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. 239 9 Feb 2004

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). You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word attachment or as plain text.

Our long-time member **L W Bailey** died on 16 June, aged ninety. In his obituary in *The Sherlock Holmes Journal* Richard Lancelyn Green says that Bill Bailey's Sherlockian writings were collected in 2000 as *The Scandal behind the 'Scandal', and other Attacks of Sherlockholmania*. Peter Blau reports that the Revd **Wayne Wall** ('Holy Peters' BSI) died in December. His magnum opus is his book *God and Sherlock Holmes* (1982).

Dinsdale Landen, who died on 29 December aged 71, was a brilliant farceur whose comic gifts overshadowed his talent for dramatic rôles. His intelligent Watson matched Robert Powell's Holmes in Michael Hardwick's 1974 BBC radio adaptation of *A Study in Scarlet*. In 1989 he was a waspish Holmes to John Moffatt's Watson in Charles Marowitz's bitter comedy *Sherlock's Last Case*, also on BBC radio. Peter Blau notes that the novelist **Joan Aiken**, who died on 4 January, contributed the article on Arthur Conan Doyle to the partwork encyclopaedia *Man, Myth and Magic* . **Douglas Warren**, a member of our Society for more than fifty years and an authority on roads and plumbing in the Canon, died on 19 January. Our thoughts are with his wife, Ivy.

Comedian, actor and writer **Roy Hudd** was awarded the OBE in the New Year's Honours. He played John Gedgrave in Granada TV's 1994 production of *The Dying Detective* to Jeremy Brett's Holmes, and James Phillimore in *The Singular Inheritance of Miss Gloria Wilson* for BBC Radio in 2002, to Clive Merrison's Holmes. In 1999 he himself was Holmes in *The Newly Discovered Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, a vulgar funny burlesque for BBC Radio.

At the annual dinner of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** on 10 January, Philip Porter announced that Pam Bruxner had been awarded honorary membership — a tribute to her long and devoted service to the Society. Phil also presented the first *Tony Howlett Award*, instituted by Freda Howlett in memory of her husband and co-founder, to Richard Lancelyn Green.

In New York on 16 January, Wiggins announced the following investitures into **The Baker Street Irregulars**: Gideon D Hill ('Jack Prendergast'), Francine Kitts ('Lady Hilda Trelawney Hope'), Nicholas Meyer ('A Fine Morocco Case'), Bernard Oudin ('Our French Gold'), Michael Ross ('Von Bork'), Constantine Rossakis ('St Bartholomew's Hospital'), Doug Wrigglesworth ('The Retired Colourman'). In addition, Paul D Herbert received the *Two-Shilling Award* for extraordinary devotion to the cause beyond the call of duty, and Peter E Blau was presented with the *Dr John H Watson Afghan Campaign Desk*, 'with grateful appreciation of his many contributions as society secretary, Sherlockian ambassador, and record keeper extraordinaire'. Congratulations to all!

The publishing programme of **Black Coat Press** (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA) draws on the great French tradition of fantastic literature. *Shadowmen:Heroes and Villains of French Pulp Fiction* by Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier ($19.95) very efficiently whets the appetite for Black Coat's translations from a range of fiction all but unknown to the English language reader. We know the Count of Monte Cristo, Captain Nemo, and the Phantom of the Opera; we have encountered Fantômas or Judex in translation; and through Sherlock Holmes we have met M Lecoq or Arsène Lupin. But what of Belphégor, Fascinax, Rodolphe le Justicier? There's much Sherlockian relevance here. Harry Dickson, was presented as *Le Sherlock Holmes Américain.* Maurice le Blanc pitted his master-crook Arsène Lupin against Sherlock Holmes in several ingenious stories — though he had to call the detective 'Herlock Sholmès' or 'Holmlock Shears' (Lupin is much to be preferred to the intolerably snobbish A J Raffles). The Lofficiers have obviously had fun linking many of the characters to Philip José Farmer's 'Wold Newton' scenario — which is too complex to go into here!. *Shadowmen* is a handsome volume, well written and full of fascinating information.

'Suppose,' thought Warren Randall, 'Wiggins, on his irregular routine of going, seeing and hearing everything, fell under the influence of Dr Seuss. What would he then report to Sherlock Holmes?' The result is *And to Think that I Saw It on Mulbaker Street*, a nice 36-page booklet wittily illustrated by Laurie Manifold. It's available from Warren (15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA) for $10.00, which includes postage to any address. Make checks payable to Warren Randall.

There are Sherlockian references in the introduction to the new facsimile of *The Golliwogg's Circus* by Florence Kate Upton (The Original Golliwogg Company, 5 Southbrook Mews, London SE12 8LG; £25.00) — not surprisingly, as it's written by the artist's distant cousin, Jean Upton BSI ASH! The Golliwogg, beloved of many thousands since the 1890s, is kind, brave, resourceful, and lovable. Without moralising, the adventures of the Golliwogg and the Dutch Dolls promote an ideal of integration. (The original toys are still together, and can be seen in the Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green.) Florence Upton, illustrator and portrait artist, became a colleague of Arthur Conan Doyle in the Spiritualist movement before her early death in 1922.

Stephen Clarkson has compiled *The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2003: 'The Strength and Activity of Youth' — The Junior Sherlockian Movement.* It's a look back to the 1960s and 70s when some of today's leading Sherlockians were eager youngsters. Among those featured are Kate Karlson, Chris Redmond, Susan Dahlinger, Paul Singleton, Susan Rice and our own Nick Utechin. The 64-page booklet costs $11.00 within the USA or $12.00 elsewhere, from The Baker Street Journal, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 1731, USA (website: www.bakerstreetjournal.com).

The 21st *Beaten's Christmas Annual* is available from **The Sound of the Baskervilles** (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA) at $5.00 or $6.00 Canadian. The website is at www.thesoundofthebaskervilles.com.

New from Calabash Press (PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia V0K 1A0, Canada; website www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html): *Violets & Vitriol*, Holmesian and Doylean writing by women, edited by Susan Dahlinger (Cdn$30.00 / US$23.00 / £15.00); *The Questionable Parentage Of Basil Grant* a parody by R. Bostoun Cromer (D. K. Broster and M. Croom Brown) (Cdn$10.00 / US$7.50 / £5.00), and *I Am Inclined to Think... : Musings on Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle* by Barbara Roden (Cdn$13.00 / US$10.00 / £7.50).

New catalogues are available from **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE; blackcatuk@aol.com) *[*Holmesiana and Doyleana*]*,**Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) *[*first editions and other desirables, priced accordingly*]*, and **Sherlock Holmes Museet Antikvariatet** (Egebjergvej 206, 4500 Nykoebing Sj., Denmark;

sherlock@sherlockiana.net) *[*Holmesiana and Doyleana, mainly in English*]*.

Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) have released *The Return of Sherlock Holmes I*, read, like their previous eight volumes, by David Timson. In 'The Empty House', 'The Norwood Builder', 'The Six Napoleons' and 'The Three Students' Mr Timson demonstrates again that he is one of our great vocal actors, defining each character with apparent ease and without descending into caricature. Listening to his Horace Harker, his Sebastian Moran, or his Hilton Soames, for instance, you feel that you would recognise them instantly if you met them. His Holmes has exactly the right quality, quizzical and slightly acerbic, and his Watson is sensible and thoroughly likeable. The readings are paced splendidly, for which the producer Nicolas Soames must take credit, and they are enhanced by atmospheric music from the Naxos catalogue, in this case string quartets by A W Foote. On three CDs or three cassettes, these recordings are about as good as they come.

In *Sherlock* no. 58 Alan Perry considers Harry Potter as a detective; Paul M Chapman looks further at Holmes and the Ripper; Calum McCloud reads Kathy Reichs; M J Elliott views the later Philip Marlowe movies; Robert Sanderson considers the mysterious Mr Quin, and examines the Holmes-Spock connection; Alanna Knight contributes a new Faro story; Martin Edwards writes about writing; Gavin Collinson compares the BBC and Granada 'Blue Carbuncles' ... 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.

BBC 7's recent series of ten of Michael Hardwick's classic radio plays with Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley as Holmes and Watson will be repeated in early April with introductions by Nicholas Utechin, and a second series will follow. These clean, clear recordings had apparently lain forgotten for years in the files at Broadcasting House! *[*Thanks to Phil Attwell and Nick Utechin for keeping me up to date on this.*]*

Roy Simmons sends news that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Tim Kelly will be produced by the Wanstead Players on 19, 20 & 21 February at **The Kenneth More Theatre** in Ilford (box office 020 8553 4466; website awww.kenneth-more-theatre.co.uk).

Our New York member Mia Albright will present a performed reading of her play *The Strange Case of the Missing Dr Watson* at the Victoria pub near Paddington Station, London, at 7.00pm on 21 May. There'll be no advance booking and formal charge, but donations will be appreciated. Should be fun! For more details, you can e-mail Mia at mialbright@hotmail.com.

Tim Evers of Houston, Texas, is trying to arrange to tour his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes*, which explores the effect of Holmes's cocaine addiction. Tim has connections in Leeds and hopes to perform the play in Britain as well as in America. If you can help, contact him at TheatreBahHumbug@aol.com.

I haven't yet had the chance to check Anthony Mann's website at www.geocities.com/anthonydpmann, but we're promised news of another film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, to be directed in and around Kingston, Ontario, by Stephen L Heron. Mr Mann himself is writer and producer, and plays Sherlock Holmes.

Michael Ross tells me that Polyband of Munich has released a DVD of Granada's *The Sign of Four*, containing both the English and the German soundtracks and with better picture and sound quality than the British and American DVDs. It is available from Baskerville Bücher (Postfach 42 06 70, 50900 Köln, Germany; website at www.baskerville.de) for 18.95 plus postage — 4.00 to Europe.

London Horror Tours (PO Box 42031, London E5 9XT; e-mail pope-de-locksley@hotmail.com) offers a Sherlock Holmes walk starting at 6.00pm on Mondays from Baker Street Station, and at 2.00pm on Saturdays from the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company. There's a website at www.londonhorrortours.co.uk.

The **STUD-Watsonian Weekend** will be held 16-18 April, with the annual STUD dinner on Friday, the 45th running of the Chicago 'Silver Blaze' at Hawthorne Race Course and the 'fun(d)raiser' pizza party on Saturday, and the Fortescue Honours Brunch on Sunday. For details contact Allan Devitt and Susan Diamond at 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA. Or e-mail szdiamond@comcast.net.

The next meeting of **The Illustrious Clients** is at the Milano Inn in Indianapolis on 21 February (Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). On the same day **The Crew of the SS May Day** watch Roger Llewellyn in *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* (Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). **The Northern Musgraves** hold their Birthday Party on 28 February at the Huddersfield Hotel in Huddersfield. Contact John Hall (20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR) who says they welcome non-members, prospective members and lapsed members. **Colonel Sebastian Moran's Secret Gun Club** meets every leap year on 29 February. This year the Mongoose Hunt in the Forest Preserve at Wilmette (firearms aren't needed) is followed by a repast at Hackney's restaurant in Glenview (Elliott Black, 2511 Windsor Lane, Northbrook, IL 60062-7040, USA).

