record Co.** (Hays House, Freepost PY2035, PO Box 99, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4BR) for buying Sherlock Holmes (and other) videos by post. There's a good selection — Rathbone, Brett, Richardson, Lee and Howard — and the prices are reasonable. You can order by phone on 08705 110157.

Catherine Cooke tells me that the BBC film *The Lost World* — the one with excellent computer generated dinosaurs and a real botched job of the human characters — is now available on DVD, priced at about £19.99. Apparently the disc includes a documentary on the making of the film and 'a commentary on the series'.

Congratulations to our good friend June Kinnee on her investiture in **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** as 'Conductor of Light'!

I've received a message from **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**: '*Un Sherlockien averti décréta un jour que pour créer une société holmésienne il suffisait d'être deux et d'avoir à portée de main une bouteille de Whisky. Les conditions étaient donc replies le 5 août dernier face au Potala pour le lancement des Deerstalkers de Lhassa, société regroupant les holmésiens ayant séjourné a Lhassa.*' So, if you have visited the capital of Tibet you qualify to join **Les Deerstalkers de Lhassa**! Just contact the founding president, J P Crauser at jpcrauser@aol.com.

Our Society's next meeting will be held at the Savage Club on 16 October. The topic will be 'Sherlock Holmes and America', and several of our distinguished American members will contribute to what promises to be a very special occasion

The Long Island Cave Dwellers (Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA) will meet next on 12 October. **The Sound of the Baskervilles** (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA) will meet on 14 October to read selected stories from Conan Doyle's *Tales for a Winter's Night*. 'Shoscombe Old Place' will be the subject for the meeting of **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** (Davice Sharpe, 510 Gay Street, #1203, Nashville, TN 37219, USA) on 19 October — check the Scholars' website at www.nashvillescholars.net/. On 25 October **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** (Gideon Hill, onbridle@verizon.net) intend to analyse the Whitechapel murders of 1888 (bear in mind that Holmes, Watson, Athelney Jones and Watson's brother have all, absurdly, been claimed as Jack the Ripper!); after the debate Henry Boote will talk about Sherlock Holmes and Music.

The next day **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA) will discuss the pastiche that was briefly accepted as canonical: 'The Man Who Was Wanted' by Arthur Whitaker. Also on 26 October, **The Illustrious Clients** (Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA) will discuss the best of the long stories, *The Valley of Fear*, over dinner. **The Crew of the SS May Day** (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP, Northern Ireland) will discuss 'The Crooked Man' and watch some Canonical Cartoons on 27 October. And finally, **The Practical, But Limited, Geologists** (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) will meet for drinks and dinner on 30 October, during the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America in Denver, Colorado. Peter says: 'Our tradition is to have neither scholarly papers, slide shows, nor quizzes; our agenda consists entirely of toasts (some scholarly, but many not).'

Periodicals received. ***The Sons of the Copper Beeches***, October 2002 (**The Sons of the Copper Beeches**, Gideon Hill, onbridle@verizon.net). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, May/August 2002 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, September 2002 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP, Northern Ireland). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 2002 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Torr***, Autumn 2002 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW).

The Camden House Journal, September 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, September 2002 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Whaling News***, August and September 2002 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***Baker Street Bugle***, nos. 3 & 5 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, August 2002 (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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 226 2nd November 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Phyllis Calvert, one of the great British film stars of the 1940s and 50s, died on 8 October, aged 87. One of her last major performances was as Agnes Garrideb in Granada's curious 1996 adaptation of *The Mazarin Stone*.

David Pirie has adapted his original *Murder Rooms* script as a novel entitled (depending on your source) either *The Night Calls* or *Cream*, published last month by Century Publishing Co. Ltd, (Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) at £17.99. Apparently the book expands on the script by having Neil Cream cross Conan Doyle's path first during their student days in Edinburgh and later in London when he embarks on a career as poisoner. We are invited to believe that Cream was the 'real' Professor Moriarty.

The Canadian Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Stephen Gaspar is an e-book, downloadable from the internet on payment of a fee. The book is a sequence of short stories recounting exploits undertaken while Holmes and Watson are in Canada answering a plea for help from Sir Henry Baskerville. 'The story takes place in 1897, and I have endeavored to capture historical events as accurately as possible, as well as maintaining the integrity of Holmes and Watson.' You can obtain *The Canadian Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* from the publisher's website.

Ian (Henry) Wilkes reports a find at this year's Frankfurt Book Fair: *Sherlock Wuff und Doktor Miezon [Sherlock Woof and Doctor Pussy-Cat]* by Stefan Gemmel (Metz-Verlag, Josef-Hollerbach-strasse 14, 76571 Gaggenau, Germany; 8.60 Euros); it's a book for 8-12 year olds, with cartoon illustrations by Cornelia Kurtz. Ian calls the book 'a witty juvenile pastiche'.

There are new catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) *(*£5,750 will get you a first edition of **The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes** in dust-wrapper*)* and **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com) *(*as well as a catalogue of collectibles, **The Sherlockian Times** is an enjoyable magazine in its own right*).*

On 16 October the Royal Society of Chemistry bestowed an honorary fellowship on Sherlock Holmes. Dr John Watson FRSC, who had flown in from Belfast for the occasion, hung a specially struck medal round the neck of Holmes's statue at Baker Street Station. You should still be able to find a fair number of reports on the net by searching for +"Royal Society of Chemistry" +"Sherlock Holmes".

Francine Swift reports that the National Portrait Gallery in London currently houses a loan exhibition, entitled *The Americans*, from its counterpart in the USA. The portrait of T S Eliot, a noted Sherlockian as well as a great poet, was painted by Sir Gerald Kelly, who was a member of the pre-war Sherlock Holmes Society and an honorary member of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) has released the latest volume of David Timson's excellent readings from the Canon. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes V* comprises 'The Reigate Squire', 'The Boscombe Valley Mystery', 'The Beryl Coronet' and 'The Yellow Face', all unabridged and enhanced by judicious use of music from Dvořák's piano trios. It's a particular pleasure to have that last, frequently neglected, story among the old favourites. Mr Timson, who also contributes perceptive and knowledgeable notes on the stories, is a superb reader. His manner is authoritative yet confiding, his pacing is excellent, and every character is distinct. As always with Naxos, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes V* is available on CD or cassette. It's a bargain in either format, and highly recommended.

And so is *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, read by Martin Jarvis (also Naxos AudioBooks). The chapter 'The Wild Wood', in which Mole ventures into the wood in deep winter and Rat rescues him, has a gloriously Sherlockian touch in Ratty's deductions, from the injury Mole sustains, that they are within feet of Badger's house and safety. Grahame clearly had Holmes and Watson in mind when writing this passage, and it's surprising that only E H Shepard and Harry Hargreaves of the major illustrators recognised the fact and dressed Ratty in tweeds and a deerstalker. It's a wonderful novel, sensitively abridged by Perry Keenlyside (though I was sorry to lose the Christmas episode at Mole End), and beautifully read by Mr Jarvis, who, like David Timson, is one of the best readers in the business. Again, thoroughly recommended.

The Great Moghul (The Treasure Company Ltd, PO Box 2, Ashburton, Devon TQ13 7XW) is a detective game with a prize. Joe Dymond, private detective, is commissioned to investigate a wartime mystery — the death of Percy Elgin and the disappearance of his employer's famous ruby, the Great Moghul. Along with the letter from Elgin's great-nephew, the boxed set contains a recording on CD of interviews with persons relevant to the case, and a dozen physical clues — a theatre programme, newspaper cuttings, a pill bottle, etc. Having listened to the interviews and examined the clues, you'll need to search the internet for further leads. If you can work out where the ruby is now, and how it can be identified as the same one that Elgin had in his possession, you can claim the reward of a real ruby spinel. *The Great Moghul* is an exceptionally clever game, very handsomely presented. The mystery is, I suspect, beyond my detective powers to solve, but perhaps not beyond yours. You may want to check the websites at www.treasurecompany.co.uk and www.mysteriz.com.

Here's a treat for admirers of our honorary member **Douglas Wilmer**. PPS (the Programme Preservation Society) produces video interviews with television stars. Normally these are available to PPS members only, but the latest, *The Life (in a Day) of Douglas Wilmer*, is on general sale until the end of December. For £10.00, including postage, you get 165 minutes of Douglas reminiscing about his long and distinguished acting career, with, of course, due attention to his performances as Sherlock Holmes and his recordings from the Canon. To break up the interview there are numerous stills from Douglas's film and TV appearances, and a selection of his excellent paintings. The video is available (in PAL format VHS only) from David May, PPS Publicity Officer, 13 Leeswood Road, Upton, Wirral CH49 9AD. You can e-mail Mr May for more details at DMay1@compuserve.com.

Antony Richards (170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) offers a set of five postcards featuring splendid watercolours by Douglas West, painted to illustrate an edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* but not used. The price is £1.50 the set within the UK, 3 Euros within the EU (cash only), or $3.00 elsewhere. All prices include postage. Make sterling cheques or US dollar checks payable to A J Richards.

Sherlock's (Brian Grimshaw, The Belgian House, 54 Earl Street, Wigan WN1 2BW) is a dealer new to me. He offers books, radio shows on CD (including 50 or so of the Rathbone/Bruce series, and the BBC productions of the long stories with Hobbs & Shelley, as abridged for American radio), and movies on VCD (some of the shorter Rathbones). There are three e-mail addresses: bry2@blueyonder.co.uk, j221b@blueyonder.co.uk, and sigerson@blueyonder.co.uk.

The Royal London Society for the Blind presents a Murder Mystery Evening on Saturday 23 November at Dorton House, Seal, Sevenoaks, Kent. Tickets cost £10.00 each and include nibbles. Call Zoe for tickets or further information on 01732 592684.

From 6 to 20 December, Billy Wilder's idiosyncratic gem *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* will enjoy an extended run at the National Film Theatre. Booking and other information is on the NFT website at www.bfi.org.uk/nft, or phone 020 7928 3232. For details of the re-release of the movie contact the press office, Blue Dolphin Films, 40 Langham Street, London W1W 7AS; tel. 020 7255 2494; or e-mail luciano@bluedolphinfilms.com.

On the morning of 16 November, the Enoch Pratt Free Library at 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore will house the 23rd annual Saturday with Sherlock Holmes, organised by **The Six Napoleons**, **Watson's Tin Box** and **The Carlton Club**. The theme this year is *Love and Romance in the Canon*, and speakers include Marshall S Berdan, Philip Sherman, Dana Richards, John Pforr and Beth Austin. It's a good, full programme, and the event is free to the public. For details call 410-396-5494.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 51 features an atmospheric still of Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke in the play *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*. Inside, Paul Chapman writes about Sherlock Holmes and the supernatural; Alan Taman scrutinises Holmes's contribution to forensic science; Alan Wightman reviews *The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire*; Gavin Collinson investigates the Douglas Fairbanks spoof *The Mystery of the Leaping Fish* and previews the new BBC *Hound of the Baskervilles*; Mike Ripley checks out the spy story; M J Elliott looks at Perry Mason, and Chris Senior considers Adam Adamant; Mark Campbell interviews Sparkle Hayter; Calum McLeod samples Lauren Henderson's *tart noir*; Johnny One Eye appears in a new story by David Stuart Davies; Al Gregory reveals **Mrs Hudson's Cliffdwellers**; Moriarty mutters ... The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (Europe £26.00, rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

From *The Sherlockian Times* I learn of a new society, the **Sherlock Holmes and All That Jazz Society**, whose inaugural meeting was held in New Orleans in March. Those interested in joining in a *Sherlock Holmes and All That Jazz II* should contact Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Davice Sharpe, contact for **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, has moved to another apartment in the same building. The address is now: 510 Gay Street #1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA.

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company has recently returned to the public Sherlockian scene, and Philip Weller has announced some changes: 'In future we are going to have a clearer identification of the Holmesian and Doylean activities of the Head Office Staff through them operating two core groups within the FMHC. The Holmesian group will be entitled **The View from 221B** [. . .]. The Doylean group will be **The Arthur Conan Doyle Study Group** [which] will have its own, occasional, Journal entitled *The Old Horse* [. . .].' (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; e-mail fmhc@acd-221b.info).

Our Society's annual film evening will be held at the Museum of London on 22 November, when David Stuart Davies will present the BBC TV *Hound of the Baskervilles* of 1968 (the membership secretary is Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU — or check the website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

8 November will see both the autumn members' meeting of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** (get details from Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, New York, NY 10011, USA) and a discussion of 'The Three Gables' by **The Occupants of the Empty House** (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).The next day **The Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn** will meet (Peter Crupe, 1533 64th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219, USA). On 11 November **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will speculate on the life of Sherlock Holmes before he took up his unique career (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court N W, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). On 16 November **The Three Garridebs** will discuss 'The Dying Detective' (Sue Vizoskie, 90 Ralph Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606, USA). On 23-24 November **The Friends of Dr Watson** will travel by Eurostar to Brussels to meet up with the Friends' Belgian Chapter (Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM11 3JJ). The 24 November meeting of **The Crew of the SS Mayday** will feature a discussion of 'The Resident Patient' (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP, Northern Ireland).

On 1 December **The Sydney Passengers** will celebrate Christmas with Holmes and Watson (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia). **The Illustrious Clients** will discuss 'The Blue Carbuncle' at their dinner meeting on 7 December (Steven Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). The following day **Mrs Hudson's Cliffdwellers** will meet aboard the *Binghampton* (Al Gregory, 118 South Prospect Street, Verona, NJ 07044, USA). And the day after *that* **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will talk about 'The Blue Carbuncle'.

Periodicals received. ***Canadian Holmes***, Michaelmas 2002 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada) *(**Canadian Holmes is one of the half-dozen leading Sherlockian journals; enquire about subscriptions from D Thorpe, 5 Brownlea Avenue, Toronto M9P 2R5, Canada*).* ***The Camden House Journal***, October and November 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, September 2002 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Practice Notes***, September 2002 (**The Friends of Dr Watson,** Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM11 3JJ).

Ineffable Twaddle, October and November 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Communication***, September/ October 2002 and Special Fall Television Issue 2002 *(*one of the PPoF's great parody issues*)* (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The FMHC Memo***, Autumn 2002 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; e-mail <fmhc@acd-221b.info>) *(*the FMHC publishing schedule is changing along with the structure of the society; the* ***Memo*** *seems to have taken over many of the functions of* ***The New Baker Street Pillar Box*****).*

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, September 2002 (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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 227 8th December 2002

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$13.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Alexis Barquin passes on the news that on 11 December Christopher Lee will be invested as a Chevalier of the French Academie des Arts et des Lettres. Lee, as you won't need reminding, is the only actor to have played both Holmes brothers and Sir Henry Baskerville. *(*Richard E Grant has played Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes and Jack Stapleton*).*

I'm reminded that though **Richard Harris**, who died on 25 October, never appeared in a Sherlock Holmes movie or play, he did play James McParlan, the 'real' Jack McMurdo, in the 1970 film *The Molly Maguires*. Laura Kuhn notes the death of **Lewis Feuer** on 24 November; the New York Times said: 'His interest in matters philosophical was matched by a fascination with Sherlock Holmes. He condensed it in a historical whimsy of a novel, *The Case of the Revolutionist's Daughter: Sherlock Holmes Meets Karl Marx* [in which] Holmes is hired by Marx to investigate the disappearance of his daughter Eleanor.' **Stanley Black** died on 26 November, aged 89. There was nothing directly Sherlockian in his long career as musician, conductor and composer, but he did write the score for the atmospheric 1959 thriller *Jack the Ripper*.

The Ripper's in the news again with the publication of Patricia Cornwell's *Portrait of a Killer*, which claims that Jack was the painter Walter Sickert. As someone said, Ms Cornwell may know a lot about criminals but she doesn't seem to know much about artists.

You'll have checked the Christmas radio and TV scheduling by the time this reaches you, but I'll mention that the new *Hound of the Baskervilles* will be shown on BBC1 on Christmas Eve (Barbara Roden's sent a very encouraging review from Canada). Oscar Ross suggests we look at BBC2's comedy on 23 December: *Cruise of the Gods*, in which Steve Coogan plays a former children's TV entertainer who has gone on to a US mini-series, *Sherlock Holmes in Miami*. He also notes that from Christmas Day Granada Plus will show a selection of Granada TV's classic Holmes series.

Mercat Press (53 South Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1YS) has published a second selection from the memoirs of James McLevy, and *McLevy Returns* (£9.99) is just as good as its predecessor, *McLevy: The Edinburgh Detective*. Once again, curiously, the cover photograph is of Edinburgh in the 1880s, even though McLevy's detective career stretched from the 1830s to the 1860s. No matter; it's an attractive picture, and the book itself is splendid. The style of these tales, taken from two volumes published in 1861, is chatty, in the way that Dickens's essays are. Dr Watson would have recognised a fellow-spirit, and could have cited McLevy's accounts in justification of his own narrative style. Even Holmes might have approved of the Edinburgh detective, as the stories show him to have been intelligent and resourceful as well as hard-headed and courageous. McLevy is also a gripping storyteller. Here are the first lines of 'The Jewel-Box': *Sometimes we detectives have moments of despondency. As the world is made, robbers and murderers will persevere, — it is their nature; and the more they achieve, the more they would. They are artists inspired by their art.* Could you resist reading on?

David Ian Davies has followed his recording of *Silver Blaze* with the other Dartmoor adventure, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail ddavies@aol.com). Mr Davies reads, as always, with a relish that he communicates to the listener. His remarkable vocal versatility is again evident in this unabridged reading, which occupies four CDs, and the characters are all carefully distinguished. Actually 'reading' is too limited a word. Mr Davies *acts* the narrative. There are some occasional mispronunciations, though — 'dyspnoea', meaning a breathing difficulty, is not pronounced *dispan-yay* but *diss-nee-a*, as any good pronouncing dictionary will tell you. And it's a curious choice to play Sir Henry with a dubious Scottish accent, and justify it by changing the text to give him a background in Canada and Scotland instead of 'the States and Canada'. Those quibbles aside, this is a fast-moving and engaging performance of Holmes's greatest case, nicely packaged with a very atmospheric picture of Dartmoor.

No quibbles at all about the latest related release from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ). Kerry Shale makes a lovely job of reading Poe's three tales of the Chevalier C Auguste Dupin. In 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', 'The Mystery of Marie Rogêt' and 'The Purloined Letter' Poe created the detective story — or tale of ratiocination, as he called it. Sherlock Holmes was very dismissive of Dupin and Poe, but Arthur Conan Doyle freely acknowledged his debt to character and author, a fact missed by David Timson in his otherwise admirable notes. Whether or not you've read Dupin lately, I urge you to listen to these grand readings. You'll discover again the remarkable achievement of Poe, and realise perhaps for the first time how much Conan Doyle improved on his model. *The Dupin Stories*, available on four CDs (NA427612) or four cassettes (NA427614), is a near-essential companion to David Timson's continuing series of superb readings of the Sherlock Holmes stories for Naxos AudioBooks.

Philip Attwell reminds me that the BBC's Cover to Cover cassettes have released an unabridged reading of *the Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Derek Jacobi. Should be good!

Steven Rothman, editor of *The Baker Street Journal*, sends notice that this year's BSJ Christmas Annual will be *Tilting at Windmills: Denis Conan Doyle and the Baker Street Irregulars* by Richard Lancelyn Green. It is, says Steve, 'a 64-page illustrated account of the wranglings of the Conan Doyle Estate in America with liberal quotations from the correspondence between Denis, Adrian and their lawyers and those being threatened by those two keepers of the flame, such as Edgar Smith, Christopher Morley and Ellery Queen.' *Tilting at Windmills* is available from *The Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA, or from the BSJ website at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. The price outside the continental United States is $12.00, payable by check, Visa or Mastercard.

Due on 6 January at £3.99 from Pocket Books (no address to hand) is *Hounded by the Baskervilles* by Mercer Warriner, in which Sabrina the teenage witch summons Sherlock Holmes to help her.

What looks like an extraordinarily interesting book is Will Bagley's *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (University of Oklahoma Press; $39.95). It's an account of one of the worst mass murders of civilians in American history, when 120 men, women and children, travelling on a wagon train west from Arkansas, were slaughtered in a valley in south-western Utah, on 11 September 1857. It seems that the responsibility of the Latter day Saints is pretty clear, although Mormon authorities have done their best to conceal evidence. At any rate, this single dreadful event goes a long way to explain the fear in which many 'gentiles' held the Mormons, and why Conan Doyle chose them as the villains of *A Study in Scarlet*. (My apologies: I've forgotten who put me on to this.)

There are new catalogues available from **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE; e-mail blackcatuk@aol.com, website

www.blackcatbookshop.com) and **G H Bradley** (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet. Essex SS7 1PA; e-mail Geoffcads@aol.com). Lots of Sherlockiana in the former, and recent crime fiction in the latter.

St Bartholomew's Hospital is again under threat, from the scheme first proposed in the mid-1990s: 'to combine Bart's, the London Chest Hospital, the Royal London Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Children's Hospital upon a single site in Whitechapel' (see *Private Eye* 1067 & 1068). Today's 'Labour' government is as committed to private finance initiative deals as the Tories ever were, and the future of the best loved hospital in London seems uncertain.

Holmes and Watson's sitting-room at the *Sherlock Holmes* pub in Northumberland Street, off Trafalgar Square (020 7930 2644) has been decorated for Christmas by Mrs Hudson. You get a grand view of the room from the restaurant, and the food and drink are excellent.

If you need a Sherlockian Christmas present, don't forget the wide range available from **The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company (**230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT) and **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). And check www.221bbakerstla.com for Chuck Kovacic's Sherlockian artwork.

Wonderful neo-Victorian (and other) Christmas presents can be had from **Past Times**, who have 60-odd shops and a mail order service. Call 01993 770440 for a catalogue. **Hawkin & Co**. (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0PJ; phone 01986 782536 for a catalogue) sell all sorts of toys and things you didn't know were still made. Hawkin's has a growing number of very popular shops, the latest here in Chelmsford.

For something more expensive, check www.spycruise.com for details of the 2003 SpyCruises from San Diego to Hawaii (embarking 27 March) or from New York to London (1 September). Learn about espionage in luxurious surroundings from top intelligence experts.

The Times for 7 November had a half-page article, 'Sherlock Holmes and the curious case of a scholar who detects the Bible in Conan Doyle's tales'. Mario Palmaro, who teaches philosophy at Regina Apostolorum Pontifical University in Rome, claims that New Testament echoes appear throughout the Holmes Canon.

A reminder that Billy Wilder's idiosyncratic gem *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* is being shown at the National Film Theatre until 20 December. Booking and other information is on the NFT website at www.bfi.org.uk/nft, or phone 020 7928 3232.

In issue no. 42 of *CADS* John Hall has contributed a very good piece on E W Hornung and A J Raffles, and David Ellis an equally interesting one on the fictional exploits of Edgar Allan Poe. *CADS* is grand reading for the crime fiction fan (G H Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet. Essex SS7 1PA; e-mail Geoffcads@aol.com).

Shirley Purves has resigned as secretary to **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**; enquiries should be addressed to Vosper Arthur at Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR. And Eric Monahan has handed over editorship of the Poor Folk's journal *The Torr* to Reggie Musgrave.

Patricia Guy tells me that Verona's first Sherlockian group is up and running. The choice of name when I last heard was between **The Assorted and Stradivarius of Verona** and **I Figli di Tonga**. For details, contact Patricia at benguy@libero.it. *(*I think Patricia's entertaining and informative book* ***Bacchus at Baker Street: Observations on the Bibulous Preferences of Mr Sherlock Holmes and his Contemporaries*** *is still available at £9.95 from Ian Henry Publications, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH.**)

At 6 pm on 10 December, Philadelphia's newest Sherlock Holmes Society, **Mycroft's League**, hosts a cocktail party to celebrate 55 years of the great Sherlockian game in the city. The venue is the Old Café at the Union League of Philadelphia, 140 S. Broad Street. Get more information from Gideon Hill at gideonhill@earthlink.net.

The annual dinner of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** is on 18 January in the Members' Dining Room at the House of Commons, where the guest of honour will be Professor Sir Roy Meadow, one of our most distinguished paediatricians. Ian Richardson has also accepted an invitation, commitments permitting. As usual there's an informal lunch the next day at the New Commonwealth Club in Northumberland Avenue. For details of the society, contact Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

The annual dinner of **The Crew of the SS Mayday** is on 12 December, and on 6 January they celebrate Sherlock Holmes's birthday (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP, Northern Ireland). On 21 December **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** meet to discuss 'The Blue Carbuncle' and to party (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). **The Three Garridebs** hold their Blue Carbuncle Lunch on 29 December (Sue Vizoskie, 90 Ralph Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606, USA). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** meet on 14 December and 13 January; their Master's Dinner is on 4 January (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). The Birthday Meeting of **221B** also takes place on 4 January (Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU). **The Sydney Passengers** celebrate Holmes's birthday on 5 January (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia).

Festivities in New York begin with *The Christopher Morley Walk* on Thursday 9 January, followed later in the day by a staged reading of *The Blue Carbuncle*, adapted by Andrew Joffe and featuring Paul Singleton and Mary Ellen Rich (2 pm at the West Bank Café, 407 West 42nd Street; admission free), and by *The BSI Distinguished Speaker Lecture* (Douglas G Greene, biographer of John Dickson Carr, editor and publisher). Next day begins with *The Martha Hudson Breakfast*, continues with *The William Gillette Memorial Luncheon*, and open house at Otto Penzler's Mysterious Bookshop, and concludes with the annual dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** (invitation only) and *The Baskerville Bash.* On Saturday morning the dealers' room is open at the Algonquin Hotel, and **The Clients of Adrian Mulliner** hold their Junior Bloodstain in the lobby. The afternoon sees the BSI's annual reception, for all Sherlockians and their friends. Sunday winds up the weekend with **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes'** informal brunch at the Baker Street restaurant at 1152 First Avenue. *(*For details about the* ***BSI****, contact Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA. For the* ***ASH****, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, New York, NY 10011, USA. For* ***The Clients of Adrian Mulliner****, Anne Cotton, 12 Hollywood Street, South Hadley, MA 01075, USA. For* ***The Baskerville Bash****, P J Perry, 346 East 87th Street, #4-A, New York, NY 10128-4844, USA.*)*

Periodicals received: ***Communication***, November/December 2002 and Special Hollywood Issue 2002 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 33544, USA). ***The School Report***, Winter Term 2002 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Passengers' Log***, Spring issue 2002 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***Mayday Mayday***, November and December 2002 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2002 (**The Baker Street Irregulars**, Steven Rothman, 220 West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA) *(*subscriptions for the BSJ should go to PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for the BSI should be sent to Michael Whelan,7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA*).*

The Whaling News, October and November 2002 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, November 2002 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; e-mail 221b@acd-221b.info) *(*the first electronic newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company's International Sherlock Holmes Study Group*).* ***Ineffable Twaddle***, December 2002 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NE #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgsys.com).

The District Messenger will take its customary break until late January or early February, so, from Jean and me,

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
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 228 26th January 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details. Apologies for the increase in the dollar rate, necessitated by US bank charges. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

Peter Blau tells me that at the **Baker Street Irregulars'** annual dinner in New York, Shillings were awarded to: Edwin L Christenson ('Antonio'), Joseph A Coppola ('The Strangers' Room'), David Greeney ('Uncle Ned'), Alexian A Gregory ('The Grimpen Postmaster'), Mia Stampe ('The Dynamics of an Asteroid'), and Susan Vizoskie ('Mrs Saunders'). Donald E Novorsky received the Two-Shilling Award, and Janice Fisher was *The* Woman. Congratulations to all!

Our Society lost an outstanding member with the death of **Cdr Geoffrey Stavert, RN (retd)** on 19 December. Geoff Stavert served as Hon. Secretary from 1986 to 1994, and continued as Correspondence Secretary. He was invested as 'The Shingle of Southsea' BSI in 1994 and received Honorary Membership of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London in 1998. After leaving the Royal Navy he became a lecturer at Sandhurst, and there was always a nice academic edge to his humour. His *magnum opus* is his 1987 book *A Study in Southsea: The Unrevealed Life of Dr Arthur Conan Doyle*, recounting ACD's life during the time when he created Holmes and Watson. The book is both precise and accessible, as was its author. (Brian Pugh points out that, although *A Study in Southsea* is out of print, it is available on CD-ROM at £9.95 plus £1.47 postage, from Archive Britain at www.archivebritain.com.)

Michael Bragg reports the death on 17 November of **Frank Oglesbee**, whose long-ago presentation of the Rathbone movies on Channel 8 WSIU in Carbondale helped stimulate the now considerable Sherlockian activity in central USA. **Peter Tanner**, a great film editor, died on 10 December after a 60-year career that embraced many classics: *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, *The Cruel Sea*, *The Blue Lamp* and others, including *Without a Clue* (1988). **James Hazeldine**, best known as 'Bayleaf' in the TV drama series *London's Burning*, died on 18 December; Sherlockians will remember him as Brunton in Granada's award-winning 1986 adaptation of *The Musgrave Ritual*. Laura Kuhn notes the death on 28 December of producer **Richard Horner**, whose many Broadway successes included Paul Giovanni's 1978 play *The Crucifer of Blood*, based on *The Sign of the Four*. **Al Hirschfeld**, who died on 20 January aged 99, dazzlingly caricatured Broadway and Hollywood for nearly 80 years. He designed the *My Fair Lady* poster, showing Bernard Shaw as puppeteer, pulling the strings of Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews, and among the original pen & ink drawings offered by the Margot Feiden Galleries at www.alhirschfeld.com is *The Game's Afoot*, featuring Rathbone and Bruce as Holmes and Watson.

Sherlock Holmes' Last Case by Robert D'Artagnan (Xlibris, www.exlibris.com, $29.69 hardback, $19.94 trade paperback), takes Holmes and Watson to Vienna to meet Sigmund Freud, and gives a sensational new account of what really happened during the Great Hiatus — but it's not a re-run of *The Seven-per-Cent Solution*. The year is 1908: At Martha Freud's request Holmes investigates her husband's peculiar behaviour, and Freud helps him to solve the mystery of Reichenbach and the years that followed. Holmes's childhood, his birthright, and his relationship with the Moriarty family are revealed, and the Napoleon of Crime does make an appearance, in the person of Col. James Moriarty, who twice challenges Holmes to a duel. Dr Freud's persecutor, we discover, is someone who will later have a profound effect on the history of Austria, and indeed of the world. It's heady stuff, excitingly told, though Mr D'Artagnan's style is not Dr Watson's. There are broad hints of unpublished exploits, including the Shakespeare Case, of which we are told that Elizabeth I's one-time favourite, the Earl of Leicester, a poisoner who plotted to seize the crown *(*there is some historical evidence for this*)* was the direct ancestor of the Moriarty family; and that Edward, 17th Earl of Oxford, was responsible both for foiling Leicester's plot *(*I know of no evidence for this*)* and for writing Shakespeare's plays and poems! *(*Oxford was a fine poet, but there's little resemblance between his writings and those of the Bard of Avon — who, despite a lack of university education, was an armigerous gentleman, and not a 'simple rustic'.*)* The hardback, strongly made and attractively presented, is currently available only from the Xlibris website. The paperback is also available from Amazon.com, Borders.com and BarnesandNoble.com.

The Outstanding Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes by Gerard Kelly (The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada; $34.00) comes much closer to the style and manner of the Canon. I don't go as far as one reader, who said, 'It is hard to believe they are not Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's own creations' (of living writers only Denis Smith and June Thomson have consistently captured the style and flavour of Conan Doyle's writing) but Mr Kelly makes a good job of it. He knows his period and he has a devious imagination! In this volume you have thirteen ingenious and engaging new Sherlock Holmes stories. I commented favourably in DM 223 on 'A Slaying in Suburbia', in the anthology *Curious Incidents;* it's in this collection too, and the rest of the tales are just as good. This is a handsome hardback, nicely illustrated by the author, a retired draughtsman, whose architectural knowledge is evident in the attractive cover painting. The publisher's price of $34.00 works out at £21.60 plus postage, but Gerard Kelly offers signed copies for £20.00 each postpaid, from Baker Street Books, 74 Crofton Avenue, Timperley, Cheshire WA15 6DA (cheques payable to G Kelly). There's a website at www.bakerstreetbooks.co.uk.

The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box has published a considerable amount of Sherlockian scholarship, whimsy, pastiche, and reference material, translations of the Canon, and more besides, including *The Octagon Project*, which is making essential material available on CD-ROM. See the website at www.charlesmckeebooks.com/~silicon.

Xlibris also offers *The Master Sleuth on the Trail of Edwin Drood* by Robert Fleissner (hardback $28.79; trade paperback $18.69); *Sherlock Holmes and the Story for Which the World is Not Yet Prepared* by Stephen E Pierce (trade paperback $18.69); and *The Secret Files of Sherlock Holmes* by Frank Thomas (trade paperback $17.84).

Last October, apparently, Indy Publish. Co. (PO Box 410186, Cambridge, MA 02141, USA) issued new editions of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (hardback £20.99, paperback £17.99), *The Sign of the Four* (£13.99, £9.99), and *A Study in Scarlet* (£19.99, £15.99). However, Whitaker's LibWeb still lists publication as 'provisional'! Random House Adult Trade Group (c/o Orca Book Services, Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole, Dorset BH15 3AJ) has published a new paperback edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at £6.99. Penguin Books (80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL) has a TV tie-in paperback of the same title at £4.99. In February, Constable (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) will publish *Dr Mortimer and the Carved Head Mystery*, the third in Gerard Williams' series, following *Dr Mortimer and the Aldgate Mystery* and *Dr Mortimer and the Barking Man Mystery*.

There's much of interest about the 1959 *Hound of the Baskervilles* in Wayne Kinsey's *Hammer Films: The Bray Studios Years* (Reynolds & Hearn, 61A Priory Road, Kew Gardens, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3DH).

Peter Blau notes that *Camera Obscura*, the second Doctor Who novel by Lloyd Rose, BSI, has many Sherlockian overtones (BBC Worldwide Ltd, Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT; £5.99).

Jens Byskov Jensen (Bredalvej 61 C, Gl. Sole, DK-8722 Hedensted, Denmark) has written *Baker Street — Once Again*, an illustrated search for the true location of no. 221B. Copies are available from Jens for $26.25 or Dkr.210, plus registered postage at $8.50 or Dkr.68 for Europe, or $10.00 or Dkr.80 elsewhere. Make US dollar checks payable to Marina Stajic and Danish kroner checks to Jens Byskov Jensen.

There are recent catalogues, all with Sherlockian material, from **Donald Rudd** (8 Parkside, Middlesbrough TS3 0BP) *(*thanks to Phil Attwell for this*)*, **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; <nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk>), **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; sales@rupert-books.co.uk; also online at www.rupert-books.co.uk) and **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN) *(*thanks to M C Black for this; if you contact Bibliophile, please quote reference 1045.*)*.

A reminder that the specialist mystery bookshop **Crime in Store** is now located at 32 Store Street, London WC1E 7BS (crimebks@aol.com). There's a website at www.crimeinstore.co.uk.

Catherine Read of Mercat Press Ltd, publishers of *McLevy: The Edinburgh Detective* and *McLevy Returns*, the strongly recommended memoirs of a 19th century detective, points out that I gave the wrong address in DM 227. Mercat Press has moved to 10 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AL; and there's a website at www.mercatpress.com.

Jonathan H Brewer's neat little Sherlock Holmes story, 'The Chess Problem Case', was published in the October 2002 issue of *Weekend Chess*. Since then he's written a dozen or so more, which will appear on the Internet chess shop of Chris Rice, the magazine's editor.

Thanks to the generosity of Hugo Koch I have three spare copies of his Christmas booklet *The Adventure of the American Violinist*, a clever and charming Sherlockian tale, illustrated by Philip Cornell. These are free to the first enquirers within the UK, as are two copies of Hugo's admirable 1998 monograph *'There Are Some Hundreds of Henry Bakers in this City of Ours': An Identification of the Henry Baker*.

Jon Lellenberg tells me that the US Supreme Court has upheld the Bono Copyright Extension Act, which adds 20 years to existing US copyright terms — meaning, says Jon, 'the last Sherlock Holmes stories protected in America won't go into the public domain until the end of 2023.'

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 52 features the famous image of Janet Leigh's screaming face in Hitchcock's *Psycho*, covered in Paul Chapman's article about fictional serial killers. Also in this issue — Robert Sanderson looks at Raymond Chandler's *other* detective; Calum McLeod considers the novels of Barry Maitland; Mark Campbell interviews Harlan Coben; M J Elliott revisits *Columbo* (and contributes a new Sherlock Holmes story); Mike Ripley investigates sexual domination in crime fiction; Gavin Collinson previews the BBC TV *Hound;* eight crime writers choose their favourite Holmes story; Moriarty mutters ... and more! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Brian Pugh notes that next month the BBC will release the Richard Roxborough *Hound of the Baskervilles* on video (£12.99) and DVD (£15.99). The BBC Shop website offers the DVD (which includes extras) at a pre-release price of £11.99. Also available from the Beeb is Bert Coules' radio adaptation of *The Sign of the Four* on CD.

Also from Brian: **The Deerstalkers of Welshpool** have commissioned a plate to mark the Royal Society of Chemistry's award of an honorary fellowship to Sherlock Holmes. Go to the manufacturer's website at www.pipedreamcrafts.co.uk, and click on 'previous work' and 'commemorative' to find it.

M C Black, who has organised our Society's monthly Club Nights at Royal Commonwealth Society in Northumberland Avenue, tells me that the one on 7 February will be the last, because of dwindling support.

On 13 February, at National Medical Services (3701 Welsh Road, Willow Grove, PA 19090, USA), the distinguished toxicologist Michael F Rieders will give a light-hearted talk on 'The Devil's Foot'. Two days later, at Toronto Reference Library at 789 Yonge Street, Clifford S Goldfarb will talk about a controversy that has unjustly attached to ACD's name in 'Arthur Conan Doyle and the Dorando Affair: The Evolution of an Olympic Legend.'

The AGM and luncheon of **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** will be held at The Globe at Topsham on 1 February (details from Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR; Cherry@arthurc.fsnet.co.uk). **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** will study 'The Three Garridebs' on 16 February (Thom Boykoff, 222 Randolph Drive, #303, Madison, WI 53717, USA). 'The Sussex Vampire' will be the subject at the Lodge of **The Red Circle** at the National Press Club in Washington on 21 February (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Looking further ahead, on the weekend of 16-18 April 2004 **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** will celebrate their Silver Jubilee, with the collaboration of **WelcomeHolmes**, **The Fresh Rashers**, **The Mycroft Holmes Society**, **The Mycrofts of the Midway** and **The Diogenes Club**. get details of the conference, called *It's all GREE!*, from Jim Hawkins (644 Vivian Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA; jimhawkins@thehawk.net).

Periodicals received. ***Canadian Holmes***, Christmas (Winter) 2002 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada; subscriptions, D Thorpe, 5 Brownlea Avenue, Toronto M9P 2R5, Canada). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Winter 2002 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, January 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, December 2002 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Whaling News***, December 2002 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Formulary***, December 2002, ***The Collected Essays: The Dr John H Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition***, 2002, and ***A Thrilling Affair*** by Tim Healey (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ).

The Illustrious Clients News, November/December 2002 and January 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA).***Communication***, Special Holiday Issue 2002 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 33544, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2002 and January 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, December 2002 and January 2003 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; 221b@acd-221b.info) *(*the electronic newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company's International Sherlock Holmes Study Group*)*. ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2002 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Magic Door***, Winter 2002 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada). ***Tonga Times***, Fall 2002 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E. 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, January 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA).

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2002 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 229 1 March 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. Please note that I give such addresses and prices as I have. If I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Apologies for the increase in the dollar rate, necessitated by US bank charges. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

I omitted to mention the death late last year of **Zakaria Erzinçlioglu** ('Dr Zak'), Britain's leading forensic entomologist and author of *Maggots, Murder and Men* and *Every Contact Leaves a Trace*. He also tried his hand, very effectively, at fiction, with 'The Adventure of the Bulgarian Diplomat' in Mike Ashley's *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures* (Robinson, 1997). His dream of establishing the Solon Institute, a permanent body for forensic science, has been taken on by his widow, Sharon, herself a medical researcher.