Periodicals received. *The Sherlock Holmes Journal,* Winter 2003 *[*there's timing — it arrived this morning!*]*. ***The Passengers' Log***, 8th October 2003 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Formulary***, December 2003, and ***The Collected Essays: The Dr John H Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition,*** 2003 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ). ***The Crier***, Winter 2003-2004 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Brenda Rossini, 550 Sheridan Road, Winnetka, IL 60093, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Christmas (Winter) 2003 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***The Parallelogram***, December 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, January 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Whaling News***, November and December 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, December 2003, and February 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**,. ***Communication***, 'Special End-of-the-Year Issue 2003', and January/February 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, December 2003 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, January 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2003 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, January 2004, and February 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Winter 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 Magic Door***, Winter 2003 (**Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON, Canada M4W 2G8). ***Interim Newsletter***, January 2004 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, February 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2003, and January 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 240 15 March 2004

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). You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word attachment or as plain text.

Mollie Hardwick, who died on 13 December at the age of eighty-eight, was a prolific author, particularly of novels based on popular television series, such as *Upstairs Downstairs* and *The Duchess of Duke Street* . Sherlockians honour her for her collaborations with her late husband Michael: *The Sherlock Holmes Companion*, a radio biography *The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes*, a book of the same title, three volumes of plays based upon the Canon, eight scripts recorded by Robert Hardy and Nigel Stock, a couple of the scripts for the 1968 BBC TV series with Peter Cushing, and a dazzling novelisation of Billy Wilder's bitter-sweet comedy *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* .

Martin Booth, author of a notable biography *The Doctor, the Detective and Arthur Conan Doyle*, died on 12 February aged only fifty-nine. He was a formidable novelist (*Industry of Souls* was short-listed for the Booker Prize) and poet, with a strong interest in exploration and conservation. The actor **Russell Hunter** died on 26 February, eight days after his seventy-ninth birthday. He will always be associated with his character Lonely in the secret agent series *Callan*, but the Independent notes that he was revered as a legend of Scottish theatre. He contributed outstanding cameos to the 1984 Peter Cushing vehicle *The Masks of Death* (as Alfred Coombs) and Granada TV's 1988 production of *Silver Blaze* (as Silas Brown). On the same day **Harry Bartell** died aged ninety-one. His long acting career, mainly in radio, included a stint as announcer on *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* with Rathbone and Bruce in 1945-46.

The sixth volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library* edited by Leslie S Klinger is *The Sign of Four* (Gasogene Books, PO Box 69308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; $19.95). I need hardly say that the editor's standards are as high as ever. The text is carefully chosen from the various editions, with significant differences noted, and the annotations present scholarship gathered from an astonishing range of sources, Sherlockian and other. Mr Klinger is perceptive and has a nice dry wit (just how did Holmes address a telegram to his 'dirty little lieutenant, Wiggins'?) but, rightly, he doesn't side with one commentator against another. Personally I do not find Madeline B Stern's argument that Holmes was a rare book collector convincing — the evidence suggests otherwise — and I have no idea of Leslie Klinger's opinion on the matter, but he is quite right to give several quotations from Ms Stern's monograph. In his introduction Bernard Davies assesses the importance of this second published exploit of Sherlock Holmes, relishes his own involvement with the story over the years, and solves a mystery that has exercised many minds, of the Sikhs with the impossible names. The book is not free of typos — Jonathan Small's name is spelt 'Jonathon' in the page headings to chapter XII — but that is a minor fault. Leslie Klinger is, as John Bennett Shaw used to say, a benefactor of the race, and so are the proprietors of Gasogene Books.

New from the same publisher is volume one of *Serpentine Muse-ings: An Anthology from the Journal of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Susan Z Diamond and Marilynne McKay ($19.95). *The Serpentine Muse*, though not perhaps one of the essential four or five Sherlockian journals, has always been distinguished by a wit and irreverence that reflect the origin and nature of the ASH. After a foreword by Evelyn Herzog, the Principal Unprincipled Adventuress, the editors' introduction gives an admirably concise and comprehensive account of the society and its organ. After that, the content is divided into seven sections, beginning, naturally, with *'The* Woman' and continuing with 'The Master', 'The Good Doctor', 'The Other Woman' (i.e. Mrs Hudson), 'Other Ladies', 'Other Gentlemen' and 'Villains'. The contributions, by a total of forty-seven writers, cover authentic research, humour, parody, pastiche, interviews, toasts and a few oddities, such as Gahan Wilson's apology for non-attendance at an ASH dinner. Yes, Gahan Wilson. The famous cartoonist and author is one of several male contributors, some others being Henry W Enberg, Joe Fink, Al Gregory, Philip Shreffler, Thom Utecht and Ben Vizoskie. But overwhelmingly this book is the product of the Adventuresses themselves, who, with one living exception (Peter Blau) are all female. Here, among others, are Linda Anderson, Marie Gibb, Sarah Montague Joffe, Kate Karlson, Julie McKuras, Teddie Niver, Trish Pearlman, Dorothy Belle Pollack, Shirley Purves, Susan Rice, M E Rich, Marina Stajic, Jean Upton — and Rosalie Williams, who wrote her own account of life as Mrs Hudson. This is a book to dip into, because no matter which page you choose you'll find something to enjoy. Both *Serpentine Muse-ings volume one* and *The Sign of Four* are available from the publishers. Postage is $3.95 within the USA and $5.95 elsewhere; add 75¢ for each book after the first.#

Karen Murdock is rapidly becoming a major player in the world of Sherlockiana, with contributions to *The Sherlock Holmes Almanac* (The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, PO Box, Shelburne, Ontario L0N1S0, Canada; $36.00), informed postings to **The Hounds of the Internet,** and continuing work on gathering all Vincent Starrett's Sherlockian writings into one volume. *Good for the Cause: Sherlockians in the Newspapers* (Bootmaker Occasional Paper Number Four, January 2004) is an informative and hugely entertaining 20-page booklet, the result of intensive research among John Bennett Shaw's scrapbooks in the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota. If you're curious to know how we and our hobby appear to the press, especially the American press, *Good for the Cause* is an excellent introduction. Copies can be had from Karen Murdock (1212 Yale Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55414-3123, USA) for $7.00 including postage; US dollar checks or bills only, please.

Thanks to the generosity of Hugo Koch I have one spare copy, available free to the first applicant within the UK, of his latest monograph, *Where Is 'Baker Street West'? A Prolegomenon to the Identification of Ellery Queen's West 87th Street Brownstone: A Tribute to Gray Chandler Briggs* . Hugo's candidate seems to me to be definitive.

Michael Cox and Phil Attwell have both sent copies of an offer for a handsome nine-volume edition of *The Sherlock Holmes Collection* in slipcase, priced at £45.00 from BCA *or* The Softback Preview, both at Guild House, Farnsby Street, Swindon SN99 9XX.

Two new titles from **Gryphon Books** (PO Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209, USA): *Souvenirs of Sherlock Holmes: Collected Articles on the Canon and the Pastiches* by Gary Lovisi, featuring

illustrations of many covers of rare and collectable volumes ($15.00; Mr Lovisi will gladly sign copies upon request) and *Sherlock Holmes & The Terror Out Of Time* by Ralph Vaughan, in which Holmes joins Professor Challenger to fight the minions of Cthulhu ($15.00).

Reported by Peter Blau: *Sherlock Holmes: Some Unpublished Cases* by Robert A Kisch (The Institution of Diagnostic Engineers, 7 Wier Road, Kibworth, Leicester LE8 0LQ; £9.99 plus postage). There's a website at www.diagnosticengineers.com.

There are new catalogues available from **Janus Books** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; website janusbooks.com) and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

You may be in time to catch Aubrey Hampton's play *Sherlock & Shaw: The Adventure of the Missing Vampire Diaries* at **The Gorilla Theatre** (4419 N Hubert Avenue, Tampa, FL 33614, USA; phone 813 879 2914), which runs until Sunday 24 March.

Undershaw, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's house at Hindhead in Surrey, is now a hotel and restaurant. The report in the Independent for 7 February was not wholly favourable. 'A fishless fishcake, where salt was the only recognisable taste' ... 'We were subjected to REO Speedwagon at a volume similar to, well, an ice rink' ... 'My breast of duck was too rare, and, like the chicken, not properly hot. It was as if the entire contents of the Undershaw kitchen was being warmed over in a hostess trolley' ... It sounds like one to avoid.

At 3.00 pm on Saturday 3 April **The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection** present the 2004 Cameron Hollyer Lecture, which will be given by Maureen Jennings, author of a well-received series of crime novels set in Victorian Toronto, featuring William Murdoch. The venue is the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium at the Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street. Admission is free.

A reminder that the Chicago 'Silver Blaze' will see its 45 th annual running on Saturday 17 April at Hawthorne Race Course, and that the **STUD-Watsonian Weekend** will be held from 16 to 18 April, with the 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, contact Allan Devitt and Susan Diamond at 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA. Or e-mail szdiamond@comcast.net.

I'm sorry to say that Jean Upton and I have had to withdraw from *A Practical Sherlockian Symposium on the US Constitution and Nation Building, with Observations on the Segregation of HM the Queen*, to be held by **Mycroft's League** at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia on 8 May 2004. Speakers will, however, include Ben & Sue Vizoskie, Gideon Hill, Mark Rahdert, Daniel Stashower and, I think, Chris Redmond. For more information about the symposium, contact Gideon Hill onbridle@verizon.net.

The 2004 Victorian Cricket Match between the Field Bizarre (the gentlemen of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**) and the Gold Bats (the gentlemen of **The P G Wodehouse Society**) will be held on Saturday 26 June at the wonderfully picturesque West Wycombe Cricket Ground in Buckinghamshire. Our Society's captain, Peter Horrocks, is anxious to hear from prospective players. If you're on for a day's sporting fun, phone Peter on 020 8786 6471, or contact him at minuetter@aol.com. West Wycombe Cricket Club has a website at www.ww-cc.org.uk.

The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem will discuss *A Study in Scarlet* on 20 March (Billy Fields, 902 Boscobel Street, Nashville, TN 37206-3730, USA). The next meeting of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will be a magic lantern lecture on Victorian crime, at the Savage Club on Wednesday 24 March. For information about the Society, contact Bob Ellis at 13, Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU — or check the website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk. **The Priory Scholars** will discuss *The Valley of Fear* at their meeting on 28 March *[*I find it extraordinary that Horace Coates can refer to this, the best by far of the long stories, as 'the bottom of the barrel'! De gustibus non est disputandum, bit still ...*]* (Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

On 6 April **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** will meet at the home of Peter and Audrey Wood to talk about 'The Copper Beeches' (Peter Wood, 201-1525, Pendrell Avenue, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6G 1S6) **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet on 9 April at Alongi's Restaurant to discuss 'The Final Problem' and 'The Empty House' (Stan Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). On 12 April **The Sound of the Baskervilles** will hold their regular monthly meeting at T S McHugh's (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** meet again on 17 April (Billy Fields, 902 Boscobel Street, Nashville, TN 37206-3730, USA).

Periodicals received. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal,*** Winter 2003, (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**) *[*this issue, rightly, includes many tributes to our late President Tony Howlett, as well as Nick Utechin and Guy Marriott on 'The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant', and Jon Lellenberg on the first seventy years of **The Baker Street Irregulars** *]*. ***The Petrel Flyer,*** Fall 2002, January-February 2003, Spring 2003, June 2003, August 2003, Autumn 2003, January-February 2004 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia,** Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, BC, Canada V7P 3C6) *[*one of the most stimulating and lively Sherlockian newsletter/journals; Michael Higgs's geographical scholarship is outstanding*]* . ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles,*** February 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, pkblocker@comcast.net) *[*reprints Tennessee Governor Ned McWherter's 1987 proclamation recognising the centenary of Sherlock Holmes's first appearance in print*]*. ***The Camden House Journal,*** February *and* March 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House,** Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) *[*William Cochran re-assesses the often overlooked case of 'The Reigate Squires'; he and Janet Bensley consider Irene Adler and Briony Lodge*]*.