Leslie Fiedler died on 29 January. His Freudian psychosexual criticism of classic literature did not overlook Sherlock Holmes. His essay 'Art in the Blood' appeared as the introduction to the 1978 *Sherlock Holmes Illustrated Omnibus*.

Mary Ellis, who played Lady Florence in Granada's 1993 production *The Eligible Bachelor* (based very loosely on 'The Noble Bachelor') and Mrs Maberley in 1994's *The Three Gables*, died on 30 January at the remarkable age of 105. As a young girl she had known William Gillette, and was the last surviving singer to have created a rôle in a Puccini opera — Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica* at the New York Met in 1918. She will be best remembered as Ivor Novello's leading lady.

George Welch, a long-time active member of our Society, has been in very poor health for about a year, and has been in and out of hospital several times. Friends might like to drop him a line or send a card, care of his brother, Mr A J Welch, 48 Vaughan Road, Manchester M21 0YL.

Our good friend **John Baesch** had a heart attack last month but is recovering well. We've just learned that John and **Evelyn Herzog** are now engaged to be married. Excellent news! I was going to suggest that John would welcome Get Well cards, but it looks as if congratulations are more to the point. Friends can contact him at 613 Cranbrook Road, Apt G, Cockeysville, MD 21030, USA; or Evelyn at 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA.

The third volume in the Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series is something rather different from the first two. The work reproduced is not by Arthur Conan Doyle but by another giant of the detective story. And it is illustration rather than text. In *G K Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes* Steven Doyle has published for the first time nineteen drawings, in Chesterton's distinctive, almost cartoonish style, using pencil and crayon. They were intended for a still unidentified edition of the Holmes Canon, probably in the early 1930s, but have for years lain almost unknown in the Lilly Library at Indiana University. The pictures add greatly to our understanding of Chesterton's admiration for the Holmes stories. To put them in context, the book includes four of his essays: 'Errors about Detective Stories', 'How to Write Detective Stories', 'A Defence of Detective Stories' and 'Sherlock the God'. There are also essays by Dale Ahlquist of the American Chesterton Society, Pasquale Accardo, and Scott Bond — all are enlightening, the last particularly so, as an illustrator's commentary on the drawings. A publisher himself, Steven Doyle has ensured that the reproduction is excellent. *G K Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes* is an unusual, important and exceptionally interesting volume. The price is $35.00 plus $8.00 postage ($9.50 outside the USA). Send orders to The Baker Street Irregulars, c/o Calabash Press, PO Box 1360 Ashcroft, BC, Canada V0K 1A0.

Jeremy Paul, whose script for Granada's 1986 *The Musgrave Ritual* won an Edgar award, has written *Sing Willow: The True Story of The Invalids CC, the Cricket Side Immortalised in A G Macdonell's England, their England* (The Book Guild Ltd, 25 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2LU; £16.95). The Society's cricketers may like to know that the Invalids' first match was played, as the Old Age Pensioners, at West Wycombe. Ian M Leslie, whose letter to *The Times* in October 1951, signed 'John H Watson, MD' was vital in persuading Marylebone Borough Council to set up the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition, and who was a stalwart member of our Society, was an Invalid. So, of course, is Mr Paul. You can buy signed copies of *Sing Willow* directly from him, at 4 Seymer Place, Seymer Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 2AJ.

Breese Books Ltd has moved to 10 Hanover Crescent, Brighton BN2 9SB (e-mail Mbreese999@aol.com).

Catherine Cooke has a few books for sale on behalf of Anna Smyth: *The London of Sherlock Holmes* by Michael Harrison (£10.00), *Sherlock Holmes and Music* by Guy Warrack (Sherlock Holmes Society of London reprint, £5.00); *Sherlock Holmes Gazette* (issues 1-6, £3.00 each), *Sherlock Holmes Detective Magazine* (issue 28, £3.00), *The Strand Magazine* (vol. 4, July-Dec 1892, £8.00). Prices don't include postage. If you're interested, please contact Catherine at ccooke@westminster.gov.uk.

A new catalogue is available from **Canford Book Corral** (Drawer 216, Freeville, NY 13068, USA — not much Holmes, but lots of vintage American crime fiction.

At a quick look through the latest catalogue from **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0) I'm attracted by a lot of the titles, especially the reprints of *The Martyrdom of Man* by Winwood Reade and two of Clark Russell's fine sea stories, *The Frozen Pirate* and *The Death Ship* (each at $36.00). Also at $36.00 is *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture*, attributed to Sherlock Holmes. Then there's Tupper Bigelow's *Irregular Anglo-American Glossary* ($24.00), *A Sheaf of Sherlock* by Michael Harrison ($42.00), *Disjecta Membra* by Eric Monahan ($34.00), *Sherlock Holmes in the West Country* by Patrick Campbell ($15.00), *The Original Text Solar Pons Omnibus* by August Derleth ($130.00) and a great deal more.

Just out from The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, and available only to members of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, is *The e-Sherlock Holmes Journal*, a complete archive on CD-ROM, searchable and printable, of the SHJ from 1952 to 2002. The discs also contain Geraldine Beare's comprehensive three-part index — Author & Title, Media News & Reviews, and Subject — and all the Society's membership lists, annual dinner menus, and Christmas cards, as well as the necessary Adobe Acrobat Reader. It is essentially a reference tool, and I already find it invaluable as such, but I should mention that the first eight issues of the Journal are included twice, the second time in perfect facsimile. The cost of *The e-Sherlock Holmes Journal*, including postage, is £65.00 or $100.00. All paid orders received before the end of March will get an extra CD-ROM containing *The Complete Sherlock Holmes Stories*, *The Martyrdom of Man* and *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture*. If you're not already a member of the Society, you must place your order through a member. Or contact Bob Ellis and ask about joining (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU).

This is a rich month for audio-books. In *The Darlington Substitution Scandal* David Stuart Davies fleshes out a brief remark made by Sherlock Holmes in 'A Scandal in Bohemia'. The story is read, or rather acted, with remarkable virtuosity and panache by the author's near-namesake, David Ian Davies. With credible characters, an ingenious plot and an atmosphere of excitement, we are plunged once again into that romantic chamber of the heart, that nostalgic country of the mind, where it is always 1895. What more could we wish for? The CD also includes DSD's story 'The Reichenbach Secret,' a credible reinterpretation of 'The Final Problem'. (One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail ddavies858@aol.com.)

Getting back to the true Canon, two superb readers have recordings newly out. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes episode 6* comprises 'The Priory School', 'The Red-Headed League' and 'The Blue Carbuncle', told by Edward Hardwicke. You really do get the feeling that if Watson did recount his experiences to a privileged group of friends over whisky and cigars, this is what it was like. Mr Hardwicke conveys every quirk of character, every nuance of atmosphere, and it's a pleasure to listen to that mellow but authoritative voice. This two-cassette pack was first released in Canada by Tangled Web as *Tales of Avarice*. CSA Telltapes (6A Archway Mews, London SW15 2PE) have done us a favour by issuing it over here.

David Timson is not nearly as well known, but he is one of the best readers around, and I'm delighted to welcome his latest recording, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes VI*. As Watson he is perhaps less relaxed than Edward Hardwicke is, but he is just as much in command. As Holmes he has the edgy nervous energy that comes across so tellingly in Conan Doyle's prose. He has plenty of opportunity to demonstrate his striking range of voices and accents in the four stories in this latest collection: 'The *Gloria Scott*', 'The Resident Patient', 'The Noble Bachelor' and 'The Final Problem'. His Moriarty, in particular, is masterly. The reading is complemented by atmospheric music from the Naxos catalogue, this time by Dvorak, Paganini and Mendelssohn (one piece, I'm not sure which, is used as the theme for Radio 4's Sherlock Holmes series), and David Timson contributes perceptive and informative notes on the stories. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes VI* is available from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) on three CDs or three cassettes.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 53 features a provocative still of Mme Valladon (Geneviève Page) kissing Mr Holmes (Robert Stephens) in Billy Wilder's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, covered in Gavin Collinson's article about the film.. Also in this issue — M J Elliott looks at the later series of *Columbo*; Robert Sanderson investigates Dirk Gently; Calum McLeod considers the novels of Martina Cole; Bert Coules reviews the BBC TV *Hound of the Baskervilles*; Mike Ripley asks whether an author really should write about what he knows; Richard Valley considers cross-dressing in the Sherlock Holmes stories; There's a preview of the 2003 Sherlock Awards; Ron Ellis contributes a new Johnny Ace story; Chuck Kovacik illuminates **The Baker Street Builders** ... and more! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Philip Attwell notes that BBC 7 digital radio (check the website at www.bbc.co.uk/radio is broadcasting the Radio 4 Sherlock Holmes plays with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, while Oneword (http://oneword.co.uk) is transmitting vintage Holmes plays from American radio. Phil says a good source of information about forthcoming Sherlock Holmes material on British radio and television is www.mydigiguide.com.

Writers might find *Blood at the Source: Research Tips for Mystery Writers* (www.barbarafister.com/Bloodatthesource.html) useful.

Customs & Excise have dogs trained to detect the ink and dye on bank notes. Last month a sniffer dog named Sherlock tracked down £36,000 in a passenger's suitcase at Newcastle Airport.

At 8.00 pm on Friday 28 March, Roger Llewellyn will be at Falmouth Arts Centre, Cornwall with *Sherlock Holmes — the Last Act!* (a virtuoso performance of a stunning play, highly recommended). The box office number is 01326 212300, and tickets cost £7.00 (concessions £6.00).

You'll know by now that Britney Spears is set to star in a film called *221bCAUSE*, as an American assistant at a London travel agent located at 221B Baker Street. She notices that letters are arriving addressed to Sherlock Holmes, and when she starts answering them in his name she gets involved in a race to save the US President's kidnapped son. Who knows? It might be fun ...

Mia Stampe has set up a website for reviews (in English) of Sherlock Holmes books, films and so forth, drawing on the experience and opinions of Sherlockians world-wide. You'll find it at www.gfy.ku.dk/~ams/sh/books.html. It's worth a look. And Robert W Franson's review of *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* is posted at www.Trynovant.com.

Terry Fountain tells me that the January issue of *ThrillerUK* features an article on the 'crimes' of Sherlock Holmes, who also appears on the cover. The magazine costs £3.95 plus 55p postage (£1.55 overseas) from T Fountain, *ThrillerUK*, 130 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 7AA. There's a website at www.thrilleruk.fsnet.co.uk/latest.htm.

The March issue of *Collect it!* (Essential Publishing Ltd, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester CO4 9PE) has a four-page article by Brian Jones on collecting Sherlockiana.

The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes have their own website at www.ash-nyc.com.

Davice Sharp tells me that plans for *It's All GREE*, a weekend conference in April 2004, have reluctantly been cancelled.

The subject of our Society's meeting on 19 March at the National Liberal Club will be Holmes's relationship with Inspector Lestrade. The membership secretary is Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

On 7 March **The Occupants of the Empty House** meet in Du Quoin (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) **The Diogenes Club of the Monterey Peninsula** meet on 8 March (Michael H Kean, 2040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach. CA 93953, USA). 10 March sees the book sale and regular monthly meeting of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** meet on 16 March to consider 'Thor Bridge' (Thom Baykoff, 222 Randolph Drive, #303, Madison, WI 53717, USA). **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** discuss 'The Naval Treaty' at their meeting on 28 March (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). Next day, **The Glades of the New Forest** visit the 'Five Orange Pips' locations in the Portsmouth area (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU). **Caska Spolecnost Sherlocka Holmese** (the Czech Sherlock Holmes Society) plans a Sherlockian exhibition 'near Prague', to run from 1 April for about eight weeks (Ales Kolodrubec, Milesovska 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic).

Periodicals received. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Winter 2002 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, Nicholas Utechin, Highfield Farm House, 23 Highfield Avenue, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LR). ***The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment Interim Newsletter***, January 2003 (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Camden House Journal***, February 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, February and March 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, January 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, February 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Communication***, January/February 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 33544, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, February 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Whaling News***, January and February 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn,** Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). And the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, January 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 230 10 April 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Murray Shaw, who died on 18 December, well into his 90s, was for many years an enthusiastic subscriber to the DM. By profession a kitchen designer, in our world he was the author of several pleasant new Holmes stories and, more importantly, of the *Match Wits with Sherlock Holmes* series: eight books that respectfully and engagingly present the Canonical adventures as puzzles for younger readers. Peter Blau notes the death of **Jon V Wilmunen**, whose witty cartoons and parodies enlivened several Sherlockian publications in the 1960s and 70s, on 13 January.

Also from Peter, the news of the death on 25 January of producer, writer and director **Sheldon Reynolds**, most memorably responsible for the pleasant 1954 TV series *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and its little-seen 1981 follow-up *Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson*. Peter says, 'Sheldon Reynolds was inventive and optimistic, and a delightful raconteur.' Gideon Hill reports that **James Jewell** died on 27 February, just six months after his wife Jeanne. He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Susan and Jon Lellenberg, and by his fellow-members of the Philadelphia scion **The Sons of the Copper Beeches**, who will stand on the terrace for him at their meeting on 9 May.

The Master of the Queen's Music, **Malcolm Williamson**, died on 2 March at the age of 71. 'The appointment marked the beginning of the decline of a career that had enjoyed almost two decades of extraordinary success' (*Independent*), but among the works he composed during his tenure was the score for that admirable TV movie *The Masks of Death*. On 5 March, **Lloyd Shirley**, one of Britain's leading television executives, died, also aged 71. Among the series and serials that he helped develop were *Callan*, *Van der Valk*, *Minder*, *The Sweeney*, *The Bill* — and *The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*. **Mary Campbell** MBt, BSI, ASH, died on 17 March. I met Mary first in Montreal at the 1990 Bimetallic Colloquium, where, as Barbara Roden reminds me, she wore a different Victorian gown every day, and received a special award at the Saturday dinner. She seems to have been a friend and mentor to **The Bootmakers of Toronto** and just about all the Sherlockians in Canada. To the ASH she was 'Mrs Merrilow', and she was invested as 'Brenda Tregennis' BSI in January 2002.

The fifth volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*, edited by Leslie S Klinger, is *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, which comes with a thought-provoking introduction by David Stuart Davies (Gasogene Books, PO Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; $29.95). Depending on whether or not the editor intends to cover the Doylean apocrypha, the project is now at or past the half-way stage, and we can safely dismiss any doubts about its surpassing Baring-Gould's *Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. Les Klinger has clearly spent many hours trawling the writings about the writings for relevant material (and there's far more now than was available to Baring-Gould), and probably as many hours again sifting it, finding the exact quotation or summarising several pages in one sentence. It's a marvellous job, and the result is surely essential for every serious Holmesian. I spotted just two errors in the notes to *The Return*: Lord Gore-Booth, diplomat, was not the same person as Lord Donegall, journalist, though I think both would have been amused at the thought. And a map at 1 to 500 is actually very *large* scale, not small. That's not bad among the hundreds of annotations, not to mention the appendices and the rest, and it's nice in a way to know that Mr Klinger isn't infallible. *(*Many now accept the identification of the Grange at Bacton as Ridling Thorpe Manor as original to Philip Weller, who wrote it up in 1997, but Bernard Davies was there first [I was there in 1984 when he announced it, as was Philip]. Leslie Klinger can't be blamed for not knowing that, as Bernard never committed it to paper.*)*

Gasogene's other new book is *My Dear Holmes: Being the Continuing Annals of Sherlock Holmes* by David L Hammer ($12.95). Most of the thirteen stories in this slim volume purport to be among the cases that Watson merely tantalisingly referred to. They are often cleverly plotted, and it's very interesting to know that one derives from a personal reminiscence of the late Michael Harrison. In that respect this third collection is an improvement upon the second, but Mr Hammer's style still doesn't ring true to me. The fact that a word or a phrase was current in Victorian England doesn't in itself make it appropriate in a Sherlock Holmes story. I was brought up short by Watson's breakfast references to 'shirred eggs', and, having checked various Victorian and modern British sources, finally found the phrase in a modern American dictionary. No doubt Mr Hammer will say that Mrs Beeton gives a recipe, but I've never come across the phrase in a British book of whatever age. David Hammer is the author of a series of insightful and chatty guides to Holmes's world, and I know he can do better than this.

Both books can be ordered from the publisher. Postage for one book, is $3.95 within the US or $5.95 elsewhere; plus 75¢ for each additional book. Checks and money orders should be payable to Gasogene Books.

Eric Monahan's latest booklet is less handsomely but more amiably presented. The first three tales in *Sherlock Holmes in To Err is Human, or All's Well that Ends Well* range from neat parody to outright burlesque — it's an engaging idea that Holmes and Watson's first few years together were spent in poverty at 221A Baker Street before they could afford to move upstairs into 221B! But 'The Disappearance of James Phillimore' and 'The Case of the Fourth Victim' are rather more serious, though I'm sure that Holmes should have realised how the trick was done in the former adventure. The Watsonian or Doylean style is deceptively easy to imitate; the difficult thing is to imitate it *well*, but Eric Monahan does better than most, and he always has a good tale to tell. The booklet is available, postpaid, for £5.80 or $10.95 (£4.80 or $9.95 to members of **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**) from Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW.

In *Finding Sherlock's London* Thomas B Wheeler lists an astonishing 200 Sherlockian sites, both by adventure and by the nearest Underground station, identified, as Mr Wheeler says, 'with humble detective skills, a 1902 London street map, and a large magnifying glass'. The 80-page large-format (11" x 8½") book, ring-bound for practicality, is essentially a gazetteer, to take along on a tour of Holmes's London — a pilgrimage of several days. Every location has the appropriate, accurate information from the Canon, but for full detail and exegesis you should have Arthur M Alexander's *Hot on the Scent* to hand. *Finding Sherlock's London* is an excellent traveller's tool. It's available from Thomas B Wheeler (6875 Honey Locust Cove, Memphis, TN 38119, USA; e-mail londonsecrets@london.com) for $15.00 postpaid, or $20.00 outside the US. Credit cards accepted.

Cenarth Fox has sent copies of the first two issues (June and December 2002) of his magazine *Nicholas Twit: The Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes*, which comes well recommended by our good friend Bill Barnes of **The Sydney Passengers**. Nick Twit's use of Holmes's techniques makes perfect sense in these tales of 21st century Australia; it all reminds me of Terrance Dicks' excellent *Baker Street Irregulars* novels, which can

only be good. And there are puzzles and Sherlockian Snippets to keep the reader, of whatever age, engaged. There's a website at www.twit.biz. The magazines are available in the UK from an agent in Horsham, but I have no address. Meanwhile, you can contact Cenarth Fox at Fox Plays, PO Box 2078, Richmond South, 3121 Victoria, Australia (e-mail editor@twit.biz.

Derek Hinrich tells me that Stage Right is currently putting on *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* at **The Theatre** in Leatherhead, Surrey (formerly the Thorndike Theatre — *sic transit*). Both plays run until 19 April. Call the box office for details on 01372 365141, or check the website at www.the-theatre.org. On Saturday 12 April Roger Llewellyn will be at the **Palace Theatre** in Redditch with *Sherlock Holmes - The Last Act!* by David Stuart Davies. The box office number is 01572 65203. From 17 to 26 April, TOADS Theatre Company will present Paul Giovanni's *The Crucifer of Blood* at the **Little Theatre** in Torquay. Box office 01803 299330; website www.toadstheatre.co.uk. *The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes* by David Belke will be performed at the **Vagabond Theatre** in Cornwall, Ontario, on 24, 25 & 26 April, and at **Aultsville Theatre** at St Lawrence College on 1, 2 & 3 May. You can e-mail info@vagabondtheatrecornwall.com, but I have no phone number. Website www.vagabondtheatrecornwall.com. From 8 to 18 May in the **Drama Lab Theatre** at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, CA, you can see *Sherlock Holmes and the Giant Rat of Sumatra* by Kelly and Sharkey. Phone 714-432-5880. Website www.occtickets.com.

There's a lot of Sherlockiana available on DVD. On 14 April the entire Granada TV series with Jeremy Brett is being released as a 23-disc set by Cinema Club (78 Dean Street, London W1V 5HA). Look out also for *Terror by Night, The House of Fear, Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon, Pursuit to Algiers, Dressed to Kill* and *The Woman in Green* (all with Rathbone & Bruce); *Murder Rooms: The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes* with Ian Richardson; and the cartoon features *The Sign of Four, The Valley of Fear* and *The Baskerville Curse*, with the voice of Peter O'Toole, apparently talking in his sleep.

Bert Coules' dramatisation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams was released on CD in 2001 in the BBC Radio Collection (BBC Worldwide, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT); *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Valley of Fear* will follow on 5 May.

BBC Worldwide will shortly issue its first MP3 release, the complete *Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy* on two discs. In the USA a company called Worldtainment has already released the entire Holmes Canon on MP3, each volume priced at $14.95. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Sign of Four* make up one volume; *A Study in Scarlet* and *His Last Bow* another; while *The Valley of Fear* is paired with 'The Leather Funnel'. In the same series are *The Lost World* coupled with 'The Poison Belt', and *The Detection of Sherlock Holmes* by Patrick Horgan. Mr Horgan, English-born of Irish parents, has played Sherlock Holmes many times in his distinguished acting career, and he is the reader throughout this tremendous project. You can find out more from the publisher's website at www.worldtainment.com.

Until 12 July, the Newberry Library (60 West Walton Street, Chicago, IL 60610, USA; website www.newberry.org) houses an exhibition entitled *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — Beyond Sherlock Holmes*, all exhibits being from the collection of Fred Kittle.

The *Sherlock Holmes* pub in London is already taking bookings for its Christmas Murder Mystery dinners. (Jean and I attended the first one, which was great fun, and the meal, as always was excellent.) Phone 020 8289 9595 for details. *(*The pub is a shrine that all Sherlockians should visit, of course, and its history is inextricable from that of* ***The Sherlock Holmes Society of London****. You'll find it in Northumberland Street, just by Charing Cross Station and Trafalgar Square.*)*

Peter Blau reports that the Eastman company found a second print of Albert Parker's silent *Sherlock Holmes* starring John Barrymore. 'A new and better version of the film' has been created, which had its world premiere in Rochester, NY, on 12 January. *(*I wonder if people outside the USA will be permitted to see this print. We've never officially been allowed to see the first restored version ...*)*

Something really big for the autumn: a symposium, *From Gillette to Brett: Sherlock Holmes on Stage, Screen and Radio*, will be held at the Omni Indianapolis North Hotel (8181 N Shadeland Avenue, Indianapolis, IN) on 8 & 9 November. Confirmed speakers include Gordon Kelley (author of *Sherlock Holmes: Screen & Sound Guide*), David Stuart Davies (*Starring Sherlock Holmes*); Chris Gullo (Peter Cushing' biographer); Paul Herbert (Sherlockian scholar) and Susan Dahlinger (William Gillette's biographer). Special guests are **Edward Hardwicke** and **Nicholas Meyer**. The cost, excluding accommodation, is $99.00. Send checks, payable to Wessex Press, to Steven Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA.

On 25 April **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** will discuss 'The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge' (get details from Gideon Hill at onbridle@verizon.net). **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** (website www.harpooners.org) look at 'The Solitary Cyclist' on 26 April (Michael Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** consider 'The Creeping Man' on 27 April (Thom Boykoff of 222 Randolph Drive, #303. Madison, WI 53717, USA; phone 608 833-3369).

The annual **STUD-Watsonian Weekend** takes place in the Chicago area 2 - 4 May, starting with the STUD dinner at the Sheraton Four Points in Schiller Park on Friday; Saturday sees the Fortescue Honours Brunch and the pizza party fun(d)-raiser; and the weekend concludes with the 44th running of the Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course (Susan Diamond and Allan Devitt, 16W603 3rd Ave., Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; e-mail szdiamond@attbi.com). **The Diogenes Club of the Monterey Peninsula** meets on 10 May (Michael H Kean of 2040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953, USA; e-mail mkean@ctb.com). **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** examine 'The Crooked Man' on 16 May; and **The Notorious Canary Trainers** discuss 'The Lion's Mane' on 18 May.

Periodicals received. ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 2003 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, Apt 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, March 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, January 6 2003 *(Summer issue)* (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The School Report***, Spring Term 2003 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***Mayday Mayday***, March 2003 (incorporating ***The Chronicler***) and April 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

Ineffable Twaddle, April 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Lady Day (Spring) 2003 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 1, 2003 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe, Hellebækgade 19, 3.tv., 2200 Kbh. N, Denmark). ***The Antipodean Holmesian Society Newsletter***, December 2002, February 2003 and March 2003 (**The Antipodean Holmesian Society**, Ted Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand). ***The Torr***, Spring 2003 (**The Poor Folk upon the Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA). ***The Parallelogram***, March 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA).

The Camden House Journal, March 2003, April 2003 and ***The Beeman's Christmas Annual***, 2002 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Stan Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) *(*the final edition of the* ***Annual*** *marks the Occupants' silver jubilee and is dedicated to Fr 'Vic' Holly, composer of the inspiring Sherlockian Prayer*)*. ***Communication***, Special Science Fiction Issue and March-April 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *(*the special issues are always fun; this SF one combines imagination and humour*).*

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, February and March 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 231 11 May 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail. Note that I'll be using my Yahoo e-mail account for the DM in future.

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Richard Dalby reports the death on 12 September 2002 of **Lloyd Biggle, Jr**, one of the masters of science-fiction and fantasy, at the age of 79. He also wrote detective stories, and his two Sherlock Holmes novels — *The Quallsford Inheritance* (1986) and *The Glendower Conspiracy* (1990) — are among the best by any writer since Conan Doyle. **Karen Morley**, who died on 8 March aged 93, never appeared in a Sherlock Holmes movie, but in 1932 she was John Barrymore's co-star in the *Arsène Lupin* and played the heroine of the Boris Karloff thriller *The Mask of Fu Manchu* — in which she was overshadowed by Myrna Loy's delicious performance as Fu's daughter. **Sir Paul Getty**, billionaire, philanthropist, art connoisseur and cricket-lover, died on 17 April aged 70. American-born, he took British nationality after receiving his knighthood. Because of the foot & mouth epidemic, our Society was unable to take advantage of Sir Paul's offer of his private ground for the Victorian cricket matches against the P G Wodehouse Society.

Brian Scrivener passes on news of the death of **Carl Hoskisson** in December at the early age of 33. He was a hard-working and by all accounts amiable member of the Friends of Dr Watson (for whom he acted as Practice Receptionist), the Franco-Midland Hardware Company and the Baskerville Hounds. David Sanders reported the death on 9 April of **Ann Skene-Melvin, MBt, ASH**, bookseller, bibliophile, and a founder of the Bootmakers of Toronto.

A Sherlock Holmes Almanac was compiled and privately printed by Svend Petersen BSI in 1956. Now a team consisting of Carl William Thiel, Karen Murdock, Frank Darlington, Edwin Christenson BSI and George A Vanderburgh has revised and updated the almanac for publication by the Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada; $36.00). It's a full calendar of events in the Sherlockian world. Other new or forthcoming titles from the BSDP include a revised and enlarged edition of Donald Redmond's classic *Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Sources* ($40.00), *A Baker Street Christmas Stocking* by Bliss Austin, *The Adventures of Shirley Holmes* by Frederic Arnold Kummer & Basil Mitchell *[*nothing to do with the recent TV series — these stories date from the 1930s*]* and *The Solar Pons Encyclopaedia*.

Reviews suggest that *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon (published on 1 May by David Fickling Books for young adults and by Jonathan Cape for adults) makes effective use of Sherlockian allusion. Ian McEwan says: 'Mark Haddon's portrayal of an emotionally dissociated mind is a superb achievement. He is a wise and bleakly funny writer with rare gifts of empathy.'

Several interesting titles coming in June. *Murder in Baker Street*, a collection of new Sherlock Holmes stories edited by Martin Greenberg and Jon Lellenberg (Robinson, 3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER; £7.99). A new edition of *The Memoirs of Vidocq* (AK Press; £14.00) — Eugène-François Vidocq (1775-1857) could fairly claim to be the first great real-life detective, and his sensationalised ghost-written reminiscences are the prototype of all detective fiction. The paperback edition of *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, edited by Martin Priestman (Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU; £15.95). And finally *Crime in Literature: The Sociology of Deviance and Fiction* (Verso; £40.00, or £19.00 paperback).

In July comes *Victorian Detective Fiction and the Nature of Evidence: The Scientific Investigations of Poe, Dickens and Doyle* by Lawrence Frank (Palgrave Macmillan, Brunel Road, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hants. RG21 6XS; £45.00). Severn House (9-15 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1DF) has announced publication in August of *Sherlock Holmes and the Rule of Nine*, priced £18.99. I have no more details at present.

There are new catalogues available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), and **The Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester L1 1GE; blackcatuk@aol.com) *[*the latter is numbered as 'Catalogue Umpteen'!*]*

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 54 features an excellent photo of David Jason as Detective Inspector Frost, who is the subject of M J Elliott's article on Telly Tecs *[*it's interesting to note that Jason is actually the third actor to play Jack Frost*]*. Also in this issue — Paul M Chapman writes of Sherlock Holmes and history, and continues his examination of fictional serial killers; Robert Sanderson considers Mickey Spillane's thick-ear PI, Mike Hammer; Gavin Collinson gives the second part of his look at Billy Wilder's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes;* Calum McLeod investigates the novels of Robert Crais; Scott Flinders contributes a Merlin the Magnificent mystery; David Stuart Davies traces Conan Doyle's private life in his fiction; Mike Ripley asks which bestseller is selling best; Jerry Kegley illuminates **The Curious Collectors of Baker Street**; Moriarty mutters ... and more! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

There's a lot of television drama available on video from Acorn Media UK Ltd (10 Smith's Yard, Summerley Street, London SW18 4HR), including the two *Sherlock Holmes: The Golden Years* films with Christopher Lee and Patrick Macnee — though if the running times in the new catalogue are accurate the films have been heavily cut. There's a website at www.acornmediauk.com. Douglas Johnstone adds a couple of titles to the list of Holmes movies available on DVD. He's bought the Matt Frewer *Hound of the Baskervilles* (£6.99) and *Murder by Decree* (£12.99) from Bensonworld (Freepost [LON 12770], Unit 9, Iron Bridge Close, London NW10 0UR), who don't charge postage on DVD order. They have a website at www.bensonworld.co.uk.

You may know that Peter Blau has produced a useful alphabetical list of invested **Baker Street Irregulars**, the BSI's Two-Shilling Awards, *The* Women, and the currently active **Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, which he will supply free of charge by e-mail from pblau@dgsys.com, or by post for $1.25 from 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA. You can also access it on Willis Frick's *Sherlocktron* home page, at http://members.cox.net/sherlock1/Sherlocktron.html, where you'll also find Peter's list of 810 Sherlock Holmes societies, with contact details for 431 active societies. Now Al Gregory has reversed the BSI list with an alphabetical list of investitures; it's available from Al by

e-mail only, from grimpen@nac.net. It makes interesting, if rather esoteric, reading.

Visitors to Walt Disney World at Orlando in Florida may not know about **Sherlock's of Celebration**, the English tea rooms in the Disney community of Celebration. It's run by Tony David, a Londoner who worked for years in Baker Street, across the road from the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company, and his wife June, and it offers Sherlockian souvenirs as well as genuine tea — both the drink and the meal. You'll find it at 725 Bloom Street, Celebration, FL 34747, USA.

On a recent visit to the little cathedral city of Ely, John Hoath spotted the name 'Capital & Counties Bank' clearly visible above the windows of what's now a Clinton Cards shop. The Capital & Counties, later absorbed into Lloyds, were Sherlock Holmes's bankers. There aren't many places where the name is still displayed.

Our Malaysian correspondent Aziz Bin Adam has sent a review from a Malaysian paper of the recently released computer game *The Mystery of the Mummy*. The critics seem agreed that it's complex but unintelligent.

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, due in cinemas this summer, is based on the successful series of comic books (or graphic novels if you prefer). There are numerous Sherlockian allusions, though I understand that Holmes himself doesn't appear. Look out also for the action comedy *Shanghai Knights*, currently on release, in which Jackie Chan is an unlikely original for Sherlock Holmes.

Phil Attwell passes on news of *Holmes and Watson*, a film set in the present day and written by James Robinson, writer of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. 'The heir to the Holmes legacy will be portrayed as a twentysomething playboy who uses his talents mainly to pick up girls — until he is unwittingly drawn back into the family detective business by a young, sexy Dr Jane Watson.'

M C Black sends a piece from the Daily Telegraph of 26 April, noting a discovery by Douglas Blunden of Sheringham Golf Club in north Norfolk. Arthur Conan Doyle played golf at Sheringham, and so, we now know, did a Mr C Moriarty. However, Mr Moriarty's name doesn't appear in the records until 1901, eight years after the publication of 'The Final Problem'.

Charles Marowitz's iconoclastic spoof *Sherlock's Last Case* will be produced by Nipissing Stage Co. in Ontario, from 17 June to 12 July (205-101 Worthington Street E, North Bay, ON P1B 1G5, Canada; phone 705-472-2782; e-mail nsc@resultsmedia.on.ca). From 18 June to 20 July, the Apple Tree Theatre in Highland Park, Illinois, will house the world premiere of a new adaptation of *The Sign of the Four* (595 Elm Place, Suite 210, Highland Park; phone 847-432-4335 (e-mail appletreetheatre@yahoo.com). By coincidence, Dennis Rosa's play *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four* will be produced by American Theatre Works, Inc. at the Dorset Theatre in Vermont from 26 June to 12 July (American Theatre Works, PO Box 510, Dorset, Vermont 05251, USA; phone 802-867-2223).

The Friends of Dr Watson have announced the Dr Watson 2003 Essay Competition. Once again entries can be submitted under two separate headings. The first is 'Discuss Watson's relationship with Scotland Yard and the regular police force', and the second 'Write a short pastiche on Holmes's passing reference to a case in "The Adventure of the Second Stain": "You remember the woman at Margate whom I suspected for the same reason. No powder on her nose — that proved to be the correct solution."' The competition is not restricted to members of the Friends. For full details, contact Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ (e-mail TheFormulary@aol.com). The closing date is 30 June 2003.

Bill Barnes reports that **The Sherlock Holmes Society of Australia**, like the Red-Headed League, is dissolved. However, its founder Alan Olding BSI has accepted honorary membership in **The Sydney Passengers**, which is now known in full as **The Sydney Passengers: The Sherlock Holmes Society of Australia**.

The annual general meeting of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of** London at the Lansdowne Club on 28 May will be followed by a session of Three-Minute Problems (Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU).

On 16 May, **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will consider 'The Crooked Man' (ask Michael E Bragg for information at PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA — or check the website at www.harpooners.org). 'The Lion's Mane' will be the subject of discussion at the meeting of **The Notorious Canary Trainers** on 18 May (Thom Boykoff, 222 Randolph Drive, #303. Madison, WI 53717, USA). On 22 May **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** will mark Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 144th birthday (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN; e-mail brian.w.pugh@tesco.net).

The Glades of the New Forest will visit the Pitt-Rivers Museum and 'some Holmesian colleges' in Oxford on 7 June (Jane and Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; e-mail fmhc@acd-221b.info). On 15 June **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** will look into the case of 'The Veiled Lodger' (Thom Boykoff, 222 Randolph Drive, #303. Madison, WI 53717, USA). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will visit Silver Blaze country for a Dartmoor picnic on 21 June (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR; e-mail Cherry@arthurc.fsnet.co.uk). On the same day, but an ocean away, **The Illustrious Clients** will also enjoy a picnic (Steven Doyle at 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607, USA). A week later **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will discuss 'The Speckled Band' (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2003 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) *[*the original and still one of the indispensible Sherlockian periodicals; the outstanding essay in this issue is Jens Byskov Jensen's study of Holmes's musical tastes*]*. ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2003 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA) *[*articles on an early parodist, W H Auden's views on the detective story, and the silent comedy* ***A Black Sherlock Holmes*** *(starring Bill Robinson's brother Sam)*]*. ***Ineffable Twaddle***, May 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The Whaling News***, March and April 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

The Camden House Journal, May 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) *[*a delightful piece of spoof scholarship on Professor Moriarty by Robbie Burr*]*. ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, March and April 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker & Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; e-mail dgsharpe@rocketmail.com) *[*revived after a short hiatus under new editorship, and as friendly and approachable as ever*]*. ***The Illustrious Clients News***, March 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA) *[*yes, it does say March, but I think that should read April; anyway, it's full of interest, especially on the subject of Conan Doyle's visit to Indianapolis in 1923*]*. ***Practice Notes***, March 2003 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ) *[*an intriguing essay by Dr Tim Healey asking whether Watson was colour blind*]*. ***Quivers on the Web***, April 2003 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU; 221b@acd-221b.info) *[*the electronic newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company's International Sherlock Holmes Study Group*]*.

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 232 15 June 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail (and note the different e-mail address).

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Frank Darlington, who died on 9 May aged 81, was amusing, erudite and clubbable. From his home near Seattle he maintained active membership of **The Sound of the Baskervilles**, **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** and **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**. I regret that I never met him or his wife Carol, but I greatly enjoyed our correspondence and I cherish his witty, elegant Christmas cards. On 14 May **Dame Wendy Hiller** died at the age of 90. Her long acting career never, I think, included any Sherlock Holmes productions, but her performance as Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's *Pygmalion*, on stage in 1936 and on film, to Leslie Howard's Henry Higgins, two years later, is one to treasure. **Fr Raymond L Holly** died on 19 May. 'Vic' Holly was the only person to attend the first meeting of **The Occupants of the Empty House** and he was a charter member of **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**. He composed the inspiring Sherlockian Prayer**.**

An update on Thomas B Wheeler's *Finding Sherlock's London*: this gazetteer of 200 Sherlockian sites, identified, 'with humble detective skills, a 1902 London street map, and a large magnifying glass', is now available in pocket format — 102 pages, 8½" x 5½", spiral-bound in clear plastic covers. This excellent traveller's tool is available from Thomas B Wheeler (6875 Honey Locust Cove, Memphis, TN 38119, USA; e-mail londonsecrets@london.com) for $15.00 postpaid, or $20.00 outside the US. Credit cards accepted.

A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by Brian Pugh has been reissued in a greatly expanded and corrected edition of 92 A4 pages, similarly bound. It's available postpaid from Brian at £16.00 within the UK, or £19.00, 30 Euros or $30.00 elsewhere. Send cheques — sterling only, payable to B W Pugh — or cash to 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN..

Sherlock Holmes und der Fluch von Addleton (Bastei Lübbe, Verlagsgruppe Lübbe GmbH & Co. KG, Bergisch Gladbach, Germany; 10 Euros) is a German edition of Mike Ashley's excellent 1997 anthology *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures*, with contributions by Simon Clark, Zakaria Erzinçlioglu, Michael Moorcock, Amy Myers, Guy N Smith and a host of others, including several subscribers to this newsletter.

Bill Barnes (19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) reports that *The Hounds' Collection, vol. 8*, containing '68 pages of scholarship, humour, research, pastiche, conjecture and artwork by members of **The Hounds of the Internet**' is now available from him for £6.50 or 9 Euros or US$10.00 or Cdn$15.00, postpaid. He can accept PayPal at bbarnes@ozemail.com.au, or cash, or cheques payable to R W Barnes. Volumes 4, 5, 6 and 7 are still available.

Severn House (9-15 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1DF) has announced publication in August of *Sherlock Holmes and the Rule of Nine* by Barrie Roberts, priced £18.99.

e-booksonline (uk) ltd (28 Bryntirion Drive, Woodlands Park, Prestatyn, Denbighshire LL19 9NU) publishes books in three formats: as a download, sent electronically to your computer; as an A4 ring-bound book, and as a paperback. In *Mycroft Up Against It* and *Mycroft over the Water* Sam Bonnamy gives us a much more energetic Holmes Major than we find in the Canon, with a devoted mistress who masquerades as a gentleman member of the Diogenes Club. Check the website at www.e-booksonline.net or e-mail quillusers@aol.com for more information.