The Parallelogram, February 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis,** Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA) *[*good 'Notes on 'The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor'' by Ed Moorman, and none of Pasquale Accardo's McGonagallesque limericks — Pat Accardo is a scholar but not, I submit, a poet*]*. ***Tonga Times,*** Winter 2004 (**The Mini-Tonga Society,** Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E 19th Street #2E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA) *[*lovely colour photos of miniature 221B sitting-rooms by Peggy van Vlymen and Nancy Garcés, Sherry Rose-Bond's sound advice on authentic re-creation, an interview with Tonga, and more*]*. ***Ineffable Twaddle,*** March 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles,** Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA) *[*lots of interesting snippets, including the information that Arthur Conan Doyle acted in two silent movies, 'The $5,000,000 Counterfeiting Plot' and the serial 'Our Mutual Girl'!*]*. ***The School Report***, Spring Term 2004 (**The Priory Scholars,** Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) *[*Horace Coates continues his paper on the friendship of Holmes and Watson, and Ken Savery considers 'The Retired Colourman'*]*. ***Sherlockiana,*** nr. 1, 2004 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark,** Mia Stampe, Hellebaekgade 19, 3.tv, 2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark) *[*a report with colour photos on the dinner on 10 January; Jørgen Frørup looks at 'The Final Problem'; Jens Byskov Jensen examines aspects of Holmes's London ' and it's all in Danish*]*.

And, not least, the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press,*** February 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 241 20 April 2004

Richard Lancelyn Green, who died on 27 March aged fifty, owned what may have been the most important collection of Holmesiana and Doyleana in private hands; moreover he was one of the two or three leading authorities on Arthur Conan Doyle's life and work. He joined the Sherlock Holmes Society of London in 1966, becoming, thirty years later, an active, amiable and inspired Chairman. In 1985 he was invested into the Baker Street Irregulars as 'The Three Gables', and his importance was recognised by Doylean and Holmesian scholars world-wide. He and John Michael Gibson compiled a magnificent bibliography of Conan Doyle, and Richard, solo or in collaboration, edited many of Conan Doyle's writings that had not previously been available in book form. His organisation of our Society's weekend expedition to Liverpool last September was a triumph. Our thoughts are with his mother, June, and his siblings.

A memorial service, 'A Programme for Richard', will be held at St Andrew's Church in Bebington on Saturday 22 May — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's birthday. (Jack Adrian has written an admirable obituary, published in *The Independent* for 8 April. You can also find it on the website at www.independent.co.uk. Scroll down and click on 'obituaries' on the left-hand side.)

Alas, there are other deaths that should be recorded, including a couple that I missed last year. **Pat Watt** (10 June 1929 - 3 March 2003) was a fairly recent member of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, but she was a long-time enthusiast for mystery fiction. Her enduring achievement will surely be the founding of **The Margery Allingham Society** in 1987. Early members of The Occupants of the Full House will remember the hospitality of the society's 'Mrs Hudson', **Claire Wightman**, who died on 16 October. **Victor Langley**, who died last November, was an actor of moderate distinction and a gentleman of great charm. Sherlockians will remember him in a non-speaking rôle as the future King Edward VII in the 1978 movie *Murder by Decree*, which has now achieved near-classic status. **Christopher Downes** (d. 21 November 2003, aged seventy) was that rare thing in the theatre, a dresser who became something of a legend in his own right. Derek Granger writes in *The Independent*: 'When [Robert] Stephens was cast in the title rôle in the film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1970), Downes's services were written into Stephens's contract. So impressed was Billy Wilder, the director, with Downes's stylishness and verve that he wrote him into the script as a Victorian policeman.'

Older habitués (and sons of habitués) of the Players' Theatre Music Hall will remember the lively chairmanship of **Robin Hunter**, who, after a dispute with the management, went on to establish the now equally missed Abba Dabba Music Hall in the 1980s. In 1987 he contributed to what may have been Granada TV's supreme achievement in its long-running Sherlock Holmes series, playing Major John Sholto in *The Sign of Four*. (In 1932 his father Ian Hunter had played Dr Watson to Arthur Wontner's Sherlock Holmes in the entertaining ARP film of the same story.) **Max Harris**, who died on 13 March aged 85, was primarily a jazz pianist, who was happiest working with the likes of Stéphane Grappelli. However, he will be best remembered for his radio and television theme music, for *Round the Horne*, *Porridge*, *Open All Hours*, *Poldark* — and the 1965 BBC TV series *Sherlock Holmes*, with Douglas Wilmer and Nigel Stock (no composer was credited for the 1968 series with Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock).

M E Rich has alerted me to the very recent death from cancer of **Norman M Davis** ('The Grosvenor Square Furniture Van', BSI). 'A sweet and courtly fellow', in Mary Ellen's words, Norm Davis was an unashamed punster and the pawkiest humorist in that most light-hearted Sherlockian society, The Pawky Humorists.

In an attractively presented 32-page booklet entitled *The Partial Art of Detection* (The Shoso-in Press, 2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181-0012, Japan; $8.00) Balaji Narashimhan presents 235 observations from Sherlock Holmes, arranged alphabetically by story (in Prof. Christ's title abbreviations) and indexed under eighty-two key words. I have to say that the index appears capricious: none of the words from 'Results without causes are much more impressive' [STOC] appears in the index; and although the index word 'Nice' refers us to sixty-nine separate quotations none of them actually contain that word! Still, it's a neat little book, good for dipping into. It's available from the publisher or from Classic Specialties, PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA.

A revised and corrected edition of Thomas B Wheeler's book *Finding Sherlock's London* 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. Each location has the appropriate information from the Canon, so the book 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.

David Stuart Davies's fifth Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Veiled Detective* is due on 30 April from Robert Hale Ltd (Clerkenwell House, Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0HT) at £18.99. The blurb says: 'It is 1880 and a young Sherlock Holmes arrives in London to pursue a career as a private detective. He soon attracts the attention of the criminal mastermind, Professor James Moriarty, who decides that he must control this fledgling genius. What happens next is both shocking and thrilling.' There'll be a launch and signing at Murder One in Charing Cross Road at 7.00pm on 11 May. I'll review the book in the next DM.

Michael Kurland's first two Professor Moriarty novels, *The Infernal Device* and *Death by Gaslight*, have been collected, with a new short story, 'The Paradol Paradox', in a big paperback omnibus, *The Infernal Device and Others* (St Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010, USA; $18.95). The third Moriarty novel, *The Great Game*, is new in hardback from St Martin's at $24.95.

Karen Murdock asks me to point out that the price of her booklet *Good for the Cause: Sherlockians in the Newspapers* (see DM 240) includes postage to anywhere in the world. Copies are available from the author at 1212 Yale Avenue Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55414-3123, USA at $7.00 (US dollar checks or bills only, please). Karen also reminds me of *A Sherlock Holmes Almanac*, originally compiled and privately printed by Svend Petersen BSI in 1956 and now revised, enlarged and updated by Carl William Thiel, Karen Murdock, Frank Darlington, Edwin Christenson BSI and George A Vanderburgh (Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada; $36.00). It's a monumental day-by-day guide to the Sherlockian year, exemplified by the entries (sans details, which are considerable) for 11 January: 1753, death of Sir Hans Sloane; 1864, opening of Charing Cross Station; 1886,

birth of George Zucco; 1905, birth of Dr Julian Wolff; 1947, founding of The Pondicherry Lodge of Springfield, Illinois; 1952, birth of Nicholas Utechin.

221Books (760 E Carlisle Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361, USA; website www.221books.com) is holding a sale of Sherlockiana during the month of April, with 50% off selected books and 20% off the rest. Meanwhile there are new catalogues available from **Janus Books** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; website janusbooks.com) and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

You can hardly have missed the news that the Conan Doyle papers, the subject of such wrangling between Dame Jean's lawyers and the representatives of her late brothers, have been 'unexpectedly found' in a lawyer's office in London. Richard Green certainly believed that they should have formed part of Dame Jean's bequest to the British Library, but instead they will be auctioned at Christie's in London on 19 May. There are over 3,000 items (not all papers), estimated at a total £2,000,000. Check Christie's website at www.christies.com.

You may not know, however, that on 16 November Sotheby's in New York will auction the first forty pages of the manuscript of 'The Solitary Cyclist' (estimate $150,000 - $200,000), and Sidney Paget's original drawing of the struggle at the Reichenbach Falls ($50,000 - $75,000). *[*Phew!*]* Website www.sothebys.com.

At www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/ you can see a digitised image of Conan Doyle's application to use the British Museum Reading Room. Thanks to Forbes Gibb for bringing it to my attention. As mentioned some time ago, Forbes has started a Doylean collection at Edinburgh University Library; if you'd like to help enhance the collection, please contact him at forbes.gibb@cis.strath.ac.uk, or write to Forbes Gibb, Professor of Information Science, Graduate School of Informatics, Dept of Computer & Information Sciences, University of Strathclyde, 26 Richmond Street, Glasgow G1 1XH. You can find out more about the collection at www.lib.ed.ac.uk/about/bgallery/Gallery/records/twenty/gibb.html..

Roger Llewellyn continues touring with David Stuart Davies's splendid play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* He'll be at **The Open Air Theatre** in Regent's Park, London (0207 486 2431) for a late night studio performance on 3 July; and at the **Town Hall Theatre** at High Wycombe (01494 514444) on 20 October. And on 14 November he'll be at the **Manoel Theatre** in Malta!

On 29 March *The Daily Mirror*, a paper not noted for sober factual reporting, claimed that **Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie** are to star as Holmes & Watson in a one-off drama for ITV1. David Stuart Davies was told by Fry's agent that there is nothing concrete so far, and the alleged screenwriter knows nothing of the project. Is it significant that the report appeared so close to April the first?

Acorn Media UK (Freepost LON10524, 10 Smith's Yard, London SW18 4ZZ; www.acornmediauk.com) continues to release classic television drama on video and (increasingly) DVD. The new catalogue has Anthony Valentine as Raffles, Alan Dobie as Sergeant Cribb, Kenneth More as Father Brown, both Ian Carmichael and Edward Petherbridge as Lord Peter Wimsey, Peter Davison as Albert Campion — oh, and Christopher Lee as Sherlock Holmes.

Even more exciting is that in June BBC Worldwide will release on DVD *[*at last! at last!*]* all the surviving films from the 1968 *Sherlock Holmes* series with Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock. There'll be three releases: *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* ; *The Hound of the Baskervilles* ; and *The Sign of Four* and *The Blue Carbuncle*. Each DVD costs £9.99, and you can order them online now at www.bbcshop.com.

The shop is also taking orders for *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, volume 2*, written by Bert Coules and starring Clive Merrison & Andrew Sachs as Holmes and Watson. According to the website, it will be released on 7 June, on cassette at £10.99 or CD at £15.99. I understand that the series is due for transmission in May, and it seems likely that not all the plays will be included in the officially available recordings.