There's a new catalogue of Sherlock Holmes books available from **Ian Henry Publications Ltd** (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH). The books themselves aren't new, but it's good to know that there's a British source for such admirable titles as Jon Lellenberg's *Nova 57 Minor* (£22.00), Christopher Redmond's *In Bed with Sherlock Holmes* (£32.00), and Jack Tracy's *Subcutaneously, My Dear Watson* (£15.00).

M C Black notes that the latest catalogue from **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; orders@bibliophilebooks.com) includes Arthur Conan Doyle's *Our African Winter*, reduced from £14.99 to £5.00 (reference no. 41264). If you order a copy, please also quote reference 1045, so they know where the recommendation originates. 'They do little advertising and rely on recommendations.'

The new catalogue of crime fiction from **Canford Book Corral** (Drawer 216, Freeville, NY 13068, USA) has little Sherlockian but does include the 1943 novel *Murder by Inches* by Stanley Hopkins Jr — a pseudonym of, I think, Christopher Morley's daughter.

John Baesch, Philip Attwell and Brian Pugh have pointed out that the June issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* (45 St Mary's Road, Ealing, London W5 5RQ) features Richard Dalby's 16-page revised update of his earlier articles on collecting Sherlock Holmes, with UK prices. Read it and weep — or, if you're really lucky, read it and gloat.

Brian Pugh sends word that Mr R F Flower offers *The Hound of the Baskervilles* complete in six tiny volumes, an inch high, at £33.00 or £6.50 per volume. Also available in single volumes at £6.50 each are *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, *The Red-Headed League*, *A Scandal in Bohemia*, *A Case of Identity*, *The Five Orange Pips* and *The Man with the Twisted Lip*. Brian says that the books are 'printed, not copied and then reduced in size'. I don't know the cost of postage, so write to Mr Flower at 5 Foxglove Close, Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5PB for details, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

John Baesch tells me that the current issue, no. 111, of *Realm: The Magazine of Britain's History and Countryside* 'has a delightful article on Arthur Conan Doyle, with a Doyle portrait and Paget illustrations. The travel guide refers you to the Sherlock Holmes Museum, the Criterion and Simpson's in the Strand.' The last sentence, though, opens up new possibilities: Conan Doyle was 'a fine sportsman who once took the wicket of W C Fields in a cricket match.' Godfrey Daniels!

A colleague kindly sent me a page from *The Guardian* for 5 June describing Tracy Moran's exploration of Sherlock Holmes's London on a 'Streets of London' walking tour. A nice article, though I was surprised to learn that in Holmes's study at the *Sherlock Holmes* pub '52 items represent each of Doyle's stories about the detective. A true fan is challenged to identify them all.' Jean and I have cared for the room for several years, and that's news to me!

Bob Ellis has sent a cutting from the *Times* for 30 May, reporting that BBC 2 has bought Granada's original 1984 *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* to show as part of its *Watching the Detectives* series on Saturday afternoons. It'll be nice to see Michael Cox's baby get another airing, though I can't help wishing that the Beeb had decided to screen some of its own Sherlock Holmes productions.

Mike Gannon has produced five 'Seasons Greetings' postcards featuring his own paintings of Holmes, Watson and the *Sherlock Holmes* pub. They cost £3.00 the set, postpaid, from P M Gannon, 36 Gordon Street, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 0ED. A Holmes catalogue is available from Mr Gannon for two first-class stamps.

Takeshi Shimizu alerted me to two new CDs from the British Library, and Bob Ellis has sent fuller details. *The Spoken Word — Writers* (£9.95) features the voices of G B Shaw, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, H G Wells, Max Beerbohm, G K Chesterton, Somerset Maugham, Edgar Wallace, John Buchan, Harley Granville Barker, E M Forster, P G Wodehouse, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Compton Mackenzie, Hugh Walpole, Agatha Christie, Vita Sackville-West, J R R Tolkien, Rebecca West, Aldous Huxley, J B Priestley and Noel Coward. *The Spoken Word — Poets* (£9.95) is an even more mixed bag, with recordings ranging from 1889 to 1969. The discs can be bought at the British Library (96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB), through UK bookshops, or online at www.bl.uk/services/publications/onlineshop.html.

A recent Book Marketing Ltd survey of women readers found that the ideal literary date was Mr Darcy. Sherlock Holmes came seventh in the list, ahead of Rhett Butler, Prince Charming and Sharpe, but behind James Bond, Superman, Hercule Poirot, Inspector Morse and Heathcliff.

Several people spotted an item that has been disseminated by the Wales News Service (Market Chambers, 5-7 St Mary Street, Cardiff CF10 1AT; walesnews@yahoo.com). *'The title of baron of the castle which inspired the Sherlock Holmes novel The Hound of the Baskervilles has been put up for sale — for £40,000. The castle near Brecon, Mid Wales, was built by Ralph Baskerville, an 11th century knight who was rewarded by Norman lords for his efforts in fighting the Welsh tribes. Owner Grace Pitchford said the history of the 1,000-year-old Pencelli Castle prompted Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to write his most famous Sherlock Holmes novel. Mrs Pitchford said: "Conan Doyle was a regular visitor to the castle during the reign of Queen Victoria and was inspired to write Hound of the Baskervilles." The new owners will be entitled to call themselves "Baron and Baroness of Pencelli".'*

Note that the castle isn't for sale, only the title. Even so, questions inevitably arise. *Did* Conan Doyle visit Pencelli Castle, which has been an uninhabitable ruin for centuries? Is the title genuine, like an English Lordship of the Manor? How did it come into Mrs Pitchford's possession? Is it coincidence that Grace Pitchford's claim that Conan Doyle visited Pencelli Castle resembles Grace Riley's claim that he visited the house that is now the Sherlock Holmes Museum? Conan Doyle's daughter was certain that he never did visit 239 Baker Street, which Mrs Riley took over from her son, John Aidiniantz ...

Brian Pugh tells me that the plaque to on the house in Durnford Street in Plymouth (where Conan Doyle was briefly in practice with Dr Budd) has been stolen. No more news at present.

Forthcoming venues for Roger Llewellyn's production of *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* by David Stuart Davies are: **Arts Centre**, Stamford, Lincs. (16 September); **Woughton Centre**, Milton Keynes (25 September); **Queen Mary's College**, Basingstoke (2 October); **QE2**, New York - Southampton (19-25 October); **Weston Park**, Shropshire (1 November); **Cramphorn Theatre**, Chelmsford (14-15 November); **Wimbledon Theatre Studio** (18-22 November, including Saturday matinee).

Sherlock issue no. 55 will be the last from PMH Publications, who have published the magazine since issue 9. It has been acquired by Atlas Publishing, a new company set up by Mark Coleman, who has great plans for the magazine's future, which editor David Stuart Davies will help to implement.

At 1.30 on Saturday 12 July, the magazine's Sherlock awards will be presented at **Crime Scene 2003**, the fourth annual festival of crime literature and film at the National Film Theatre. The Crime Scene guest of honour will be Walter Mosley, and there'll be a special focus on the works of Georges Simenon and Jean-Pierre Melville. For full details of Crime Scene 2003, phone the NFT on 020 7928 3232, or check the website at www.bfi.org.uk/crimescene.

The Friends of Dr Watson have announced the Dr Watson 2003 Essay and Pastiche Competitions, open to all. Either 'discuss Watson's relationship with Scotland Yard and the regular police force', or 'write a short pastiche on Holmes's passing reference to a case in "The Adventure of the Second Stain": — "You remember the woman at Margate whom I suspected for the same reason. No powder on her nose — that proved to be the correct solution."' Or have a go at both! For details, contact Brian Scrivener (94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ; TheFormulary@aol.com). The closing date is 30 June 2003.

Sherlock Holmes in Trouble by Mark Long and Emil Wolk will have its world premiere at the Royal Exchange Theatre (St Anne's Square, Manchester M2 7DH; phone 0161 833 9833) from 2 July to 9 August. There's a website at www.royalexchange.co.uk. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Tim Kelly will be staged at the Pioneer Playhouse (840 Stanford Road, Danville, KY 40422, USA) from 15 to 26 July.

The Poor Folk Upon The Moors will picnic on Dartmoor on 21 June (get details from Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR; Cherry@arthurc.fsnet.co.uk). On the same day, **The Illustrious Clients** will also enjoy a picnic (Steven Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607, USA). On 28 June **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will discuss 'The Speckled Band' (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). The following day sees the third annual cricket match at West Wycombe, between **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** and **The P G Wodehouse Society**. **The Diogenes Club of the Monterey Peninsula** will meet on 12 July (Michael H Kean, 2040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953, USA; mkean@ctb.com). On 19 July **221B** will explore 'Five Orange Pips' locations around Horsham (Jane and Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU). Joel and Carolyn Senter announce that the next meeting of **Sherlock Holmes and All that Jazz** will be an informal gathering at the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival in Davenport Iowa, between 24 and 27 July (the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society, PO Box 3688, Davenport, IA 52808, USA; info@bixsociety.org).

Periodicals received. ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Research File***, 2003 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN.). ***The Magic Door***, Spring 2003 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Peter Wood, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada). ***The Parallelogram***, June 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***Communication***, May/June 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, May 2003 and June 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; e-mail dgsharpe@rocketmail.com). ***Mayday Mayday***, May 2003 (incorporating ***The Chronicler***) and June 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

Ineffable Twaddle, June 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The School Report***, Summer Term 2003 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The New Baker Street Pillar Box***, December 2002 *[*sic*]* (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU) *[*material as stimulating, controversial and sometimes infuriating as ever, most of it by Philip Weller himself*]*. ***The Camden House Journal***, June 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, June 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA).

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 233 17 July 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail (and note the different e-mail address).

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Peter Blau notes the death on 13 June 2002 of **Alvin Sapinsley**, who in 1955 adapted Gerald (H F) Heard's novel *A Taste for Honey* for television as *The Sting of Death*, with Boris Karloff as the elderly Sherlock Holmes, and in 1976 wrote the enjoyable television film *Sherlock Holmes in New York*, in which Roger Moore was cast against type as Holmes but played the rôle with great relish.

The actor was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours last month, and is now **Sir Roger Moore**.

After two volumes of the (no doubt ghosted) memoirs of the Victorian detective James McLevy, on 21 July Mercat Press will publish *The McGovan Casebook: Experiences of a Detective in Victorian Edinburgh* by James McGovan. The exploits of McGovan in the 1860s and 70s are as exciting and as well written as those of McLevy a decade or more earlier, and they admirably convey the beauty and the squalor of the city that Arthur Conan Doyle knew so well. Remember John Clay, 'smasher and forger'? Try this: 'We had got hold of a woman "smashing," or passing base sovereigns in the High Street, and ran her in to see what she had about her.' That gives a good idea too of McGovan's way with a narrative, grabbing the reader's attention from the start and never letting go. He was a master story-teller — and perhaps it really shouldn't come as a surprise to learn that 'James McGovan' was not a detective at all, but a professional writer and musician named William C Honeyman! His *Strathspey and Reel Tutor* and *Scottish Violin Makers* are apparently still in print, now rejoined after eighty years by McGovan. This strong, attractive paperback is introduced by one of today's leading crime novelists, Quintin Jardine, and there's an informative afterword by Mary Anne Alburger, who suggests some influences that McGovan may have had on the character of Sherlock Holmes. Highly recommended, along with the adventures of James McLevy. (Mercat Press, 10 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7AL; £9.99.)

Leslie S Klinger, deserving winner of this year's Special Sherlock Award for his excellent annotated edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library* (Gasogene Books, PO Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; $22.95), has been commissioned to prepare *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* for publication in three volumes by W W Norton (500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110, USA) in Autumn 2004. As the title implies, this edition aims to replace W S Baring-Gould's masterwork and is aimed at a more general readership than the Reference Library.

Mad For A Mystery (Suite D 308, 3805 Marlborough Drive NE, Calgary, Alberta, T2A 5M4, Canada) has published *Curious Incidents 2*, seven new Sherlock Holmes stories edited by J R Campbell and Charles Prepolec, priced at Cdn$20.00 within Canada, US$17.00 airmail to the USA, or US$20.00 elsewhere. The stories, by Peter Calamai, Regina Stinson, J R Campbell, M J Elliott, Valerie J Patterson, David N Cisler and James R Stefanie, are illustrated by the excellent Philip Cornell.

The Complete Sherlock Holmes on CD-ROM by Arthur Conan Doyle was published last month by Academy Electronic Publications Ltd, PO Box 1973, Sheffield S10 1WT. The price is £20.00.

Brian Pugh notes that *Raffles: The Amateur Cracksman* by E W Hornung has been issued as a Penguin Classic at £7.99, annotated and introduced by Richard Lancelyn Green (Penguin Books Ltd, 80 The Strand, London WC2R 0RL).

Available from Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) are *Sherlock Holmes' Solutions from the Sussex Downs*, new stories by Balaji Narasimhan ($16.95), and *The Crowded Box-Room: A Checklist of Sherlockian Publications and their Publishers* by Don Hobbs ($27.50). Check the shop's website at www.sherlock-holmes.com.

More recent(ish) and forthcoming titles. *Sherlock Holmes: Mysteries of the Victorian Era* by Rock Dilisio (Writers Showcase Press, c/o Bertrams the Book Wholesaler, The Nest, Rosary Road, Norwich NR1 1TF; June 2002; price unknown). *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes* by Peter Ridgway (Ashgate, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 3HR; June 2003; £45.00). *Homing in on Holmes: Shakespearean and Other Literary Investigations with the Master Sleuth* by Robert F Fleissner (Edwin Mellen Press, Unit 17, Llambed Industrial Estate, Lampeter, Dyfed SA48 8LT; July 2003; £69.95). *The Sherlock Holmes Triviography and Quiz Book* by Kathleen Kaska (Taylor Trade Publishing, c/o Plymbridge Distributors Ltd, Estover, Plymouth PL6 7PZ; November 2003; £7.95). The same publishers also have *Sherlock Holmes: In His Own Words and in the Words of Those Who Knew Him*, edited by Barry Day ($24.95).

There are new catalogues available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), *[*no Sherlockiana this time*]*, and **P M Gannon** (36 Gordon Street, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 0ED) *[*mostly Holmes and Doyle*]*.

I'm sorry to report that **Crime in Store**, one of London's few specialist crime fiction bookshops, went into voluntary liquidation this month.

Heather Owen has forwarded a letter from **Mr D R Browne** (20 Mulberry Way, South Woodford, London E18 1ED) listing some volumes of *The Strand Magazine* (20, 21, 22, 23 and 26 — July 1900 to June 1902, plus July - Dec. 1903), *The London Magazine*, *Harmsworth Magazine*, *The Royal Magazine* and *Black & White Magazine*. No prices are given. Please contact Mr Browne if you're interested.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 55 features the classic image of Christopher Lee as Count Dracula bending lustfully over Linda Hayden's lovely throat — the lead article being A L Blake on 'Sherlock Holmes and the Vampire Connection'. Also in this issue — Paul M Chapman looks at the vampire-hunter as detective; Robert Sanderson considers Lady Molly of Scotland Yard; Gavin Collinson examines the comedy *Without a Clue;* Mark Campbell interviews Sue Grafton; M J Elliott contributes a new Holmes story; Calum McLeod keeps an eye on the novels of Cath Staincliffe; Jim Coffin illuminates **The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach** ... and there's material from Pat Ward, Kathryn White, Roger Forsdyke, Mike Ripley, Bob Byrne, David Stuart Davies, Moriarty and me. This is the last issue from PMH Publications. From no. 56 the magazine will be published six times a year by Atlas Publishing, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO

Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). Look out for *Sherlock* in British branches of Borders, and check the website at www.sherlockholmes.com, which will be up and running on 21 July.

The justly celebrated **Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company** has opened a second branch, at The Baker Street Emporium, sited within the former cinema at Baker Street Station, just along from the Sherlock Holmes statue. The specialist material remains at the original premises at 230 Baker Street, while the new shop, **The Sherlock Holmes Emporium,** aims to cater more to tourists. Apart from a grand range of Sherlockian goods and souvenirs, it has a nice set of the hearth at 221B where you can have your photo taken with Sherlock Holmes — or, to be accurate, with Stewart Quentin Holmes. Both shops are well worth a visit. The address of the Emporium is 4-5 Station Approach, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LD.

Jazz fans will enjoy listening to *The Sherlock Holmes Suite* by Alan Barnes, released as a double CD by Woodville Records Ltd (146 Kings Avenue, London SW12 0BA) at £16.00 post-paid. Actually I suspect that quite a lot of people will like this jazz interpretation, played by an eight-piece band led by the composer, and interspersed with narration derived from the Canon and read by Alan Mitchell. *[*Is he the one-time vocalist with the Temperance Seven? No, probably not.*]* The music sounds good to me — David Newton's wild piano on 'The Tiger of San Pedro' is terrific — though I suspect that I might want to skip the narration after a few listenings. Fortunately you can do that with a CD. Barry Hatcher of the Jazz Partnership says, 'Sometime in July, the album will be available from specialist record stores where I understand the price will be in the region of £18.' Better buy it direct from Woodville Records. It's different and it's fun.

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen is released in America today. Richard Roxburgh becomes the third actor, after Christopher Lee and Richard E Grant, to play both Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes.

Brian Pugh reports that the July issue of *Country Quest: Your Wales and Borders Magazine* has a three-page article about Conan Doyle and Wales by John Stoker of **The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, and that *Heritage: Britain's History and Countryside* (no date mentioned) contains what is evidently the same article, mixing up W G Grace and W C Fields, that features in *Realm: The Magazine of Britain's History and Countryside* issue no. 111 (see DM 232).

Roy Simmons very kindly sent a copy of the Summer 2003 issue of *Evergreen: Britain's Lovely Little Green Quarterly*, containing a nice four-page article about the cinema career of Nigel Bruce by Simon Lillywhite (P O Box 52, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 1YQ; £3.50).

Listen out for a four-part series on unusual aspects of forensic science, to be broadcast on the BBC World Service from the beginning of August. There should be some Sherlockian content. (You can find out more from the producer, Alexandra Feacham, at BBC Radio Science, Room 630, SE Wing, Bush House, Strand, London WC2B 4PH.)

The lovely Malcolm Cooper miniature of the *Sherlock Holmes* pub in London is long unavailable, but Lilliput Lane has recently issued a similar model (L2611), four inches high. Photographs show a number of differences from Malcolm Cooper's, most obviously a double-decker bus rather improbably parked outside. It looks very nice indeed in the photos I've seen. You can get details from The Lilliput Lane Collectors Club, Brunthill Road, Kingstown, Carlisle CA3 0EN. I gather that the retail price is £49.99.

Following up last issue's mention of the barony of Pencelli being offered for sale: it appears that though Pencelli Castle has been owned by the Pitchford family since the 1930s no one has yet offered evidence that Arthur Conan Doyle visited the place or took the Baskerville name from it. This manorial title may be genuine, but a lot of them aren't. Jean Upton recommends a look at the British Feudal Investments website at nobletitles.com/manorialsocietyscam.htm. *[*Thanks also to Peter Blau for his investigations.*]*

Takeshi Shimizu passes on news of software, developed at Edinburgh's Joseph Bell Centre for Forensic Statistics and Legal Reasoning, that will be able to use lateral thinking to help detectives investigate suspicious deaths. It has no name yet, apparently.

The Assorted and Stradivarious of Verona have found a permanent venue: the Live Literature Association at Vicolo Pomo d'Oro. Contact Patricia Guy and Michaell Benson at Via Fama 11, 37121 Verona, Italy, or at benguy@libero.it.