A reminder that our New York member Mia Albright will present a performed reading of her play *The Strange Case of the Missing Dr Watson* in the Theatre Bar at **The Victoria** pub (10A Strathearn Place — near Paddington Station) at 7.00pm on 21 May. There'll be no advance booking or formal charge, but donations will be appreciated. You can send enquiries to mialbright@hotmail.com.

While I think of it, my own play *The Great Detective: The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* will be staged at **The Old Court Theatre** in Chelmsford at 7.45pm on 21 August. Tickets will be available from the Civic Theatre box office on 01245 606505.

Philip Attwell notes that there'll be a production of the musical *Jack the Ripper* (no author mentioned) at **The Royal Theatre** in Northampton, at 7.30pm on 15 June, and at 2.30pm and 7.30pm on 16 June. The box office is on 01604 626222.

The Deerstalkers of Welshpool now have their own website at <www.welshpooldeerstalkers.co.uk>. You can also find information about them at <www.bbc.co.uk>; under *Search the Web* type 'Sherlock Holmes', BBC only, scroll down to *Mid Wales* and click on *Deerstalkers of Welshpool*.

Periodicals received. ***Mayday Mayday***, March and April 2004, and ***The Chronicler***, March 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, March 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 2004 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, March/April 2004 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, BC, Canada V7P 3C6). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, April 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***SNOB***, Winter 2003/04 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Jan Kipping, Schürbeker Str. 2, 22087 Hamburg, Germany) *[*still an excellent journal, nearly all in German, of course; **SNOB** incorporates both **The Soft-nosed Bullet-in** and **The Striking (T)Rifles***]*. ***Practice Notes***, March 2004 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Brian Scrivener, 94 Reigate Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3JJ).

The Whaling News, January, February & March 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, Summer issue 2004 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Baker Street Bugle***, issue 18 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2004 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Torr***, Spring 2004 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA). ***The Illustrious Clients*** News, March 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN, 46077, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Lady Day (Spring) 2004 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***The Lost Club Journal***, no. 3 (Roger Dobson, 182 Barns Road, Oxford OX4 3RG; and Mark Valentine, Stable Cottage, Priest Bank Road, Kildwick, Keighley, West Yorks. BD20 9BH) *[*not a Sherlockian organ per se, but a magazine for all who champion neglected authors; this issue contains a piece on August Derleth's creation Solar Pons — 'the Sherlock Holmes of Praed Street').*

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, March 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 242 25 May 2004

Percy Metcalfe, who died on 24 March at the age of eighty-four, was a barrister who became, says The Times, 'the doyen of law reporters in the criminal appeal courts'. He is listed among the members of our Society in the very first issue of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, and he contributed to the SHJ and other Sherlockian publications over a period of forty years. He was a frequent and amiable attender at our meetings until quite recently.

Film designer and art director **Michael Stringer**, who died aged seventy-nine on 7 March, created the look of *Genevieve*, *The Sundowners*, *Robin and Marian*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and many others, including the 1983 film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Ian Richardson. Tall and thin, with deep-set eyes and a sepulchral voice, **Philip Locke** (d. 19 April, aged seventy-six) was an actor of integrity and versatility, capable of an intensely moving Lear at the Young Vic in 1980, and of a masterly comic performance as Sir Roderick Glossop in the TV series *Jeeves and Wooster*. His Professor Moriarty in the 1974 Royal Shakespeare Company production of William Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes* is summarised by The Independent as a 'glittering-eyed embodiment of evil ... a vital element of the evening's heady, energy-fused panache, a worthy opponent to John Wood's masterly Holmes'. If only that production had been committed to film! Before becoming head of BBC Television drama in 1969, a post he held till 1981, **Shaun Sutton** directed many plays and serials, including *The Bruce-Partington Plans* and *The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax* with Douglas Wilmer & Nigel Stock in 1965. He died on 14 May aged eighty-four.

The auction of **The Conan Doyle Collection** at Christie's in London last Wednesday was an exceptionally interesting occasion. Much of the successful bidding was by two antiquarian dealers, Peter Stern of New York and Bernard Quaritch of London, but the British Library acquired over 1200 documents and Doug Wrigglesworth, for the Conan Doyle Collection in Toronto, bought a lot of papers relating to Canada. Nearly a quarter of the lots failed to reach their reserve prices, but the British Library has hopes of acquiring some of them. The auction has been well covered in the better papers, and The Independent for 19 May has an interview with Charles Foley, one of the beneficiaries of Anna Conan Doyle's will, explaining the situation behind the sale.

David Stuart Davies has written several good Sherlock Holmes novels, but his imaginative curiosity has been most evident in the 1997 novella *Sherlock Holmes and The Reichenbach Secret* and, of course, in his play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* And now we have *The Veiled Detective* (Robert Hale Ltd, Clerkenwell House, 45-47 Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0HT; £18.99). We are used to the idea that some of what we read in the Canon is wrong — the dating of 'Wisteria Lodge' to 1892 when Holmes was believed dead after the Reichenbach incident, Watson's knowledge of Professor Moriarty at the time of the Birlstone murder in the late 1880s and his ignorance of him in 1891 — but *The Veiled Detective* requires us to accept that a great deal of what we know from the Canon is wrong. For a start, Dr Watson is actually Dr Walker, and he was cashiered from his regiment rather than honourably invalided out. This all sounds outrageous, but really it's no more so than the premise for Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven-per-Cent Solution* (and much less so than that for Michael Dibdin's *The Last Sherlock Holmes Story*). Walker's predicament leads plausibly to his recruitment by Professor Moriarty to infiltrate Sherlock Holmes's household, and the result, for the reader, is a remarkable tension between the familiar investigations and the hitherto unrevealed machinations of the arch-criminal through his reluctant underling. I'm not wholly sure of the meaning of the title, but *The Veiled Detective* gives us an intelligent, thought-provoking and fresh view of one of the great friendships in all literature, without diminishing the stature of either Holmes or Watson.

The setting of *Murder in the Bath* is actually the great Roman bath in the city of, er, Bath. Four years ago I gave a very appreciative review to Michael Mallory's collection *The Adventures of the Second Mrs Watson*, and I'm delighted to welcome Amelia Watson's first novel-length adventure. A part of the pleasure of these tales is the mutual distrust between Sherlock Holmes and Amelia Watson. Holmes knew where he stood with Mary Watson, but he thinks that Amelia takes up too much of the doctor's time. She has quite a different view on the matter, and as she is pretty much the detective's match in ingenuity, intelligence and stubbornness the relationship is rather tense. There's also an atmospheric and ingenious mystery involving a pagan cult and murder by a dead man, and a style that's light and engaging. *Murder in the Bath* (Deadly Alibi Press, PO Box 5947, Vancouver, WA 98668-5947, USA; $16.99) has deservedly attracted plaudits from the critics, though I'd have to take issue with the one who says, 'Pack your deerstalker and your gasogene because Mallory takes you on a wonderful trip to 1905 Bath', since a gasogene is not the sort of thing one would travel with. They're damn' heavy for one thing!

Brian Freemantle's *The Holmes Inheritance* (Severn House Ltd, 9-15 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1DF; £18.99) could have benefited from some of Mr Mallory's lightness, as the writing is distressingly clumsy ('The omens were ominous immediately prior to my leaving London.' Well, of course they were ominous. Otherwise they wouldn't be omens). Having said that, the story itself is more what we should expect from a master of the espionage novel. Mr Freemantle's protagonist is not Sherlock Holmes but his son, the result of a relationship with a very unconventionally-minded nurse while recovering after Reichenbach. In 1913 Sebastian Holmes is sent, entirely unofficially, to the USA to investigate pro-German factions seeking to influence American policy in the inevitable forthcoming conflict. The relationships between Sebastian, Sherlock, Mycroft (now Cabinet Secretary) and Winston Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty and instigator of the mission) are subtle, tense and believable. It's a pity that the book seems to have been written in a hurry and not checked by an editor before being printed.

On the Level with Conan Doyle, and Other Journeys by Michael L Higgs (Hansom Press Ltd, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6; Cdn$12.95, US$10.95, £6.50) is a second collection of short essays from the roving reporter of the Stormy Petrels of British Columbia. All twenty-one were first published in *The Petrel Flyer*, and all will bear re-reading. Mike Higgs sees the world with a fresh, amused and intelligent eye. Who else would take the imaginative step from a Canadian newspaper report about a limb transplant to Holmes's journey through Persia, amputees in the Canon, one of Conan Doyle's less successful horror stories, and one of his most impassioned campaigns against injustice? The author's travels take him to Bart's Hospital, the Opera House in Warsaw, the Panama Canal, Transylvania, Persia, the museum of the Berkshire regiment, Netley — and elsewhere. He is a most engaging guide.

In his twelve-page pamphlet *A Case of Identity* (Sherlock Holmes Museet, Egebjergvej 206, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark; Kr.50) Anders Fage-Pedersen makes a curiously convincing case for the common identity of Sherlock Holmes and Guy Boothby's sinister mastermind Dr Nikola. At the very least he emphasises the literary debt that Boothby owed to Conan Doyle.

Basil Copper wrote *Solar Pons versus the Devil's Claw* (Sarob Press, Ty Newydd, Four Roads, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire SA177 4SF; £25.00 or $45.00) nearly thirty years ago, but it remained unpublished until now. Copper has continued the chronicles of August Derleth's sleuth, 'the Sherlock Holmes of Praed Street', with great success over several volumes, and it's good to have this novel available at last. The introduction is one of the last things Richard Lancelyn Green wrote. Besides the limited hardback edition there's a deluxe edition priced at £55.00 or $95.00.

Sherlock Holmes' Lost Adventure: The True Story of the Giant Rats of Sumatra by Lauren Steinhauer (iUniverse Inc., 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln, NE 68512, USA) is available as a paperback at $12.95 or as an Adobe e-book. At the author's website, www.laurensteinhauer.com, you can read a couple of chapters and gauge how well he's captured the Canonical style.

An author who has done it with consistent success is June Thomson, whose latest volume, *The Secret Notebooks of Sherlock Holmes*, is newly out from Allison & Busby (Suite 111, Bon Marche Centre, 241-251 Ferndale Road, London SW9 8BJ) at £18.99.

Due shortly from Black Coat Press (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA) is a new English translation of Maurice Leblanc's dazzling mystery thriller *The Hollow Needle*, which pits Sherlock Holmes against the 'gentleman-cambrioleur' Arsène Lupin (and incidentally restores the detective's true name). This edition is introduced by Kim Newman, and also includes the short story 'Sherlock Holmes Arrives Too Late'.

Susie Drost tells me that **The Mongolia Society** can import editions of Sherlock Holmes in the Mongolian (cyrilliz) script. If you collect the Canon in different languages, contact Susie for details at: The Mongolia Society, 322 Goodbody Hall, Indiana University, 1011 East Third, Bloomington, IN 47405-7005, USA (e-mail monsoc@indiana.edu).

There are new catalogues available from **Janus Books** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; website janusbooks.com) and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Martin Hirst, a former member of our Society, invites offers for two single issues of *The Strand Magazine*. June 1904 includes 'The Three Students', and March 1923 has 'The Creeping Man'. Martin says, 'They are in good condition as they have had plastic covers made for them by a previous owner, but the earlier one the front cover has become detached from the rest of the book.' Drop a line to Martin at The Old School House, 21B Pool Green, Neston, Corsham, Wilts. SN13 9SN; or e-mail gizmomrsduck@aol.com.