News of a couple of new societies. Susan Diamond, Peg Duthie and Davice Sharpe have formed **The Mycrofts of the Midway**, whose members are all graduates of the University of Chicago (Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; e-mail dgsharpe@rocketmail.com). And Simon Hall announces the formation of **The Baker Street Fellowship**, which meets twice a year at the *Hearty Good Fellow* in the little cathedral town of Southwell, and plans excursions and other events (Simon Hall, 67 Lower Kirtlington Road, Southwell, Notts.; sdehall2000@yahoo.co.uk). The Fellowship has an invitation-only branch for fans of the Rathbone movies, **The Singular and Extraordinary League of the Silk Scarf**.

The next meeting of **Sherlock Holmes and All that Jazz** will be an informal gathering at the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival in Davenport Iowa, between 24 and 27 July; contact the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society for details, at PO Box 3688, Davenport, IA 52808, USA; e-mail info@bixsociety.org. (Contact **Sherlock Holmes and All That Jazz** via Classic Specialties, PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com.) On 25 July **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will look at their titular story, 'Black Peter' (Michael Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). The Maiwand Luncheon of **The Friends of Dr Watson** on 26 July will again be held at the Caravan Serai Afghan Restaurant in Paddington Street, just off Baker Street (Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ; TheFormulary@aol.com).

The 2003 running of the *BSI Silver Blaze* will take place at the racecourse at Saratoga, New York, on 2-3 August (Lou Lewis, 11 Raymond Avenue, #24, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, USA). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will meet as usual at T S McHugh's on 11 August (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Pleasant Places of Florida** plan their first annual Film Festival for 23 August at St Petersburg College, Seminole (Michael Bryan, 11959 84th Avenue North, Seminole, FL 33772, USA).

Periodicals received. ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, July 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, July 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2003 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, July 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2003 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, July 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Communication***, May/June 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Carl Heifetz, 1220 Winding Willow Drive, Trinity, FL 34655, USA) *[*Carl has taken over editorship from Wanda & Jeff Dow*]*. ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 2, 2003 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe, Hellebækgade 19, 3.tv., 2200 Kbh. N, Denmark). ***Canadian Holmes***, St Jean Baptiste Day (Summer) 2003 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada) *[*the 100th issue of a journal that's taken its place among the half-dozen best in the field*]*.

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 234 17 August 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail (and note the different e-mail address). I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

I'm delighted to tell those who don't already know that our friends **Evelyn Herzog ASH BSI** and **John Baesch BSI** will be married next month. Our sincere felicitations!

Peter Blau has alerted me to the death on 15 July of one of the DM's earliest American subscribers, **Syd Goldberg**. To my regret we never met (though at one time Syd lived not far from my mother-in-law), but his correspondence was always friendly and amusing. Peter notes that Syd has bequeathed his substantial collection to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

From Terri Haugen I learn of the death on 2 June of **Carol Darlington**, less than a month after her husband Frank. Though not a native Sherlockian, Carol was a rock of support for Frank.

Also from Peter Blau: at the White House on 23 July President Bush awarded the Medal of Freedom, the USA's highest civilian honour, to eleven people, including **Charlton Heston** (Sherlock Holmes on stage and screen in *The Crucifer of Blood*) and **Jacques Barzun** (noted critic and scholar of crime fiction).

There have been essays on the non-Canonical Holmes — Ellery Queen's introduction to *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes* in 1944, Jon Lellenberg's *Sherlock Holmes in Parody & Pastiche* in 1978, my own 'Romancing the Holmes' in 2001 — but *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes: Pastiches, Parodies and Copies* by Peter Ridgway Watt & Joseph Green is the first really substantial survey. The authors are unknown to me, but they've certainly done their homework, helped, I suspect, by Ronald De Waal's invaluable bibliography *The Universal Sherlock Holmes*. There's a lot of stuff mentioned in these 368 pages that was new to me, and more that I know of but have never seen. (Have *you* read 'Sherlock Holmes' Great Canadian Adventure' by Jack Batten & Michael Bliss, or 'The Villars-Manningham Papers' by Jay Shakley?) The book is divided into chapters covering a) pastiche based on Watson's unchronicled cases, b) pastiche set in the Canonical time-frame, c) pastiche set before or after that period, c) pastiche centred on a character other than Holmes, d) 'parodies and impostors', and e) 'copies and rivals'. Solar Pons is classed with parodies and impostors, despite his creator's firm statement that parody was not intended. You could call him an impostor, I suppose, but a tribute would be more accurate. At any rate, he receives respectful coverage, though there's no mention of the posthumous Derleth collection *The Final Adventures of Solar Pons* or *The Original Text Solar Pons Omnibus*. Nor of the fact that several of Pons's best adventures derive from Holmes's unchronicled exploits.

Inevitably there are omissions. Gerald Frow's two *Young Sherlock* novels, Watkin Jones's *The Case of the Scarlet Woman*, Sydney Hosier's *Elementary, Mrs Hudson* and its sequels, Nicholas Meyer's *The Canary Trainer* (though Sam Siciliano's simultaneous take on the same theme, *The Angel of the Opera*, is included), and others. There are errors too. Siciliano's novel is given as *The Angel at the Opera*, for instance. But *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes* is a magnificent achievement, and Messrs Watt and Green have done a great service to all serious scholars of the world-wide phenomenon that is Sherlock Holmes. The fact that they like *The Adventures of Creighton Holmes*, which I remember as really bad; suggests that maybe it's time to give it another try. At any rate, their praise for my wife Jean's delightful 'archy & mehitabel' pastiches is fully justified. And the mention of my own contribution to the apocrypha is a bonus. *The Alternative Sherlock Holmes* is published at £45.00 by Ashgate, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 3HR.

Alan Stockwell lives in the same village as our Merchandising Officer, Lynne Godden. No doubt that's coincidental to the fact that he's written a collection of new Holmes stories called *The Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes* (UPSO Ltd, 5 Stirling Road, Castleham Business Park, St Leonard's-on-Sea, Sussex TN38 9NW; £7.99). It's an attractively produced 250-page paperback, which I shall review in the next DM.

Ute Germann reports that *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* by Jamyang Norbu is due in April next year in a German edition, as *Sherlock Holmes: Das Geheimis des Dalai Lama* from Bastei Lubbe (Verlagsgruppe Lübbe GmbH & Co. KG, Bergisch Gladbach, Germany) at 7.90 Euros.

M C Black notes that the latest **Bibliophile Books** catalogue (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; orders@bibliophilebooks.com) includes *The Doctor and the Detective: A Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* by Daniel Stashower reduced to £8.00, and *The Hound of the Baskervilles According to Spike Milligan* reduced to £2.00. If you order copies, please also quote reference 1045. *[*I think these are the paperback editions.*]*

New from **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** (B W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN) is *Honouring a Great Man*, the official video of the unveiling of the world's first public statue of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in both PAL and NTSC formats. It runs for about 70 minutes and includes the speeches at the statue and at the buffet, interviews, and footage of the Conan Doyle Collection, Windlesham, the golf club, the foundry where the statue was made, and scenes in and around Crowborough. Cost is: UK £16.50; elsewhere £20.70 or $34.00 or 27.00 Euros. Please allow 8 - 9 weeks for delivery. Prices include postage. Sterling cheques should be payable to The ACD Memorial Fund. US dollars and Euros in cash only, please.

The fourth volume in the Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series, to be published in January, will be *The Six Napoleons*, edited by William J Hyder.

Those interested in such things should also look at Randall Stock's *Conan Doyle Manuscripts: A Checklist of Facsimiles of the Sherlock Holmes Stories* at http://members.aol.com/shbest/ref/rfmsalph.htm.

There have been attempts to 'prove' that Sherlock Holmes was implacably opposed to the Freemasons and attempts to 'prove' that he was himself a Mason. That must remain a moot point, but it is a fact that from 1887 until 1911 his creator was a Mason. Issue no. 6 of *MQ*, the official magazine of the United Grand Lodge of England, includes 'Elementary, My Dear Brother', a very nicely presented five-page article by Yasha Beresiner on the Masonic

career of Arthur Conan Doyle. *MQ* is published by MDA Communications, Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London.SE1 7SJ.

On 12 October Roger Llewellyn will be at the **Palace Theatre** in Westcliff-on-Sea with David Stuart Davies's admirable play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* (box office 01702 351135). And in December the play will be in the West End! For seven nights, from 1 to 7 December, it will be at the **Jermyn Theatre** in Jermyn Street, near Piccadilly Circus, at 8 o'clock nightly with a 4.00 pm matinée on Saturday. Check the theatre's website for details (it's a small theatre, so don't miss out).

Members of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** taking part in the 'Lend Me Your Ears' weekend visit to Merseyside next month should be aware that in the past couple of weeks the estuary has been subject to an invasion of Lion's Mane jellyfish — our old friend *cyanea capillata*. According to the BBC news. 'Experts say those stung should pour vinegar on the affected area, which kills off the stinging cells. For really bad cases medical attention is advised.' *[*The vinegar doesn't sound as comforting as J G Wood's brandy.*]*

There may be a few places left at the symposium, *From Gillette to Brett: Sherlock Holmes on Stage, Screen and Radio*, to be held at the Omni Indianapolis North Hotel (8181 N Shadeland Avenue, Indianapolis, IN) on 8 & 9 November. Speakers include Gordon Kelley (author of *Sherlock Holmes: Screen & Sound Guide*), David Stuart Davies (*Starring Sherlock Holmes*); Chris Gullo (Peter Cushing's biographer); Paul Herbert (Sherlockian scholar) and Susan Dahlinger (William Gillette scholar). Special guests are **Edward Hardwicke** and **Nicholas Meyer**. The cost, excluding accommodation, is $99.00. Send checks, payable to Wessex Press, to Steven Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA.

Michael Whelan — 'Wiggins' of **The Baker Street Irregulars** (7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) — has announced that the BSI's 70th anniversary dinner, celebrating the 150th birthday of Sherlock Holmes, will be held at the Union League Club in New York on Friday 16 January 2004. The weekend's events will begin with the seventh Distinguished Speaker Lecture, delivered the previous evening at the Williams Club by John Berendt, author of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, and a Holmes devotee.

The BSI's dinner is invitation only, of course, but there are Sherlockians who prefer the more relaxed (raucous?) atmosphere of **The Baskerville Bash**, which will be held on the same evening at the Manhattan Club. The BBC (Baskerville Bash Committee) is already accepting reservations: send a check for $70.00, payable to Maribeau Briggs Shrawder, to P J Perry (346 East 87th Street #4-A, New York, NY 10238, USA).

A reminder that **The Rashers' Table** meets every Friday at 7.00 am *[*yes, breakfast time*]* at assorted Nashville eateries. If you're in the area and would like to join in, contact Davice Sharpe (110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA; dgsharpe@rocketmail.com).

In September, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** intend to visit Paris for a weekend, at the invitation of **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** (details from Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR; poorfolk@talk21.com). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will meet at T S McHugh's on 8 September (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). The Russian expedition of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will leave London on 12 September and return on 20 September (Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU; e-mail fmhc@acd-221b.info). Also on 12 September, **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).

The Diogenes Club of the Monterey Peninsula will meet the following day (Michael H Kean, 2040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953, USA; mkean@ctb.com). **The Illustrious Clients** will discuss 'The Cardboard Box' on 20 September (Steven Doyle at 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607, USA). **The Red Circle** will hold a Lodge on 19 September at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, when 'The Final Problem' will be the Adventure of the Evening (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830; pblau@dgsys.com).

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2003 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) *[*Douglas G Greene on female sleuths, Stu Shiffman and Burt Wolder on Mycroft and his offspring, David W Merrell and Ralph E Edwards each with a new explanation of 'James' in 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' — and much more, all of it good*]*. ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, August 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA) *[*a new regular media alert by Dean Richardson, with the wonderful title 'Shinwell Before Using', and a nice concise account by Davice Sharpe of Queen Mary's Doll's House*]*. ***Tonga Times***, Summer 2003 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E 19th Street #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA; minitongasociety@aol.com) *[*the first part of an excellent article by Sherry Rose-Bond on 'Creating an Authentic 221B'; photographs of a splendid miniature 221B created by Oksana Korolenko of Perm, Russia; much else of interest to miniaturists and other Sherlockians*]*.

Grimpen Mire Gazette, April 2003 (**Hugo's Companions**, Fred Anderson, 920 West Wilson Avenue #338, Chicago, IL 60640, USA) *[*I think this reached me by courtesy of long-time Companion John Brousch, who was honoured in January with a Sherlockian 'This Is Your Life'; there are also reports of more regular meetings and a copy of the programme for the opening of the exhibition 'Arthur Conan Doyle — Beyond Sherlock Holmes' recently staged at the Newberry Library in Chicago*]*. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Summer 2003 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, Nicholas Utechin, Highfield Farmhouse, 23 Highfield Avenue, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LR) *[*four pages of well-merited tributes to the late Geoffrey Stavert; an excellent survey by Wladimir Bogomoletz of the Fort of Agra and the Indian Mutiny; Dana Richards on Holmes's puzzle-solving and Nino Cirone on Holmes's purpose in life; Anna Smyth's nice summary of the year 1903*]*.

The Parallelogram, July 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA) *[*interesting and amusing brief looks at 'The Blue Carbuncle' and 'The Man with the Twisted Lip', a summary of published comments on 'The Speckled Band', and devastating reviews of the films* ***A Case of Evil*** *(aka* ***Sherlock****) and* ***The Adventures of Gerard*****]*. ***The Crier***, Summer 2003 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Brenda Rossini, 550 Sheridan Road, Winnetka, IL 60093, USA) *[*a nice report on the Conan Doyle exhibition at the Newberry Library in Chicago, the dinner that launched it, and the Watsonian Weekend, plus a review of* ***The Sign of Four*** *at the Apple Tree Theater*]*. ***Ineffable Twaddle***, August 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA) *[*Lloyd R Hedburg considers Holmes's logic; Stu Shiffman reviews Clive Nolan & Oliver Wakeman's CD* ***The Hound of the Baskervilles*** *(see DM 219)*]*.

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, July 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 235 20 September 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail (and note the different e-mail address).

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Anthony D Howlett, our Society's President, died on 21 August after a long and painful illness. Tony and his wife Freda were among that small, august group who founded the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, and Tony's humour, intelligence, organising ability and skill at presentation — always solidly but unobtrusively supported by Freda — were largely responsible for establishing the Society's unique character. What made him the perfect Sherlockian, though, was his gift for making and keeping friends. He loved to share his enthusiasms, and he set a standard of generosity and approachability that the rest of us can only try to emulate. Together with the late Thomas L Stix Jr, Tony helped bring about the close family relationship between our Society and The Baker Street Irregulars, and it was fitting that in 1994 Tom, whose own investiture was 'The Norwood Builder', should invest Tony into the BSI as 'John Hector McFarlane'. A memorial service will be arranged.

Trish and Jay Pearlman report the death on 27 August of **John Brousch**, a veteran of the Sherlock Holmes societies in Chicago, who was honoured back in January by **Hugo's Companions** with a Sherlockian *This Is Your Life*.

Constance Chapman, who died on 10 August aged 92, made just one contribution to Sherlockian drama in her long acting career: she was in the cast of Felix Felton's six-part radio serial *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1957, with Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley as Holmes and Watson.

I'm pleased to pass on the news, though rather belated, that our subscribers **Erin O'Neill** and **Malcolm Ellis** were married on 24 July. Erin and Malcolm are stalwarts of **The Sydney Passengers**, now living and working in England.

Apologies: *The Doctor and the Detective: A Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, mentioned in DM 234 as available from **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; orders@bibliophilebooks.com) at the bargain price of £8.00, is of course by Martin Booth, not Daniel Stashower.

The Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes (UPSO Ltd, 5 Stirling Road, Castleham Business Park, St Leonard's-on-Sea, Sussex TN38 9NW; £7.99) is a very enjoyable collection of fifteen stories by an author new to me, Alan Stockwell. The style is an acceptable simulacrum of Dr Watson's, and Mr Stockwell clearly knows his period and his Canon. He also has an engagingly inventive imagination. I particularly like his explanation of the case of Mr. James Phillimore, who, stepping back into his own house to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world. *the Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes* can be bought direct from the author for £9.99, including postage, at Vesper Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8PU.

Another title to look out for is *Sit-Down Comedy*, a collection of short stories by stand-up comedians, edited by Malcolm Hardee and John Fleming (Ebury Press, £7.99). One critic says: 'The gem of the collection is Simon Munnery's "The True Confessions of Sherlock Holmes", in which the revered detective's coke habit is his defining feature and he only solves crimes by accident.'

The lead article in *Sherlock* issue no. 56 is 'Sherlock and Women' by Sarah Neville, and the cover illustration is a very nice still of Basil Rathbone and Ida Lupino in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Also in this issue — Paul M Chapman looks at Holmes and the mysterious orient; Robert Sanderson considers Earl Derr Biggers' Charlie Chan novels, and M J Elliott examines the Charlie Chan movies; George Kaplan contributes a new Holmes story, pitting him against a Chinese adversary; Calum McCloud examines Robert Wilson's novels; Peter Lovesey discusses his own detective Peter Diamond; Gavin Collinson wonders what might have been on the silver screen; David Stuart Davies views 1950s cops on British TV; jazzman Alan Barnes explains his *Sherlock Holmes Suite*; Roger Dobson illuminates **The Lost Club** ... and there's material from Pat Ward, Roger Forsdyke, Mike Ripley, Bob Byrne, Moriarty and me. And I should mention the inspired illustrations of Chris Senior. This is the first issue from Atlas Publishing Ltd, who publish the magazine six times a year, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). Look out for *Sherlock* in British branches of Borders, and check the website at www.sherlockholmes.com.

There's little specifically Sherlockian in *CADS* no. 44, but Geoff Bradley's magazine is a must for anyone interested in Crime And Detective Stories. It's available from Geoff (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA) for £5.00, payable to G H Bradley.

I'm sure Bert Coules won't mind my passing on the news that he's working on the scripts for a second series of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* for BBC Radio 4, again starring Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. *[*Bert's latest production is an excellent dramatisation of John Buchan's classic **The Three Hostages**, which concludes this weekend*]*

October sees two productions of William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes*, both on the other side of the Atlantic. The Crowded Kitchen Players will present the play at the **Mauch Chunk Opera House** in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania on 3, 4, 10 & 11 October at 8.00 pm, and on 5 & 12 October at 2.00 pm. Tickets can be ordered by phone on 610-395-7176 or 570-325-4439, or online at www.barliebwallace.com/ckp.html. Those interested in a theatre party on 5 October should contact Gideon Hill at onbridle@verizon.net>. *[*Yes, the town really is called Jim Thorpe.*]* **The Alley Theater** in Houston, Texas, will stage the play from 15 October to 2 November, with previews beginning on 10 October. Order tickets by phone on 713-228-8421 or online at www.alleytheater.org.

On 12 October Roger Llewellyn will be at the **Palace Theatre** in Westcliff-on-Sea with David Stuart Davies's admirable play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* (box office 01702 351135); and on 14 & 15 November he'll be at the Cramphorn Theatre in Chelmsford (box office 01245 606505).

I've been asked about the availability in Britain of the Rathbone films on video and DVD. Listed by MVC at www.mvc.co.uk are the following videos: *The Pearl of Death, The Scarlet Claw, Sherlock Holmes Faces Death, Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon, Dressed to Kill, The Woman in Green, Sherlock Holmes and the House of Fear [*sic*]*. And *Videolog* also lists *Terror by Night* and *Pursuit to Algiers*. MVC lists *The Pearl of Death, The Scarlet Claw, The House of Fear, Pursuit to Algiers, Sherlock Holmes Faces Death, Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon, Dressed to Kill, Terror by Night* and *The Woman in Green* as available on DVD. I've no information about forthcoming releases.

Derek Eve reminds me that the current catalogue from Past Times (Witney, Oxford OX29 7DW; website at www.past-times.com) lists the first twelve instalments of Granada's *the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with Jeremy Brett on six videos at £6.00 each (all six for £33.00) or DVDs at £10.00 each (all six for £55.00). They charge for postage, so you'd be better buying from one of Past Times' many shops. Avril Ashton points out that the whole Granada/Brett opus is available by post from Music & Memories (Good Music Record Co., Hays House, PO Box 99, ST Austell, Cornwall PL25 4BR; www.goodmusic.co.uk) on 23 videos at £10.00 each or DVDs at £13.95 each. I've found Choices Direct at www.choicesdirect.co.uk a reliable and cheap source of videos.

According to *The Times* on 6 September, Arthur Conan Doyle is no longer seriously suspected of perpetrating the Piltdown Man hoax. The principal suspects now are Charles Dawson, who discovered the fake fossils, and the zoologist Martin Hinton. On 25 November the 'fossils' themselves will go on display at the Natural History Museum in Kensington for the first time since the fraud was exposed in 1953.

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, the movie based on Alan Moore's graphic novels, will be released in the UK on 17 October. The principal characters are Allan Quartermain (Sean Connery), Captain Nemo (Naseeruddin Shah), Mina Harker (Peta Wilson), the Invisible Man (Tony Curran), Dorian Gray (Stuart Townsend), Tom Sawyer (Shane West), Dr Jekyll/Mr Hyde (Jason Flemyng), and their leader, the spymaster known as M (Richard Roxburgh). It's not giving too much away to say that although Sherlock Holmes doesn't appear there is a Holmesian connection.

M C Black notes that the specialist crime fiction bookshop Crime In Store, which was forced into liquidation in July, has reopened in the same premises in Store Street, but under new ownership and with a slight change of name. It is now **Crime On Store**, and you'll find it at 32 Store Street, London WC1E 7BS.

Mea culpa again. Those intending to enjoy the delights of **The Baskerville Bash** in New York on 16 January should note that I gave the wrong zip code for applications in DM 234. Send checks for $70.00, payable to Maribeau Briggs Shrawder, to P J Perry, 346 East 87th Street #4-A, New York, NY 10128-4844, USA.

I was recently honoured to be asked to join the ranks of Able Seamen (honorary members) of that admirable society **The Sydney Passengers**, alongside Michael Cox, Edward Hardwicke and Ian Richardson. Needless to say, I accepted gratefully.

Looking ahead a bit, Elliott Black advises me that on 29 February 2004 **Colonel Moran's Gun Club** will hold its quadrenniel Muskrat Hunt somewhere near Chicago. The time and location will be divulged later. For details contact Elliott at 2511 Windsor Lane, Northbrook, IL 60062, USA; e-mail eblack@embainc.com.

Our Society's next meeting will be held in Windsor on Saturday 18 October, when a panel of experts (or otherwise) will discuss that most vexed of the unrecorded cases 'The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant'.

On 20 September **The Illustrious Clients** discuss 'The Cardboard Box' over dinner (get details from Steven Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607, USA). **The Sydney Passengers** will hold Sherlock Holmes Retirement Centenary Dinner on 27 September (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly. NSW 2095, Australia). At the Fairway Quay in Belfast on 28 September **The Crew of the SS May Day** will examine 'The Empty House' and much else (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). On the same day **The Priory Scholars** will have lunch followed by a video presentation afternoon at The Cricketers in Leicester (Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

On 4 October **The Friends of Dr Watson** hold their Dr Watson Day in London, concluding with dinner at the Sherlock Holmes public house (Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ). **The Occupants of the Empty House** meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin on 10 October (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). On 13 October **The Sound of the Baskervilles** meet at T S McHugh's (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** will meet at Moran's restaurant in New York on 18 October (Catalina Hannan, 216 Purchase Street, Rye, NY 10580, USA) *[*this one is members and female guests only*]*. The same day sees the first activity of **The Northern Musgraves** for some time; they'll meet at the beautiful Victorian 'model' settlement of Saltaire near Bradford, to discuss the working classes in the Canon (Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP).

The Parallel Case of St Louis discuss 'The Engineer's Thumb' at The Big Sleep Bookstore on 20 October (Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** will meet on 24 October at the Franklin Inn Club in Philadelphia, when the topic will be 'The Cardboard Box'; **Mycroft's League** will meet for lunch that same day at noon at the Meredith Café of the Union League of Philadelphia, and on 25 October the League will consider 'The Devil's Foot' at a panel discussion led by noted toxicologist Marina Stajic BSI, at the College of Pharmacy at the University of Sciences of Philadelphia (for both the Sons and the league, Gideon Hill has the details at onbridle@verizon.net). The dinner meeting of **The Illustrious Clients** on 25 October is devoted to 'The Red Circle'. On the same day **The Criterion Bar Association** talks about 'The Norwood Builder', first published in *Collier's* 100 years ago (Brenda Rossini, 550 Sheridan Road, Winnetka, IL 60093, USA).

Periodicals received. ***The School Report***, Autumn Term 2003 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, September 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, September 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA). ***Mayday Mayday,*** September 2003, incorporating ***Chronicler***, September 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Camden House Journal***, August and September 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, September 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn & Winter issue 2003 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***Communication***, Special Tabloid Issue 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *[*This is another of the PPoF's dazzling spoof issues — and despite what I said in DM 233, Carl Heifetz has not permanently taken over editorship from Wanda & Jeff*]*. ***The Torr***, Autumn 2003 (**The Poor Folk upon the Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA). ***The Whaling News***, May, June, July and August 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn,** Michael Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, August 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 236 22 October 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail (and note the different e-mail address).

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

John Hawkesworth died on 30 September at the age of 82. His contribution to British film and television, as designer, writer and producer, includes *The Fallen Idol, The Third Man, Father Brown* and *Tiger Bay* for the cinema, and *Upstairs Downstairs, The Duchess of Duke Street, Danger UXB, By the Sword Divided* and *The Short Stories of Conan Doyle* for television. And of course Granada TV's *Sherlock Holmes* series. Michael Cox says: 'Over a period of nearly ten years John acted as consultant on the style of the whole adaptation, choosing the stories and writers while delivering eight of the scripts himself.'

Denis Quilley, who died on 5 October aged 75, acted in two Sherlockian productions in his long and distinguished career. In 1988 he was a dominating but very human Dr Leon Sterndale in Granada TV's *The Devil's Foot*, and seven years later he played Bob Carruthers in Bert Coules's adaptation of *The Solitary Cyclist* for BBC Radio 4, a part that showcased his fine singing voice.

Congratulations to **Richard Stacpoole-Ryding**, founder and 'Dresser' of **The Friends of Dr Watson**, who has been very modest about the fact that last year he was awarded the MBE by a Certain Gracious Lady for his services to the armed forces.

After the death of **Dame Jean Conan Doyle** in November 1997, it was announced that she had left three Sherlock Holmes MSS to the British Library, a museum in Edinburgh and a museum in Portsmouth or Southsea; and letters and other papers to the British Library; and that six more Conan Doyle MSS will be sold and the proceeds shared among her chosen charities. The BL apparently is still waiting, but those six MSS will go under the hammer at Christie's in London on 19 November for the benefit of the RAF Benevolent Fund, the Not Forgotten Association, the RAF Association, the Elizabeth Finn Trust, Help the Hospices and the Royal Star & Garter Home, Richmond. They include two Brigadier Gerard stories, a poem: 'Ypres, September 1915', a 1900 article: 'A Glimpse of the Army', *The Maracot Deep* and *A Duet (With an Occasional Chorus).* For more details or to buy a catalogue, e-mail Clare Roberts at croberts@christies.com, or phone 020 7389 2117.

Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) have just released their eighth recording from the Sherlock Holmes Canon, a thoroughly engrossing unabridged reading of *The Sign of Four* by the excellent David Timson. The production, enhanced as always by atmospheric music — this time works by Paganini and Bella — is first-rate, and David Timson's narration is beautifully paced in this, the most exotic and most romantic of the long stories. His characterisation is wonderfully precise; if I single out Jonathan Small and old Sherman it's to show that both the major and the minor characters are fully individual and convincing. Mr Timson also wrote the perceptive and informative liner-notes. *The Sign of Four* is available on four cassettes at £11.99 or on four CDs at £16.99. David Timson's reading of *A Study in Scarlet* won Naxos the 2002 Audiobook of the Year Award. *The Sign of Four* is at least as good!

Thomas B Wheeler's book *Finding Sherlock's London* (see DM 230) is now available as an attractive 108-page paperback, 9"x 6", priced at $12.95 or £10.99. Mr Wheeler lists an astonishing 200 Sherlockian sites, both by adventure and by the nearest Underground station, identified, as he says, 'with humble detective skills, a 1902 London street map, and a large magnifying glass'. The book is essentially a gazetteer, to take along on a tour of Holmes's London — a pilgrimage of several days; every location has the appropriate, accurate information from the Canon. (Mary Morstan's name is given twice as 'Morrison', but that's the only error I've spotted.) *Finding Sherlock's London* is an excellent traveller's tool. You can order it directly from the publisher iUniverse at the website www.iuniverse.com, or write to iUniverse Inc., 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln, NE 68512, USA.

As mentioned in DM 234, the next volume in the BSI Manuscript Series is *The Six Napoleons* edited by William Hyder of **The Six Napoleons** of Baltimore and due in January. Bill notes that besides the facsimile MS, the book includes a chapter on notes on Conan Doyle's writing practices, the changes he made in the story and the changes imposed by the editor of *The Strand Magazine*, plus articles on radio dramatisations of 'The Six Napoleons', the statue-duplicating machine that lost Conan Doyle money but suggested the plot for the story, the story of the Borgias and their black pearl, the world of Victorian journalism, and a survey of the Italian community in Victorian London. *The Six Napoleons* can be ordered from The Baker Street Irregulars, c/o Calabash Press, PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., Canada V0K 1A0 — or check the BSI website at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. The price is $35.00 plus postage at $8.00 within North America or $9.50 elsewhere.

I can thoroughly recommend our Society's latest handbook *Lend Me Your Ears*, edited and largely written by Richard Lancelyn Green, with contributions from Bernard Davies, Oscar Ross, Derek Hinrich, Eddie Maguire, Auberon Redfearn and Marina Stajić. It will certainly be the standard source of information about the Holmesian connection with Merseyside. Moreover it's very readable, splendidly illustrated, and full of fascinating facts. Copies are available from the Merchandising Officer, Lynne Godden (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Kent TN27 8QE) priced at: UK £13.50; Europe £14.50; USA $31.00; elsewhere £17.50. Prices include postage. Sterling cheques and US dollar checks should be payable to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

Peter Blau reports: 'Philip Bergem's 56-page pamphlet *The Family and Residences of Arthur Conan Doyle* offers some of the results of his continuing research on the family, birth, marriage and death dates of the Doyles and Conan Doyles, and information about residences, military service, and gravestone inscriptions. It is available from the author (3829 172nd Avenue NW, Andover, MN 55304); the postpaid cost is $22.50 ($23.00 to Canada), and it's also available (£13.00 plus shipping) from Rupert Books www.rupert-books.co.uk.'

Also from Peter: 'Derham Groves recommends (and so do I) a website at www.crimefactory.net that offers a special Sherlockian issue with interesting contributions from Sherlockians. Some of the material (and other material that's not available at the website) will be published in he catalogue for an exhibition on Sherlockian private presses at the University of Melbourne in April.'

The 2003 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual* from **The Baker Street Irregulars** is *'The Strength and Activity of Youth': The Junior Sherlockian Movement* edited by Stephen Clarkson — 'a walk down Memory Lane to those long-gone days of the sixties and seventies when "youth must be served" was the byword. Foment in the air affected even the world of Sherlockiana, as young men and women reached out to become part of the Sherlockian scene. In a *Rashomon*-like fashion the stories of such groups as **The Baker Street Pageboys**, **The Trifling Monographs**, **The Three Students Plus** and **The Three Garridebs** unfold. The tales of disappointment and triumph are shared from the distance of decades. Many of those eager youths are today's leading Sherlockians.' It sounds fascinating (well, I was there, you see ...). *'The Strength and Activity of Youth'* costs $11.00 within the USA or $12.00 elsewhere (prices include postage), from *The Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA. Or on-line at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. They take Visa, Mastercard or US dollar checks.

Early next year **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** will publish *Serpentine Musings: An Anthology from the Journal of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Susan Diamond and Marilynne McKay. The 2004 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual* will be a history of the ASH edited by Susan Rice. More on these as it reaches me!

The Daily Mail is running a 25-week promotion, offering each week a classic of children's literature in a nice hardback edition at £2.30 when you buy the paper. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is due some time before Christmas. Check your local newsagent's.

Georgina Doyle, the widow of Sir Arthur's nephew Brigadier John Doyle, has filled a gap left by the existing biographies. *Out of the Shadows: The Story of Arthur Conan Doyle's First Family* draws on diaries and letters of Sir Arthur's daughter Mary, his son Kingsley, his brother Innes, and others, as well as the fruits of Mrs Doyle's personal research to give fuller information about his family life during the years before his second marriage in 1907. The book is due for publication in the new year, thanks in part to **The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection** at the Toronto Public Library. At 3.00 pm on 25 October — Saturday next — Mrs Doyle will be at the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium at Toronto Reference Library in Yonge Street to talk about *Out of the Shadows*. All are welcome, and admission is free.

Hirayama Yuichi tells me that he has just published volume 13 of *The Shoso-in Bulletin*, which is perhaps the most genuinely international Sherlockian periodical. It's available at $13.00 plus postage from Classic Specialties, (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). John Hall will be acting as British agent for *The Shoso-in Bulletin*. Drop him a line at 20, Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR. Yuichi notes that next year's *Bulletin*, volume 14, will be the last.

The holiday issue of *The Strand Magazine* (PO Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012-1418, USA) features fiction by John Mortimer, Ray Bradbury and Ruth Rendell, a Sherlock Holmes story by Martin Edwards, an article about Bram Stoker, a feature on Tommy and Tuppence Beresford, interviews with John Mortimer and Joss Ackland, and an extensive review section. Check the website at www.strandmag.com and the on-line bookshop at www.shopmysteries.com.

Chuck Kovacic, founder of **The Baker Street Builders** and creator of one of the most impressive re-creations of the Baker Street sitting-room at his home in California, offers Sherlock Holmes mysteries for conference, business events and so on, with himself as a convincing-looking Holmes. Have a look at www.generalpattoncorporateprog.com/Sherlock_Holmes.htm, or write to 9337 Sophia Avenue, North Hills. CA 91343, USA.

Roger Llewellyn will return to the **Cramphorn Theatre** in Chelmsford on the 14 and 15 November with David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* The box office phone number is 01245 606505. For seven nights, from 1 to 7 December, Roger will be at the **Jermyn Street Theatre** in Jermyn Street, near Piccadilly Circus, at 8 o'clock nightly with a 4.00 pm matinée on Saturday. Check the theatre's website for details (it's a small theatre, so don't miss out).

The Chicago 'Silver Blaze' will see its 45th annual running on Saturday 17 April at Hawthorne Race Course. By no coincidence at all, the **STUD-Watsonian Weekend** will be held from 16 to 18 April, with the annual STUD dinner on the Friday at the Sheraton Four Points in Schiller Park — also the venue for the Fortescue Honours Brunch on the Sunday. For details of this increasingly popular jollification, contact Allan Devitt and Susan Diamond at 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA. Or e-mail szdiamond@comcast.net.

The Sons of the Copper Beeches will meet on 24 October at the Franklin Inn Club in Philadelphia, when the topic will be 'The Cardboard Box'; **Mycroft's League** will meet for lunch that same day at noon at the Meredith Café of the Union League of Philadelphia, and on 25 October the League will consider 'The Devil's Foot' at a panel discussion led by noted toxicologist Marina Stajić BSI, at the College of Pharmacy at the University of Sciences of Philadelphia (for both the Sons and the league, Gideon Hill has the details at onbridle@verizon.net). The dinner meeting of **The Illustrious Clients** on 25 October is devoted to 'The Red Circle'; get details from Steven Doyle (540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 4607, USA). On the same day **The Criterion Bar Association** talks about 'The Norwood Builder', first published in *Collier's* 100 years ago (Brenda Rossini, 550 Sheridan Road, Winnetka, IL 60093, USA).

On 4 November **The Practical But Limited Geologists** are in Seattle (Peter Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). In the same area, **The Sound of the Baskervilles** meet as usual at T S McHugh's on 10 November (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** holds its Annual Film Evening at the Museum of London on 26 November, presented by David Stuart Davies.

Periodicals received. ***The Serpentine Mews***, Fall 2003 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2003 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) . ***The Formulary***, June 2003, and ***Practice Notes***, September 2003 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ). ***Mayday Mayday***, October 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Crier***, Fall 2003 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Brenda Rossini, 550 Sheridan Road, Winnetka, IL 60093, USA).

The Illustrious Clients News, October 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA). The ***Magic Door***, Autumn 2003 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON, Canada M4W 2G8). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, October 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Davice Sharpe, 110 Gay Street, Apt 1108, Nashville, TN 37219, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Michaelmas 2003 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, ON, Canada L7G 1P1). ***Communication no. 235***, September/October 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, October 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

And the father and mother of all Sherlockian newsletters, ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, September 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 237 22 November 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Zena Walker, who died on 24 August aged 69, played one Sherlockian rôle in her acting career: Mrs Toller in Radio 4's 1978 dramatisation of 'The Copper Beeches', with Barry Foster as Holmes. Tall saturnine **Guy Rolfe** died on 19 October aged 91; he will be remembered for movies such as *The Spider and the Fly* and *Ivanhoe*. He played Sherlock Holmes in *The Case of Marcel Duchamp*, directed by David Rowan, with Raymond Francis as Watson, but the film seems never to have been released. *[*If you have evidence to the contrary, please tell me.*]*

Davice Sharpe, editor of the newsletter of **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, died on 16 October. We never met, but it was evident from our correspondence and from *Plugs and Dottles* that she was an amiable and intelligent person with a lively sense of humour.

Ken Collier and his wife Sue have managed the *Sherlock Holmes* in Northumberland Street, London, for the past six or so years, and they have ensured that the pub remains a fixed point in a changing age. Ken developed prostate cancer a couple of years ago and lost his battle with the disease on 7 November. He was a nice fellow; Jean and I miss him. Our thoughts are with Sue and her staff at this sad and difficult time.

Colin Prestige, a founder of our Society, died on 12 November, aged 76. Shirley Purves, who knew him better than most, describes him as a keen Sherlockian with a crusty exterior and a heart of gold. He was invested as a Baker Street Irregular in 1961, as 'Captain Jack Crocker'.

The *good* news is that the surviving founder member, **Freda Howlett**, has accepted the Council's invitation to be the Society's President — the sixth, I think.

If you would like to possess a title with a Baskerville connection, I understand that the **Barony of Pencelli** is still for sale at £40,000. Pencelli Castle in Wales, now an uninhabitable ruin, was built in the eleventh century by the Norman knight, Ralph Baskerville. The lawyers for Mrs Grace Pitchford have confirmed that the title is authentic and that Mrs Pitchford is the legal owner. For more information contact Henmans Solicitors, 6 Oxford Street, Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1TW.

The latest publication from **Baskerville Bücher** is *Sherlock Holmes in Film und Fersehen: Ein Handbuch*, edited by Michael Ross. This 240-page paperback is, I think, the first thorough German language study of the subject. The contributions cover the silent Holmes movies in Germany, various Baskerville hounds, that curious comedy *Der Mann, Der Sherlock Holmes War*, the TV films with Erich Schellow, the multinational hotch-potch *Sherlock Holmes und das Halsband des Todes* — and five great Holmeses: Rathbone, Cushing, Lee, Richardson and Brett. The book is of interest even to the non-German speaker. The filmography includes details of the actors who dubbed soundtracks into German, and I'll bet Harry Wüstenhagen sounded more convincing in *Das Halsband des Todes* than the American whose voice issues from Christopher Lee's mouth in the English language prints! The book is available from Baskerville Bücher (Postfach 42 06 70, 50900 Köln, Germany) for 24.90 Euros, plus 2 Euros surface mail outside Germany. E-mail the publisher at info@baskerville.de, or buy through the website at www.baskerville.de. Payment by European bank transfer or PayPal only, please. (The book is also available from www.amazon.de, where you can pay by credit card.)