Ted Schulz recently bought a copy of the Royal Edition of volume one of *The Strand Magazine*, inscribed by Sidney Paget 'To dear Josky from Sidney'. Does anyone know who Josky was? (It might be Fosky or possibly Tosky.)

The Barnstormers Theatre in Tamworth, New Hampshire, will put on William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes* from 6 to 10 July. Get information from PO Box 434, Tamworth, NH 03886, USA; or check the website at www.barnstormerstheatre.com. Tim Evers will perform his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* at the **Cody Stage** in Cody, Wyoming on 9 & 10 August. You can e-mail Tim for details at TheatreBahHumbug@aol.com. Maldon Drama Group will stage Tim Kelly's play *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at the Town Hall in Maldon, Essex, from 14 to 16 October. For information and tickets call George Greenham on 01621 854289.

Forbes Gibb notes that there are three records for Conan Doyle and his family on the American Family Immigration Center website at www.ellisisland.org. 'You have to register — but it's free!'

Take a look at www.petitiononline.com/CCJB2005/. Please read the petition to dedicate a garden space within Clapham Common in memory of Jeremy Brett and consider signing it. This is the work of Kelley Sweat and the Jeremy Brett Memorial Group.

The second series of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, written by Bert Coules and starring Clive Merrison and Andrew Sachs as Holmes & Watson, began transmission on BBC Radio 4 at 2.15pm last Tuesday. Four of the plays (*The Abergavenny Murder*, *The Shameful Betrayal of Miss Emily Smith*, *The Determined Client* and *The Tragedy of Hanbury Street*) are being released on both cassette and CD. The fifth is *The Striking Success of Miss Franny Blossom*.

Amanda Field is at Southampton University studying Basil Rathbone's Sherlock Holmes films. She asks if anyone can provide her with access to the pressbooks for *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *SH & the Voice of Terror*, *SH & the Secret Weapon*, *SH in Washington*, *SH Faces Death*, *The Spider Woman* and *The House of Fear*. Please contact her at amanda@oscar.freeserve.co.uk.

Geraldine Beare is a member of RSVP: **The Research Society for Victorian Periodicals**, whose conference entitled 'Image and Text, Image in Text' will be held at the University of Ghent in Belgium from 8 to 10 July. Among the many panel discussions will be 'Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Stories: Crime and Mystery from the Text to the Illustrations'. I think it's too late to register now, but you can get information from Griet Vandermassen at the Department of English, Rozier 44, 9000 Gent, Belgium.

The CD-ROM *The World of Sherlock Holmes*, which I reviewed enthusiastically some time ago, is now available at just £9.95 including postage and VAT — a real bargain. Visit the website www.worldofholmes.com or send a sterling cheque payable to Peter Brown, to World of Holmes, 7 Candover Street, London W1W 7DN. Or e-mail <enquiries@worldofholmes.com>.

Sherlock no. 59 features Robert Sanderson on *CSI*; Paul M Chapman on the gothic world of Sherlock Holmes ; David Stuart Davies on the Golden Age of crime fiction; Calum McCleod on Lee Childs; M J Elliott on TV incarnations of Philip Marlowe; Gavin Collinson on the cinematic enemies of Sherlock Holmes ... There's a new story by June Thomson, and a host of further articles. 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.

Periodicals received. ***Quivers on the Web***, April 2004 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, May 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, April 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, April & May 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The School Report***, Summer Term 2004 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Whaling News***, April & May 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Baker Street Bugle***, issue 19 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7BA). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2004 (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). ***Three-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, April-May 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker pkblocker@comcast.net). ***Mayday Mayday***, May 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Communication***, May-June 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, May 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, April 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 243 27 June 2004

The screenwriter **Robert Lees** was murdered at his Los Angeles home on 13 June, at the age of ninety-two. His many successful Hollywood movies included the 1943 Olsen & Johnson vehicle, whose opening featured Basil Rathbone's Holmes telling Nigel Bruce's Watson, 'I am Sherlock Holmes. I know everything!' Gideon Hill passes on the news that **Gerald C Conroy**, a leading Sherlockian in Philadelphia, died of a heart attack on 23 May.

After the death of August Derleth in 1972, his friend Basil Copper was authorised to write further adventures of Solar Pons, 'the Sherlock Holmes of Praed Street', which he did, with remarkable success. For various reasons the longest of those exploits has remained unpublished until now. Was it worth the wait? Well, *Solar Pons versus the Devil's Claw* (Sarob Press, Ty Newydd, Four Roads, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire SA17 4SF; £25.00) is neither top quality Copper nor top quality Pons, but it is a clever, atmospheric mystery, rather reminiscent of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. As Vincent Starrett said many years ago, Solar Pons is not Sherlock Holmes; he knows it, and he knows that we know it. That fact actually adds to his appeal, whether the chronicles are from Derleth's pen or Copper's. Richard Lancelyn Green's introduction to *Solar Pons versus the Devil's Claw* is one of the last things he wrote for publication.

In *The Secret Notebooks of Sherlock Holmes* (Allison & Busby, Bon Marché Centre, 241 Ferndale Road, London SW9 8BJ; £18.99) June Thomson gives us the authentic Holmes. She is one of only three current authors who can consistently capture the Watson/Doyle style to something near perfection, and the stories she writes are all of a type with the Canonical originals. Many people have imagined what might lie behind Watson's tantalising hints of unrecorded cases; *The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes* and Bert Coules's radio series *The Further Adventures* are at the top end of the scale, but there are many attempts that belong in the depths of pastiche hell. June Thomson's five collections are among the best: in this latest you can read very satisfactory accounts of the atrocious behaviour of Colonel Upwood at the Nonpareil Card Club, the disappearance of the British barque *Sophy Anderson*, the mysterious death of Cardinal Tosca, and four others. I should add that the author's penchant for distracting footnotes, ostensibly the work of a Dr John F Watson, continues, and that, oddly, the publishers have not provided a list of contents.

The Watson/Doyle style is deceptively hard to reproduce. Lauren Steinhauer makes a brave stab at it in *Sherlock Holmes' Lost Adventure: The True Story of the Giant Rats of Sumatra* (iUniverse Inc., 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln, NE 68512, USA; $12.95). More important, however, is that he's produced a breathlessly exciting short novel that involves Holmes and Watson with an evil genius whose accomplishments dwarf those of ex-Professor Moriarty. Here you'll find science gone mad. You'll meet Charles Darwin, Gregor Mendel and a descendant of Charles Babbage (no, none of them is the villain). You'll encounter a Victorian computer and the mysterious wisdom of an eastern cult of illuminati. And of course there are those giant rats — yes, rats in the plural. It's a heady mixture, and it would make a grand movie, should the makers of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* be looking for another property. This is not really Conan Doyle's Holmes, but it is jolly good fun. Check Mr Steinhauer's website at www.laurensteinhauer.com. *[*I see that in an earlier DM I erroneously referred to Lauren Steinhauer as 'she'. Apologies. I must have been thinking of my new great-niece, whose name is Lauren.*]*

Sherlock Holmes' Lost Adventure is rather in the tradition of the classic French pulp fiction, and the Black Coat Press (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA) is doing a splendid job in publishing the best of this extraordinary genre, so like and yet so unlike its American and British equivalents, in English translation. One of the great heroes a century ago was Maurice Leblanc's creation, the gentleman burglar Arsène Lupin (so much more stylish than his British prototype Raffles, and so much less sanctimonious) who faced Sherlock Holmes on four occasions in his varied career. In *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Hollow Needle*, newly translated by Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier ($20.95), we have the first encounter and the last between the master burglar and the master detective. The short story 'Sherlock Holmes Arrives Too Late' sets the tone admirably, pitting the mercurial Gallic intelligence of the one against the remorseless Anglo-Saxon logic of the other. There is a fiendishly difficult puzzle, an apparently impossible robbery, a touch of romance — and as this is Leblanc's book, not Conan Doyle's, Lupin wins the duel of wits, but only just. 'The Hollow Needle', a short novel, is naturally on a larger scale, and, although Holmes plays a vital, or rather fatal, rôle in the story, Lupin's principal opponent here is Isidore Beautrelet, a tribute to Gaston Leroux's young detective Rouletabille. Like many of Lupin's exploits, this is essentially a treasure hunt, requiring the solution of some cunningly devised clues, but the devil-may-care character of the earlier tale gives way to a deeper and darker conclusion. To round off the book, the translators have written a brief, mellow tale, 'Escape Not the Thunderbolt', recounting a final meeting between Lupin and Holmes. They've also provided an informative afterword, and there's an enthusiastic introduction by Kim Newman. Highly recommended! Later this year, to complete the Lupin-Holmes affair, the Black Coat Press will issue *The Blonde Phantom*. There's a website at www.blackcoatpress.com.

From the same publisher comes *The Night Orchid: Conan Doyle in Toulouse* by Jean-Claude Dunyach, with a foreword by David Brin ($20.95). The work of the award-winning French science-fiction writer is not unknown to the cognoscenti, but it's good to have fourteen of his best stories in an attractive collection. Only the title story is really relevant here, involving as it does both Arthur Conan Doyle and the young George Edward Challenger in a thrilling encounter with a monster from the distant past. There's also a beautiful and brave young woman named Irène Ader *[*sic*]* and a flying machine. All this in the French city of Toulouse! It's a story that would not have been out of place in *The Strand Magazine* a hundred years ago. One quibble: the description of Conan Doyle suggests an older man than the thirty-one-year-old he was in 1890.

Newly out from Calabash Press (PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., Canada V0K 1A0) is *Out of the Shadows: The Untold Story of Arthur Conan Doyle's First Family* by Georgina Doyle. Biographies of Conan Doyle have tended to concentrate on the period of his second marriage and on the children of that marriage — Denis, Adrian and Jean. But a great part of his creative life predated that period. Georgina, widow of Arthur's nephew John, fills in many of the gaps in our knowledge of his marriage to Louise and of their children, Kingsley and Mary. Prices excluding postage are (hardback) Cdn$55.00, US$42.50, £25.00; (softback) Cdn$35.00, US25.00, £15.00. Check the website at www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html.

The first two volumes of *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Leslie S Klinger, will be published by WW Norton & Co. on 30 November. Volume three, containing the long stories, is due in 2005. There's a website at www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com. The publisher's British address is: WW Norton Ltd, Castle House, 75/5 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT. *[*There are three volumes to come in* ***The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*** *from Gasogene Books — a separate project entirely.*]*

Bill Barnes (19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) has published *The Hounds Collection, volume 9* — sixty-two pages of scholarship and wit by members of **The Hounds of the Internet**. The cost, post-paid, is £6.50, US$12.00, Cdn$16.00 or EUR10.00. Currency notes preferred, but cheques can be made out to R W Barnes — or pay by PayPal to bbarnes@ozemail.com.au.

The great Sherlockian bibliographer **Ronald Burt De Waal** is selling his collection through Sam Weller's Zion Bookstore (254 S. Main, Salt Lake City, UT 84101, USA; e-mail tony@samwellers.com; website www.samwellers.com). The collection is offered en bloc for $80,000, transportation costs to be determined.

There are new catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); and **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (George Vanderburgh, Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0; gav@bmts.com) — due late 2004 or early 2005 is *VS on SH: Vincent Starrett on Sherlock Holmes*, Starrett's complete Sherlockian writings compiled and edited by Karen Murdock.

Susie Drost tells me that **The Mongolia Society** (322 Goodbody Hall, Indiana University, 1011 East Third, Bloomington, IN 47405-7005, USA; e-mail monsoc@indiana.edu) currently has available *Stories about Sherlock Holmes Book 6* (FIVE, SPEC & ABBE) and *Book 7* (DANC, CROO & SECO) in the Mongolian (cyrilliz) script, priced at $30.00 each, plus postage.

MC Black has several copies of the very collectible catalogue from the auction of the Conan Doyle Collection at Christie's in London on 19 May. They're available at £10.00 each, including Royal Mail special delivery, to members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, the money going to the Parkinson's Disease Society, from MC at Hardknott, 25 Chadwell, Ware, Herts. SG12 9JY. Full details are on the Society's website www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

Conan Doyle's notebook from his years as a medical student was bought by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and is on temporary display at the Surgeons Hall museum. The book also contains the manuscript of 'The American's Story', the second story he wrote for publication. The College will celebrate its quincentenary next year. Forbes Gibb notes that Glasgow City Council bought the papers relating to Conan Doyle's long campaign to free the wrongfully convicted Oscar Slater. These papers now complement the records already held at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow.

The July issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* (Unit 101, 140 Wales Farm Road, London W3 6UG) contains Richard Dalby's report on the auction.

At Christie's in New York on 9 June first editions of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* sold for a total of $9,560, and the manuscript of *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire* fetched $399,500.

Sherlock no. 60 features Natasha Cooper on Margery Allingham's centenary; David Stuart Davies on the fallible Philip Trent; Phil Rickman on the origin of *The Hound*; Mark Palmer on the novels of John Sandford; Calum McCleod on Anne Perry; Gavin Collinson on the new DVDs from the 1968 Sherlock Holmes TV series ... There's a new Sergeant Cribb story by Peter Lovesey, and a host of further articles. 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.

Not only will Stephen Fry & Hugh Laurie play Holmes & Watson for ITV (Fry says, 'I'm going to have to go on a very fast diet'), but Rupert Everett will be Holmes to Ian Hart's Watson for BBC TV, in a follow-up to Tiger Aspect's 2002 production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. This one will be an original script by Allan Cubitt and may have the unoriginal title of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

The dates for Tim Evers' performance of his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* at the **Cody Stage** (1110 Beck Avenue, Cody, Wyoming 82414-3624, USA; phone 307 587 7467) have been changed and extended to 19 July - 3 August. You can e-mail Tim for details at TheatreBahHumbug@aol.com.

Roger Llewellyn will be at **The Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park** for a late-night studio performance of *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* at 11.00pm on 3 July (020 7486 2431). On 16 August he'll be at the **Adam Smith Centre** in Kirkcaldy, from 17 to 24 August in Musselburgh, on 3 September in Cumbernauld, and on 7 September in Paisley. Then from 23 September to 13 October he'll be touring Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection in Toronto have released a CD recording of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, an abridgement of Edith Meiser's 1941 radio script. No recording of the original six-part broadcast with Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce is known to exist. The new disc costs postpaid Cdn$25.00, US$20.00 or £12.00, from the Friends, c/o Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4; acdfriends@sympatico.ca. Canadian or US checks, or Visa, Mastercard or American Express accepted.

Check David Ian Davies's **One Voice Recordings** website at www.onevoicerecordings.com for information about Mr Davies's growing list of Sherlock Holmes recordings, including *A Gallery of Holmes*, more than nine hours of readings that can be downloaded from Audible.com.

But the doyen of Sherlockian readers is David Timson, whose tenth volume, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes II*, is due in July from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ).

Due on 3 September from Digital Jesters (Unit 4, Weltech Centre, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL7 2AA) is a new computer game, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Silver Earring*. The website at www.sherlockholmes.game.com should be up now.

The Poor Folk Upon The Moors will spend Saturday 31 July in London, including lunch at the *Sherlock Holmes* pub and a lengthy guided walk, plus optional extras. Contact Vosper Arthur for details at Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR.

The Sydney Passengers (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) will celebrate their 20th anniversary over the weekend of 11-13 June 2005 — the depths of winter!

Periodicals received. ***The Parallelogram***, June 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Research File XI*** and ***Irregular Newsletter***, June 2004 (**Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Magic Door***, Summer 2004 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***The Camden House Journal***, June 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, June 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, May/June 2004 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, BC, Canada V7P 3C6). ***Mayday Mayday*** and ***The Chronicler***, June 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, June 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, June 2004 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, May 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2004 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, # 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 244 31 July 2004

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

Peter Blau reports the death on 8 June of **Eric H Silk** ('The Blue Carbuncle', BSI), former Commissioner of the Ontario Police and co-founder of **The Bootmakers of Toronto**, whose constitution he drafted.

To close their 2001 *Footprints of the Hound* symposium, **The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Public Library** and **The Bootmakers of Toronto** produced the first performance in sixty years of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in Edith Meiser's radio script. Bill Nadel, *the* expert on Sherlockian radio, condensed the script from three hours to one, Doug Elliott assembled a talented cast of professional and amateur actors, and the play was presented as on one of the rare occasions when Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce and their colleagues broadcast before a theatre audience. Now the production has been committed to CD. Since no recording exists of the original 1941 serial, this is the only chance we're likely to have of hearing the play. Chris Cocoluzzi and Frank Quinlan wisely don't attempt to impersonate Rathbone and Bruce, but the format of the original radio series has been retained, with the presenter and interlocutor Knox Manning (played by Earle Toppings) taking time out to publicise the sponsor's product, Grove's Bromo-Quinine. There are some doubtful British accents and some cracking good ones, which was also true of the original productions. A lot of people contributed to this recording, including the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, who provided Edith Meiser's script, and the result makes grand listening. I'd love to have been able to take part in it! You can order the disc from the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, c/o Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4; e-mail acdfriends@sympatico.ca. The price is a very reasonable Cdn$25.00, US$20.00 or £12.00, postpaid.

Another new CD, likewise boasting fine cover artwork by Chris Senior, is *Four from the Canon*, a two-disc set of readings by David Ian Davies of 'The Final Problem', 'The Resident Patient', 'The Beryl Coronet' and 'The Dying Detective'. Actually, these are not so much readings as full-blooded theatrical performances by a very versatile actor with a remarkable range of voices. I have a feeling that Mr Davies would have been thoroughly at home in radio drama of the 1930s and 40s. It is a pleasure to be carried away from the prosaic here and now to the London of a century ago, with its comforts, its excitement, its danger and its intrigue. For some reason the word 'swashbuckling' comes to mind. I should point out, though, that Mr Davies could have used the services of a director to correct his mispronunciations in 'The Final Problem'. The French phrase *Salle à Manger*, for instance, requires a soft G, and should not sound like 'Sallamanga', whereas the names *Gemmi* and *Meiringen* are German and require a hard G. Nevertheless, *Four from the Canon* is a worthy addition to David Ian Davies's list of Sherlockian recordings. It's available from One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA (e-mail ddavies858@aol.com).

(You can hear more of David Ian Davies's readings on-line, as he has recorded over twenty-one hours of Sherlock Holmes for Audible.com. And there's a thirty-six minute one-man play about Dr Crippen at www.rusc.com/software/2004.0/.14_Crippen.mp3. Mr Davies is a busy fellow! See also www.onevoicerecordings.com.)

This is a good time for Sherlock Holmes on spoken word. Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) have just released *The Return of Sherlock Holmes II*, comprising 'The Dancing Men', 'The Solitary Cyclist', 'The Priory School' and 'Charles Augustus Milverton', read by the excellent David Timson. Mr Timson's approach is less melodramatic than Mr Davies's, but no less engaging. The pacing of the narration is superbly judged, and the characters subtly but precisely portrayed. It had not occurred to me before that Hilton Cubitt might have spoken with a Norfolk accent, but he does so here, and it seems quite in character. Moreover, the accent sounds authentic, though it's one that is deceptively difficult to assume. The blunt honesty of Squire Cubitt, the dangerous confidence of Abe Slaney, the aristocratic hauteur of the Duke of Holdernesse, the false charm of Charles Augustus Milverton — all are exactly defined. As always, the readings are enhanced by music, Mendelssohn's string quartets in this case, chosen from the extensive Naxos catalogue. I doubt if, when he began six years ago with *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I*, David Timson intended to record the entire Holmes Canon, but he's more than half-way there now, and I very much hope that he does complete the project. Meanwhile, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes II*, on three CDs or three cassettes, is not to be missed.

The sixteen classic radio plays starring John Gielgud & Ralph Richardson as Holmes & Watson will be re-released on 8 November by Hodder Headline Audiobooks (338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH), this time in four 2-CD packs, at a rather steep £14.99 each.

New catalogues are available from **Janus Books** (PO Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; website janusbooks.com), **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; www.rupert-books.co.uk; and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk). The first two are specialists in Sherlockiana, the third in first editions.

Sherlock Holmes in Babylon, and Other Tales of Mathematical History, by Marlow Anderson, Victor J Katz & Robin Wilson, will be published on 31 August by the Mathematical Association of America (no address to hand), priced at £30.00.

Andars Hammerqvist reports, via Jon Lellenberg, that a new Swedish edition of the Canon is to be published, beginning in September with *A Study in Scarlet*, translated and edited by Mattias Bostrom.

Due in July 2005 from Chancery Law Publishing (The Atrium, Southern Gate, Terminus Road, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 8SQ) is *The Science of Sherlock Holmes*. No other details are currently available.

Things I wish I'd been told about in advance ... The English Literature sale at Sotheby's in London on 8 July included two first editions of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which fetched £2,400 and £2,160; two letters from Conan Doyle to Douglas Sladen, one mentioning that the Holmes stories had been translated into Arabic 'for the use of the Egyptian police force' (£2,160); the MS of a lecture in which ACD 'justifies the "death" of Sherlock Holmes and discusses his early career, literary influences and the importance of fiction' (£16,800); and other items of Doyleana and Holmesiana.

Adrian Nebbett's website at www.schoolandholmes.com includes, among much else, excellent indexes compiled by Mr Nebbett for more than twenty classic Sherlockian texts whose publishers neglected to provide them. They range from *The Private Life of*

Sherlock Holmes by Vincent Starrett and James Edward Holroyd's *Baker Street Byways* to *The Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes* by John Radford and June Thomson's *Holmes and Watson.*

Peter Blau reminds me that Randall Stock's site *The Best of Sherlock Holmes* at http://members.aol.com/shbest/ref/rfmsalph.htm is also well worth a look. Mr Stock covers the whereabouts of Conan Doyle manuscripts and copies of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887, the results of notable auctions of Doylean material, and much more.

The Lipstick Sherlock Holmes by E D Darling, 'a celebration of Conan Doyle's great detective and an exploration into the restrictions placed on women in the 19th century', will play at the **Marlborough Theatre** in Princes Street, Brighton, on 10, 11, 13 & 15 August (phone 01273 329433). See www.inaspace-theatre.co.uk for details.

Chelmsford Theatre Workshop will put on my entertainment *The Great Detective: The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* at **The Old Court Theatre** (Springfield Road, Chelmsford) on Saturday 21 August at 7.45pm. The box office number is 01245 606505.