Last year **Magico** (PO Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA) published *A Singular Sense of Humor: A Compilation of Stuff and Nonsense by and for Sherlockians* compiled by David H Galerstein and edited by Caroline Bryan . It's full of parody, burlesque, frivolity — well, you get the idea — and it is, understandably, American-biased, with contributions from a whole heap of BSIs, ASH and other witty devotees. Alongside Kate Karlson, Jennie Paton, Thom Utecht and the rest, Shirley Purves speaks out for the misunderstood Hound as only an Englishwoman can. Cartoons by the late Norman Schatell add to the fun. I'm afraid I have no price for this nice 200-page hardback, but if you write to Magico I expect they'll send you a catalogue.

Also published in 2002 was Randal Henly's *Sherlock Holmes Crossword Puzzles*, a collection of thirty-three puzzles, mostly based on a straightforward knowledge of the Canon, but with a sprinkling of appropriately cryptic clues (published by the author, 81 Offington Avenue, Sutton, Dublin 13, Republic of Ireland). The booklet is available from the **Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7486 1426) priced at £4.50.

Black Coat Press (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; website www.blackcoatpress.com) was set up for devotees of popular fiction, drawing especially on the great French tradition of crime, fantasy and scientific fiction. One of the first titles is *Shadowmen* by Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier, a survey of over two dozen ground-breaking French pulp fiction characters, including Arsène Lupin, Fantômas, and the Phantom of the Opera. Due early next year is *The Man in Grey*, an early 'Holmes and the Ripper' thriller by Arnould Galopin, adapted by the Lofficiers. Jean-Marc has a website devoted to French Holmes pastiche at www.coolfrenchcomics.com/sherlockholmes.htm.

Peter Blau notes that the memoirs of **Frederic H Sonnenschmidt BSI** will be published next year by Pearson/Prentice Hall as *Tastes and Tales of a Chef: Stories and Recipes* ($16.00). Fritz Sonnenschmidt is the co-author of the excellent *Dining with Sherlock Holmes: A Baker Street Cook Book*, and his BSI investiture is 'Simpson's'! Peter says that he 'does not neglect Sherlock Holmes in his stories.'

There's a new catalogue, with some Sherlockiana and Doyleana, from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has just cast a model of the Hound of the Baskervilles (with Sherlock Holmes doll in its mouth!) in an edition of twenty, at £35.00 plus £4.00 postage. His other new product is a pair of miniatures of Charlie Chaplin as Holmes and Watson, in resin, with an antiqued ivory finish. They're caricatures, but the facial likeness is exact. No price for these yet, I'm afraid.

The lead article in *Sherlock* issue no. 57 is 'Dalgleish in View', in which Alan Perry surveys Commander Dalgleish's television career, and the cover illustration is a moody still of Martin Shaw in the recent *Death in Holy Orders*. Also in this issue — Paul M Chapman looks at Holmes and the underworld, and opens the files on Jack the Ripper; Robert Sanderson considers Holmes's place in science fiction; M J Elliott views the black & white movies featuring Philip Marlowe; David Stuart Davies contributes a new Johnny One Eye story; Calum

McCloud reads the novels of Clare Francis; Martin Edwards inspects Andrew Taylor's DI Richard Thornhill, and takes us through fifty years of the Crime Writers' Association; Gavin Collinson appreciates Ian Richardson; John Hall gives Mrs Hudson her due; Patricia Guy illuminates **The Assorted and Stradivarious of Verona** ... and there's material from Pat Ward, Roger Forsdyke, Bob Byrne, Chris Senior, Moriarty and me. The magazine is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $40.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). Check the website at www.sherlockholmes.com.

A reminder that from 1 to 6 December, at 8.00 pm with a 4.00 pm matinée on Saturday, Roger Llewellyn will stage David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* at the **Jermyn Street Theatre**, in Jermyn Street, near Piccadilly Circus. The box office phone number is 020 7287 2875. After more than four years it remains a fresh and exciting production.

From 10 to 13 December at 8.00 pm, at the **Third Floor Arts Centre** (Norrish Library, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth) Anyone Can Play will present *A Study in Scarlet* by Jason Brown. Tickets are £6.00 (£5.00 concessions); The box office number is 023 9283 7373.

BBC 2 is currently showing Granada's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on Saturdays, as part of its 'Watching the Detectives' slot, and the complete Brett series is available on DVD until 31 December from *Radio Times*, PO Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW, priced at £144.99 postpaid. That's a saving of £10.00.

The Beeb is broadcasting its own Sherlock Holmes plays on the radio. The digital channel BBC7 continues the Merrison-Williams series with *The Hound of the Baskervilles* part 1 at 10.00 am (repeated at 11.00 pm) on Sunday 30 November, and part 2 on Sunday 7 December. *[*Thanks to Philip Attwell for keeping me up to date with the media.*]*

According to a PA bulletin forwarded by Takeshi Shimizu, a recent poll voted DI Jack Frost (played by David Jason) the nation's favourite TV detective, with Inspector Morse (John Thaw) second and Sherlock Holmes (Jeremy Brett) third. *[*I'm delighted to see Jonathan Creek (Alan Davies) ranked fourth, but shocked that Hercule Poirot (David Suchet) doesn't feature in the top twenty.*]*

Nathan Garrideb hoped to be recognised as the Hans Sloane of his age. Sir Hans Sloane died 250 years ago, when his collections were bought for the nation, and an act of Parliament established the British Museum to house them. **The British Library** held a study day and commemoration on Monday 24 November.

Kevin Jacklin has spotted a two-handed card game, *Bakerstreet*, made by the German firm of Ravensburger and available from games shops in the UK and the USA. He also notes that *Murder by Decree* is at last out on DVD on both sides of the Atlantic. The Region 1 disc (North America) contains the whole shooting script as an extra. *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* is on DVD in Region 1 only, with lots of exciting extras — which we in Britain can't see without a multi-region DVD player and a TV set that can cope with NTSC … Grrr!

Mrs Hudson has decorated Holmes and Watson's sitting-room for Christmas at the **Sherlock Holmes** in London. The pub provides excellent food and drink, in the bar and in the restaurant. (10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DB; phone 020 7930 2644; e-mail sherlock.wc2n@laurelpubco.com).

Past Times (Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 7DX; website www.past-times.com) offers all sorts of things to help celebrate Christmas in Victorian style. **Hawkin's Bazaar** (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0HN; website www.hawkin.com) is a marvellous source of toys and games that you didn't know were still made. Both companies have mouth-watering catalogues.

The true Sherlockian should visit **The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7846 1426; website www.sherlockholmes1.com). They're taking orders for their new 'Sherlock Bear', made in a limited edition of 500 by Merrythought, one of the world's most distinguished teddy bear companies. Sherlock costs £80.00, and he's quite magnificent.

Vasili Livanov, a great Sherlock Holmes in the Russian TV series of the the early 1980s, has accepted honorary membership in **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Baskerville Hounds**.

If you live in Sussex and you'd like to be in at the start of a new Holmes group, contact Brian Pugh at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN (e-mail Brian.W.Pugh@tesco.net). He's looking to set up **Sherlock's Bee-Keepers: The Sussex Sherlock Holmes Society**.

Our Society's next meeting is the annual dinner at the House of Commons on Saturday 10 January. The guest of honour is the Chairman of the Detection Club, Simon Brett, and the supporting speaker is Michael Whelan, head of **The Baker Street Irregulars** — whose own dinner will be held at the Union League Club in New York on Friday 16 January (for information about the BSI, contact Mike at 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA).

The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn (Michael Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles MO 63302-0256, USA) discuss 'The Resident Patient' at their meeting on 28 November, and 'The Blue Carbuncle' on 20 December. The annual dinner of **The Crew of the SS May Day** is at the Ulster Reform Club on 4 December (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). **The Occupants of the Empty House** meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin on 5 December (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). The AGM and Christmas lunch of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** (hosted by **The Priory Scholars**) is at the Cricketers in Leicester on 7 December (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Sound of the Baskervilles** meet at T S McHugh's on 8 December and hold the Will Crakes Memorial Jollification on 13 December (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NE, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** have a party on 13 December (Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). **The Parallel Case of St Louis** discuss 'The Noble Bachelor' at The Big Sleep on 15 December (Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA).

6 January sees the Grand Opening of an exhibition, *Happy Birthday, Mr Holmes*, at the Czech Police Museum in Prague, jointly sponsored by **The Czech Society of Sherlock Holmes** (Ceska spolecnost Sherlocka Holmese, Ales M. Kolodrubec, Milesovska 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). The exhibition runs till 15 February. **The Pleasant Places of Florida** plan a film festival in Seminole for Holmes's 150th birthday (Carl Heifetz, 1220 Winding Willow Drive, Trinity, FL 34655, USA).

Periodicals received. ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, November 2003 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker e-mail pkblocker@comcast.net — sorry, I've no terrestrial address).***The Whaling News,*** September and October 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles MO 63302-0256, USA) PO Box 256, St Charles MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Camden House Journal,*** October and November 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, November 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, September 2003 (**Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Communication***, November/ December 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***Sherlock Holmes-Kurier***, Herbst 2003 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Uwe Sommerlad, Rödelheimer Landstrasse 32, 60487 Frankfurt a. M, Germany). ***FMHC Mamo***, interim issue (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). ***The Parallelogram***, October 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, October 2003 (Peter Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; e-mail pblau@dgsys.com). *[*Note Peter's new address.*]*

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 238 18 December 2003

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Edmund L Hartmann, who died on 28 November aged 92, was a prolific scriptwriter, whose biggest successes were probably *The Paleface* and *Fancy Pants* for Bob Hope. He had a hand in writing two of the Rathbone films for Universal: *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon* and *The Scarlet Claw* (some obituaries say he contributed to *Sherlock Holmes in Washington*, but I can find no evidence for this claim).

David Hemmings, who became an icon of the 60s when he starred in the pretentious movie *Blow Up*, died aged 62 on 3 December. His varied career saw him as both hero and villain in an almost forgotten comedy called *The Best House in London*, with two characters who were nearly Holmes and Watson; more importantly, he was Inspector Foxborough to Christopher Plummer's Holmes in *Murder by Decree*.

The Shoso-in Bulletin remains the most truly international of all the Sherlock Holmes periodicals. Volume 13 contains articles from the USA, the UK, Japan, Australia, France, Belgium, India, Denmark, Sweden and Germany. The topics include the sober (John Hall on 'The Boscombe Valley Mystery', Michael Duke on the other doctors in the Canon), the abstruse ('Simhavalokana of Sherlockiana' by Balaji Narasimham), the whimsical (Eric Monahan's 'Beginner's Guide to Holmes and Watson', Stu Shiffman's claim that Sir Henry Merrivale and Dr Gideon Fell were the offspring of Mycroft Holmes), the nostalgic (Mike Berdan's search for Holmes in present-day London, Lloyd Hedberg's discovery of the Sherlockian world), the humorous (Jean-Pierre Cagnat's brilliantly illustrated survey of the Vernet connection), and the factual (reports on the Sherlockian year from around the world). *The Shoso-in Bulletin* is a grand plum-pudding of a book, equivalent to those big anthologies that **The Illustrious Clients**, **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** and other groups used to publish. John Hall is the British agent; drop him a line at 20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR. Or you can buy volume 13 for $13.00 plus postage from Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA). Next year's *Bulletin* will be the last.

Alan Godfrey Maps (Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, Co. Durham DH8 7PW) have added the 1870 large-scale Ordnance Survey map of Upper Baker Street, priced at £2.10, to their collection. The website is at www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk.

Published at £7.95 last month by Taylor Trade Publishing (c/o Plymbridge Distributors Ltd, Plymbridge House, Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PY) is *The Sherlock Holmes Triviography and Quiz Book* by Kathleen Kaska.

Eric Monahan notes that the specialist bookshop **Crime on Store** (formerly Crime in Store) has moved again, to 14 Bloomsbury House, 4 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2RP. He adds that the current catalogue includes *The Oriental Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* by Theodore Riccardi, published by Random House (400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157-4627, USA) at £24.95. *[*The book is, of course, another attempt to tell what happened after Reichenbach. It isn't in print in the UK, but* ***amazon.co.uk*** *has it at £14.11 …*]*

Also not in print over here, but perhaps worth looking out for, are *My Sherlock Holmes* edited by Michael Kurland (St Martin's Press Minotaur, 6365 James Madison Hwy, Gordonsville, VA 22942-8501, USA; $24.95), new stories presenting Holmes from viewpoints other than Dr Watson's; *Sherlock Holmes in His Own Words and in the Words of Those Who Knew Him* by Barry Day (Taylor Trade Publishing, 15200 NBN Way, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214-9735, USA; $24.95); *The Disappearance of Sherlock Holmes* by Larry Millett (Viking Books, 405 Murray Hill Parkway, East Rutherford, NJ 07073-2136, USA; $23.95); *Souvenirs of Sherlock Holmes: Collected Articles on the Canon and the Pastiches* by Gary Lovisi (Gryphon Books, PO Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209, USA; $15.00); and *Shadows over Baker Street* edited by Michael Reaves and John Pelan, an anthology of tales taking Holmes into the dark world of H P Lovecraft (Del Rey Books, 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157-4627, USA; $23.95).

Due in February is *Sherlock Holmes and the Hapsburg Tiara* by Alan Vanneman (Carroll & Graf, 1700 4th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710-1711, USA; $24.00). Coming in March is *The Affair of the Incognito Tenant* by Lora Roberts (Perseverance Press, PO Box 2790, McKinleyville, CA 95519, USA; $13.95).

Some titles available from **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA): *Sigerson at the Pole* by Mary Ellen Daugherty ($5.95); *Sherlock Holmes's Personal Journals* by Nino Cirone ($15.00); *The Federation Holmes* by Dana Martin Batory ($28.00); and Jack Tracy's *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana* on searchable CD-ROM ($28.00). Check the website at www.sherlock-holmes.com. *[*That last item is a wonderfully useful research tool.*]*

Peter Blau notes that, according to *Publishers Weekly* for 10 November, *the Moon Reflects the Sun* by Mitch Cullin is forthcoming from Nan A Telese/Doubleday (1745 Broadway, 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10019, USA). He adds, 'The novel portrays Sherlock Holmes in retirement at 93, "struggling to come to terms with a mysterious case from his past".'

There's a new and extensive catalogue from **Janus Books Ltd** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA), including lots of classic Sherlockiana, and some not so classic.

In February, Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) will release the first part of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, read by the excellent David Timson,

Laura Kuhn has spotted a CD called *The Spirit of Christmas Past* (NI 7861), released by Nimbus Records (c/o Cadillac, 15 Kings Exchange, Tileyard Road, London N7 9AH): a collection of recordings digitally transferred from 78 rpm discs and ranging in time from 1908 to 1944. Alongside the likes of

Enrico Caruso and Count John McCormack is Basil Rathbone reading 'The Night Before Christmas'. www.wyastone.co.uk/nrl/pvoce/7861a.html is the website.

Only two of the six Conan Doyle manuscripts auctioned at Christie's in London on 19 November reached their reserve prices. *A Duet (With an Occasional Chorus)* sold for £35,850, including the buyer's premium; and 'A Glimpse of the Army' made £4,183. Presumably the others will be auctioned again, but meanwhile it seems that Jean Conan Doyle's chosen charities must wait for their money.

The **Pencelli Castle** saga continues to unfold. I said last month (and back in June) that the castle is an uninhabitable ruin. However, Mrs Grace Pitchford, who is selling the ancient Barony of Pencelli Castle, informs me that when the Norman castle fell into disrepair in the 16th century, the owners built a manor house to which they gave the same name. The house has been continuously occupied, so Arthur Conan Doyle may indeed have been a guest at Pencelli Castle and learned of its founder, Ralph Baskerville.

Roger Llewellyn continues touring with David Stuart Davies's splendid play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* On 15 January he'll be at the **Middlesbrough Theatre** (01642 815181). On 15 February at the **Village Hall Theatre**, Great Missenden, 20 February at **The Playhouse**, Derry (028 7126 8027), 21 February at the **Island Arts Centre**, Lisburn (028 9250 9254), 25 February sat **Riverside Theatre**, Coleraine (028 7032 3232), and on 27 February in Limerick.

You'll find lots about Arthur Conan Doyle's life and work at a website called *The Chronicles of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle:* www.siracd.com. You can sign up for the monthly newsletter.

Our own Society's excellent website has been simplified and streamlined by its dedicated and brilliant creator Tony Freeman, who has made it one of the two best Sherlockian sites on the web. Look at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk. Chris Redmond's equally excellent site is at www.sherlockian.net.

Fans of the *other* Baker Street detective should take a look at www.sextonblake.co.uk, owned and maintained by Mark Hodder, which features half a dozen articles by Blake scholars, the only online Blake bibliography, a gallery and a review section. Mark welcomes new contributors — e-mail him at m.hodder@ntlworld.com. He also runs www.stilettoblade.com, dedicated to reviews of pulp and vintage fiction and including a section on new Holmes stories.

Brian Pugh highly recommends Charles Hall's new model of the Hound of the Baskervilles (see DM 237). He adds, 'Due to the very limited issue it may sell very quickly.' Twenty were made but only sixteen are for sale, priced at £35.00 plus £4.00 postage.

Michael Whelan announces the formal establishment of **The Baker Street Irregulars Archives** next month, marking the BSI's 70th anniversary and Sherlock Holmes's 150th birthday. The archives will be deposited at the Houghton Library of Harvard University, and an Irregular Archivist will be appointed. For information about the BSI, contact Mike at 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA.

Al Gregory reports that **Mrs Hudson's Cliffdwellers** now have a website at www.mrshudsonscliffdwellers.homestead.com. The site was created by the talented Ron Fish, the newest Director. The Cliffdwellers are the only Sherlock Holmes society to meet regularly aboard a ship, the permanently moored *Binghampton*.

Looking ahead a bit, **Mycroft's League** announces *A Practical Sherlockian Symposium on the US Constitution and Nation Building, with Observations on the Segregation of HM the Queen,* to be held at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia on the morning of 8 May 2004. It will be followed in the afternoon by a walking tour of Christopher Morley's Philadelphia. The confirmed speakers are Ben & Sue Vizoskie, Gideon Hill, Mark Rahdert, Daniel Stashower, Jean Upton and me, and the organisers are awaiting word from Chris Redmond. For more information about the symposium, contact Gideon Hill at onbridle@verizon.net.

The annual Master's Dinner of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** is at Andy Diner in Seattle on 3 January (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Crew of the SS May Day** celebrates Sherlock Holmes's birthday at the Kylemore Quay in Belfast on 6 January (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). **The Occupants of the Empty House** discuss 'The Reigate Squires' at Alongi's Restaurant in DuQuoin on 9 January (Stan Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). On 10 January the **Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark** dines at the Restaurant Queen Victoria in Copenhagen (Bjarne Nielsen, Sherlock Holmes Museet, Egebjergvej 206, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark), and **The Illustrious Clients** hold their Victorian Dinner (Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA).

The Clients of Adrian Mulliner (a Wodehousean scion of the BSI and a Sherlockian scion of the Wodehouse Society) hold their annual Junior Bloodstain at 12.30 pm on 17 January in the lobby of the Algonquin Hotel, New York (Marilyn MacGregor, 1515 Shasta Drive, #4210, Davis, CA 95616-6692, USA; marilynmac@urcad.org). 'The Recollections of Captain Wilkie' is the theme for **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** at their meeting on 24 January (Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA).

The Deerstalkers of Welshpool will present *The Game's Afoot: A Sherlock Holmes Evening* at the Meeting Room in Oswestry Library, Arthur Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, at 7.30 pm on 28 February. The evening will include William Hyder's short play *Helping Mr Holmes*, plus talks on various Sherlockian topics. Admission is £4.00. Get more details from Roy Upton-Holder on 01938 554840 or rupton-holder@onetel.net.uk.

Periodicals received. ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2003 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, November 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 West Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Mayday Mayday*** and ***The Chronicler***, December 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Communication***, 'Special Self-Improvement Issue, 2003' (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *[*another of the PPoF's wickedly funny spoof issues*]*. ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 3/4, 2003 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Hellebækgade 19, 3.tv, 2200 Købnhavn N, Denmark).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2003 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA).

The District Messenger and I will now take our usual break until late January or early February, so I'll take this opportunity to wish everyone

Roger Johnson