A new dramatisation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Clive Francis will be staged at **Nottingham Playhouse** (Wellington Circus, Nottingham NG1 5AF) from 4 to 25 September. Phone 0115 941 9419; website www.nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk. On 30 September the play will open at **Salisbury Playhouse** (Malthouse Lane, Salisbury SP2 7RA; 01722 320333) running until 23 October. Website www.salisburyplayhouse.com. At either theatre it looks like a pretty exciting occasion. *[*Is this the actor and artist Clive Francis, who played Neville St Clair for Granada TV, and whose father Raymond was Watson to Alan Wheatley's Holmes in 1951?*]*

On Thursday, Friday & Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees from 17 September to 2 October, the Stagecrafters will present *Sherlock's Last Case* by Charles Marowitz. Website www.thestagecrafters.org/play1-sherlock.html. The **Stagecrafters Theater** is at 8130-34 Germantown Avenue, Chestnut Hill, in northwest Philadelphia. Phone 215 247 8881.

In November the wonderful duo Lip Service will be touring briefly with their deliciously silly parody *Move Over, Moriarty*. They'll be at **The Rose Theatre**, Ormskirk (01695 584468) on 4 November, at **Chester Gateway** (01244 340392) on 5 & 6, and at **Greenwich Theatre** (0208 858 7755) from 9 to 13 November.

From 16 to 20 November, Trinity Theatre Club of Tunbridge Wells will put on Brian Clemens's thriller *Holmes and the Ripper*. **Trinity Theatre** is in Church Road, and Tunbridge Wells is close to Crowborough. Phone 01892 678678. Website www.ttctw.com.

At the Sherlock Awards on 10 July I met the actor John Elnaugh, who is keen to stage a major musical, *The Baskerville Beast* by the American writer, musician and director Teddy Hayes. The producers are seeking investors for the show. Mr Elnaugh says, 'The budget will not be large for a musical but any investment involves significant risk: on the positive side there is the opportunity to be involved in something that, even in a small way, contributes to the legend that is Sherlock Holmes.' If the idea appeals, you can contact Baskerville Productions at 32 Hamlet Road, Chelmsford CM2 0ET (phone 01245 283559). *[*I should add that I have no connection with this project.*]*

The Sherlock Awards were sponsored and administered by *Sherlock* magazine and presented at Crime on Store bookshop in Great Russell Street, London. Congratulations to the winners, especially P D James for her Lifetime Achievement Sherlock and to Bert Coules for his Special Sherlock.

On Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, Premium Tours offer what they call the Ultimate Murder Mystery, an coach tour taking in the Old Bailey, the London Hospital and other sites, followed by a walk in the steps of Jack the Ripper, and returning from Tower Pier to the Embankment by boat. The evening ends with a fish and chip supper at the *Sherlock Holmes* pub. You can book on 0207 278 5300.

According to the Scottish press, David Barclay, the director of the shortest Sherlock Holmes movie ever is looking for a sponsor to host the film's premiere — in Scotland. *The Shortest Casebook of Sherlock Holmes (Ever)* lasts six minutes. Interested parties can contact Mr Barclay at scaredycat_inc@hotmail.com.

Belated thanks to Thierry Saint-Joanis and **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** for sending a copy of the famous French magazine *Le Monde* for 10 April. It's a special issue celebrating a century of *entente cordiale* between France and England, and it features thirteen pages about Sherlock Holmes, contributed by members of the SSHF.

Brian Pugh reports that Dunedin School now has planning permission to renovate Liberton Bank House, Arthur Conan Doyle's only surviving Edinburgh home, for school use. The curse of McDonald's has been staved off, it appears!

Also from Brian: the Conan Doyle Collection belonging to **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** has been removed from the town's Beacon Community College and is now in storage. It is hoped that the Collection will find a home in the proposed civic centre and museum. *[*There is a Conan Doyle Collection on display at nearby Groombridge Place, but it is separate from the Establishment's and lacks the family connection.*]*

The main feature at the Sherlockian Film Festival of **The Illustrious Clients** on 7 August will be the 1976 TV movie *Sherlock Holmes in New York*, with Roger Moore relishing the rôle of Holmes and John Huston chewing the scenery as Moriarty. The venue is the Glendale Mall Branch of Indianapolis Public Library. Get details from Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA)

Our member Rod Baser has come up with a very bold and exciting plan: a Sherlockian pilgrimage to India and the Andaman Islands. He will be heading for the subcontinent in a couple of months' time, to complete the extensive research necessary. You can find out more from his website at www.sherlockholmesinindia.com.

The Parallel Case of St Louis plans a symposium for the weekend of 20 - 22 May 2005, to be called *Holmes Under the Arch II*. The theme will be *The Sign of Four*. For information as it becomes available, write to Barbara Roscoe, 7101 Mardel, St Louis, MO 63109, USA; or e-mail <sherlock_holmes@sbcglobal.net>.

In the spring of 2005 **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will visit Switzerland again, provisionally taking in Geneva, Lausanne, Zermatt, Leukerbad, Kandersteg, Meiringen and Berne. Beekeeping will be a theme of the trip, and the title will be *Making a Beeline for Switzerland*. Watch the Society's website for developments at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

I reported in the last issue that on 11 - 13 June next year that grand Australian society **The Sydney Passengers** will celebrate *An Excellent Voyage: Twenty Years on the Hotspur*, and added, 'the depths of winter!' Bill Barnes, Captain of the Passengers, points out that the mid-June climate in Sydney compares very favourably to an English spring, with temperatures up to 68° Fahrenheit. Ask Bill about the Passengers' activities, at 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia.

Periodicals received. ***Irregular Newsletter***, July 2004 (**Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Whaling News***, June & July 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, July 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, July 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2004 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, July 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net).

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 245 31 August 2004

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

Jackson Beck, who died on 28 July, aged ninety-two, was probably the greatest American vocal actor from the 1930s to the 1990s, yet I can trace just one Sherlockian credit in his career: he was in the cast of the 1977 *CBS Radio Mystery Theater* production of *The Sign of Four*, starring Kevin McCarthy as Sherlock Holmes. **Bernard Levin**, who died on 7 August, aged seventy-five, was one of the most influential journalists of our time. The pleasures discussed in his 1983 book *Enthusiasms* did not include the Sherlockian game, which he dismissed in an essay in *The Times* on 9 October 1980, under the title 'The Footprints of a Gigantic Bore'.

On 11 August the composer **David Raksin** died, aged ninety-two. The most famous of his 400 scores for film and television is the haunting theme for *Laura*, but he also contributed music to the 1939 Fox classics *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (uncredited) and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. **Peter Woodthorpe** (d. 13 August aged seventy-two) had a dazzling early career on the stage, and became one of the great British radio actors; his performance as Gollum in the classic 1981 BBC Radio serial *The Lord of the Rings* was outstanding. His many TV and film appearances included Wilson Kemp in the now-lost 1968 BBC production of *The Greek Interpreter*, with Peter Cushing. Another great film composer, **Elmer Bernstein**, died on 19 August, aged eighty-two. Among classics such as *The Ten Commandments* and *The Magnificent Seven*, his many scores included a short animated film, *Sherlock Holmes in the Singular Case of the Plural Green Mustache*, shown at the IBM Pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair.

Peter Blau notes the death on 11 July of **Gerald R Clark**, former Pinkerton agent and founder of **The Mycroft Holmes Society** of Syracuse.

Fantastic Publishing (300 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 2TU) has issued a quite stunning set of four full-colour prints by Douglas Telford, illustrating key scenes in *A Study in Scarlet*. The style is intensely dramatic, in the tradition of the graphic novel rather than of the great illustrators of a century ago, but the atmosphere and the detail are entirely right. Mr Telford has, I think, the imagination of a film-maker, and the hand of a true artist. To give you an idea, the final scene, of Holmes and Watson discussing the case in their sitting-room, is shown from above, and the nearest object to us is a branch of the gasolier on the ceiling — yet everything we see is precisely proportioned and beautifully rendered. The prints are handmade, in a limited edition of 700 numbered and signed copies, on heavy art paper, and they come with a certificate of authenticity. They aren't cheap — individual prints are £60, or £199 for the set — but these are true collectors' items. The publisher's website is at www.fantasticpublishing.com.

Cenarth Fox has sent copies of issues 3 and 4 (August 2003 and August 2004) of his magazine *Nicholas Twit: The Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes*. As I observed of Nick Twit's earlier exploits, his use of Holmes's techniques makes perfect sense in these tales of 21st century Australia. Each issue contains three clever and exciting stories of his agency, *Basket Case Investigations*, and there are puzzles and Sherlockian Snippets to keep the young — or older — reader engaged. The fifth and final issue is due next year, and it promises to be quite something: Nicholas is taken in by faked psychic phenomena, and a journalist is about to expose him! The magazines are available in the Europe from Fox Plays UK, 84 Littlehaven Lane, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4JB (e-mail sales@nicholastwit.co.uk). And you can contact Cenarth Fox at Fox Plays, PO Box 2078, Richmond South, 3121 Victoria, Australia (e-mail editor@twit.biz). Check the website at www.twit.biz.

That admirable Florentine society **Uno Studio in Holmes** has published a very nice edition of *The Adventure of the Red Circle*, translated by Gianluca Salvatori into Italian — as *L'Avventura del Cerchio Rosso* — and more unexpectedly, but most appropriately, by Roberto d'Ajello into Neapolitan, in which language the title is *'O Cunto d' 'o Chirchio Russo*. The book is really aimed at the Italian reader, of course, and I blush to admit that my Italian is very limited. Still, even I can get some idea of the fascinating differences between the two tongues. I was interested to note that 'Attenta' is the same in both, but the Neapolitan equivalent of 'Pericolo' is 'Periculo'. There's a useful Neapolitan-Italian glossary, and altogether this is a quite fascinating little book. Copies may still be available from Prof. Gabriele Mazzoni, Viale Boccaccio, 273, 50053 Empoli (FI), Italy. You can also order from Gianluca Salvatori at mycroft@versilia.toscana.it and pay via PayPal. The society has a good website at www.unostudioinholmes.it.

Daniel Stashower calls Arthur Conan Doyle's short novel *The Mystery of Cloomber* a 'strange, confusing tale [featuring] a trio of Buddhist monks, apparently returned from the dead, who seek revenge against an English army officer for a crime committed forty years previously' — which neatly sums up its virtues and its deficiencies. For all its excesses and its misunderstanding of Buddhism, *The Mystery of Cloomber* is an exciting read. It's newly available in a sturdy paperback edition from Hesperus Press (4 Rickett Street, London SW6 1RU) at £6.99.

Many years ago Vincent Starrett wrote a charming episodic novel *Seaports in the Moon*, in which, he said, 'I brought together a number of romantic rascals I had loved in other men's books. Since some of them were centuries apart I had to find a plausible thread on which to string them, and this I found in the legend of the Fountain of Youth.' Perhaps for copyright reasons, Starrett didn't include Holmes and Watson in his novel, but in advance of his 118th birthday on 26 October this year Hugo Koch has supplied an additional chapter. *The Gift of Immortality is Bestowed in Baker Street* is a witty and affectionate tribute to both Vincent Starrett and Arthur Conan Doyle. Mr Koch has printed just 100 copies as an attractive 32-page booklet, and he has generously sent me three extra copies, which may be claimed by the first three British readers of the DM to contact me.

Susan Rice is preparing the 2004 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual*, to be titled *Dubious and Questionable Memories: A History of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes*. It's a chapter in the history of the Sherlockian game that will be of interest to many, in America and elsewhere. The annual will cost $11.00 ($12.00 international) from *the Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA — or you can order it online at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. They take PayPal.

Francis Perry has been investigating Sherlock Holmes titles available from print-on-demand publishers, and has discovered the following pastiches that you should be able to order from www.amazon.com. *The Final Four* by Harriet Brenda Reiff (it is revealed that Dr

Watson was in fact a woman); *Heroes and Villains: A Thomas Patrick Murderer-for-Hire Adventure* by Steve Jacks (this looks like an engagingly crazy fantasy involving all sorts of fictional and other characters); *Elementary, My Dear* by Jaron Summers (Sherlock Holmes, turned into a vampire by Moriarty, teams up with Dr Watson's great-great-granddaughter to hunt down the undead professor); *Dental Probe* by Betty Dickson Casteel ('a satirical murder mystery' involving private eye Shirley Locke-Holmes); *Indian River Trilogy: From Sherlock to Shuttle* by Donald W Holmes (the first section comprises three stories of Sherlock Holmes in Florida); *Infinity Express* by C Wayne Owens (Cecil W McCall follows his Uncle Shelby back through time to Victorian London, where they meet Arthur Conan Doyle and the 'real' Sherlock Holmes); *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing American Culture* by Kenneth Frawley (a satirical novel); *Watson Without Holmes* by Jeffrey B Embler (an amateur actor turns detective). Not yet available is *Death in a Victorian Manor: The Shropshire Manor Murder Case* by Otto A Schultz (the investigators are Holmes's cousins, Guy Vernon and his brother Dr Hector Vernon).

Also available is Rodger Garrick-Steele's much-trumpeted book *The House of the Baskervilles*, in which he accuses Conan Doyle of killing Bertram Fletcher Robinson, the true author of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. I can't do better than quote Mr Perry: 'What I hadn't realised, when it was reported that Garrick-Steele was looking for and failing to find a publisher, was that the reason for his difficulty in getting someone interested might have been that the book is appallingly written, whatever one thinks of the content. It is virtually unreadable — wrong words, hopeless punctuation, terrible sentences, poor factual accuracy, etc, etc! Added to this is that much of his investigation seems to be the product of psychic revelation rather than genuine research. Not recommended!'

Catherine Cooke alerts me to *Sherlock Holmes Quotation Puzzles* by James E Irwin (Trafford Publishing, Suite 6E, 2333 Government Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8T 4P4). No price, but check the website at www.trafford.com/4dcgi/robots/04-0200.html.

Our French friend Bernard Oudin is the author of *Sherlock Holmes et la Suffragette Amoureuse*, seven short stories published by Mycroft's Brother (26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France; €18.00).

Lenny Picker reports via Peter Blau that John Gardner should begin writing his long-delayed third Moriarty novel later this year.

Also from Peter: 'Stephen Clarkson's *First Magazine Appearances of the Sherlock Holmes Stories* offers the results of his research into the priority of the British and American magazines that published the Canonical tales; the 24-page pamphlet is available from Steve (91 Haven Lane, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411, USA); $5.00 postpaid.'

Readers in Melbourne, Australia should head for the Clayton Auditorium, where the Encore Theatre Company present Cenarth Fox's play *The Real Sherlock Holmes* from 2 to 5 September, in which Arthur Conan Doyle tells his own story, helped by his mother and Mr Holmes. For bookings phone 0500 842 538.

It was announced earlier this month that Richard Lancelyn Green, who died in March, bequeathed his collection of Conan Doyle manuscripts and memorabilia to the city of Portsmouth, which can claim to be the true birthplace of Sherlock Holmes. The collection is thought to contain more than 20,000 items, ranging from the 1887 *Beeton's Christmas Annual* to the sign from the *Sherlock Holmes* pub in London. Plans for exhibiting the collection are not yet settled.

Catherine Cooke, Peter Horrocks and Bob Graham are among members of our Society who will be seen in a French television programme to be broadcast some time in September by TMC. *[*If anyone can record this, I'd be grateful for a copy.*]*

SoldierPac Ltd (Crigglestone Industrial Estate, Wakefield WF4 3HT; website www.soldierpac.com) makes a superb, exquisitely detailed 54mm lead miniature of Holmes and Watson at 221B — Watson sitting reading his paper while Holmes plays the violin (item XHV18). You can buy it online for £13.00, plus £1.30 postage.

Roger Llewellyn continues to tour with David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* On 3 September he'll be in Cumbernauld, and on 7 September in Paisley. Later in the month he'll be in Ireland: 23 September Armagh, 24 Downpatrick, 25 Letterkenny, 28 Waterford, 30 Drogheda, 4 October Castlebar, 6 Antrim, 9 Enniskillen, 11 Newry, and 13 Cookstown. Catch his performance if you can.

John Hoath recently visited Prague and reports that in the old town, near Wenceslas Square are a pipe shop called *Baker Street* and a tobacconist and pipe shop called *Sherlock Holmes*, both with suitably Sherlockian signs.

The cover of *Sherlock* no. 61 shows the new Miss Marple, Geraldine McEwan, surrounded by some of her predecessors. Inside, David Stuart Davies looks at Agatha Christie's other great detective. Also in this issue, Kathryn White considers distressed damsels in the Sherlock Holmes stories, Calum McLeod examines the books of Stephen Booth, Paul M Chapman considers Holmes's more humble clients, Martin Edwards laments the lot of the modern crime writer, M J Elliott investigates the amateur cracksman, Gavin Collinson celebrates *The Pearl of Death*, we conclude the interview with David Renwick ... There's a new Sherlock Holmes story by Gillian Linscott, and a host of further articles. 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.

221B - Deutscher-Sherlock-Holmes-Club will make a pilgrimage to Meiringen over the weekend of 10-12 September. All Sherlockian societies are welcome to participate: contact Olaf Maurer, 221B - Deutscher-Sherlock-Holmes-Club, PO Box 150314, D-67071 Ludwigshafen, Germany (olaf.maurer@221b-DSHC.de)

In June next year, to mark Mr Holmes's retirement from active practice, **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will visit Meiringen and other parts of Switzerland, including Berne, Lausanne, Zermatt, Leukerbad, the Gemmi Pass and Kandersteg. Pilgrims will visit the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Lucens as well as the one in Meiringen, and of course there'll be the tradition re-enactment at Reichenbach. Late Victorian costume must be worn by all participants. This jaunt will be called *Making a Bee-Line for Switzerland*. Interested parties should contact Judi Ellis at 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

Periodicals received. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Summer 2004. ***Sherlock Holmes-Kurier***, Frühjahr/Sommer 2004 (**Von Herder Airguns**, Uwe Sommerlad, Rödelheimer Landstrasse 32, 60487 Frankfurt a. M., Germany). ***The Camden House Journal***, August 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Parallelogram***, July 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, August and September 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, August 2004 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***Canadian Holmes***, St Jean Baptiste Day (Summer) 2004 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 2, 2004 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe-Lagergaard, Hellebækgade 19, 3.tv., 2200 Köbenhavn N, Denmark). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2004 (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).

And of course the great Sherlockian newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, July 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 246 7 October 2004

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

Hugh Manning, who died on 18 August, one day short of his eighty-fourth birthday, was well known as the vicar in the TV soap *Emmerdale*. In the 1950s and 60s he appeared in Sherlock Holmes radio plays with both John Gielgud and Carleton Hobbs. **Charles Eaton** (d. 22 August aged ninety-four) was a child star of stage and (silent) screen before making the jump to talkies; *The Times* notes that he played 'a 'comically inept Sherlock Holmes imitator in *The Ghost Talks* (1929), only the second sound feature made by Fox.' **Fritha Goodey** was an outstanding actor on stage, film, television and radio; earlier this year she played Constance Addleton to Clive Merrison's Holmes in Bert Coules's 'further adventure' *The Determined Client*. She was only thirty-one when she killed herself on 5 September.

'The biggest thing for years' — well, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* certainly qualifies for that description. The first two volumes, containing all the short stories and running to a total of nearly 1900 pages, are due from by WW Norton & Co. on 30 November. Volume three, the long stories, is due in 2005. Leslie S Klinger's approach is essentially that of William S Baring-Gould, who edited the original *Annotated* thirty-seven years ago, perpetuating the 'gentle fiction' that Holmes and Watson really existed. Unlike Baring-Gould, though, he presents the stories in their published order, and he eschews the straight-faced whimsy that his predecessor sometimes indulged in. Instead, he concentrates on sound research and applies admirable judgement in selecting and presenting his findings. Modern technology gives him advantages that Baring-Gould lacked, as do the excellent bibliographies of De Waal and Gibson & Green, and the resources of the Sherlock Holmes Collection at Minneapolis. That must be offset, however, by the sheer volume of material published since the 1960s. Mr Klinger's application and energy in tackling his monumental task are astounding, particularly when we bear in mind that this is a separate project from his other annotated edition, *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*, which is aimed much more at the specialist reader. *The New Annotated* will include a huge number of illustrations, all much better reproduced than those in the original *Annotated*, but ultimately a book like this stands or falls by the quality of its notes, and although the advance proof contains many typos (which will, I trust, be corrected in the published text) the notes are exemplary in their breadth, depth and accuracy. The bibliography is as extensive as anyone could wish, and the introductory essay, 'The World of Sherlock Holmes', is masterly. Highest recommendation! The publisher's British address is: WW Norton Ltd, Castle House, 75/5 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT. There's a website at www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com.

Ian (Henry) Wilkes reminds me that Edward R Nye's collection *The Teddy Bear's Ribbon, and Other Tales* (see DM 203) is still in print from Halvon Press, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand (e-mail ted.nye@stonebow.otago.ac.nz), priced at NZ$15.00 or £5.00 plus postage.

New from Black Coat Press (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA): *Lord Ruthven the Vampire*, volumes I and II, containing John Polidori's original 1819 novella *The Vampyre* and various adaptations and sequels translated from the French. Volume I has a new story by the translator Frank J Morlock pitting Ruthven against Sherlock Holmes and Father Brown! Check the website at www.blackcoatpress.com/ruthven.htm.

Old House Books (The Old Police Station, Moretonhampstead, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 8PA) have published nice facsimiles of at least two guides of great interest to the Sherlockian: *Baedeker's London and Its Environs 1900* (£14.99) and *Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888* (£12.99). *[*The latter is the work of Charles Dickens junior, who also wrote a fascinating* Dictionary of the Thames.**]*

The 2004 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual* is on sale now. *Dubious and Questionable Memories: A History of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes* by Susan Rice is a chapter in the history of the Sherlockian game that will be of interest to many, in America and elsewhere. It costs $11.00 ($12.00 international) from *the Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA — order online at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. They take PayPal.

Out now in America and due here in February (Fourth Estate Ltd, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB; £10.00) is *The Final Solution: A Story of Detection* by Michael Chabon. The elderly retired detective who takes on a murder case in a remote village in 1944 is not named, but ...

MC Black reports that Bibliophile Books (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; website www.bibliophilebooks.com) are offering *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Reader: From Sherlock Holmes to Spiritualism* edited by Jeffrey & Valerie Meyers (£5.00) and ACD's *Tales of Unease* (£1.50). If you place an order or ask for a catalogue, please quote reference 1045.

The new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) includes, as usual, several items of Sherlockiana.

The cover of *Sherlock* no. 62 shows the regular cast of *Foyle's War*: Michael Kitchen, Honeysuckle Weeks and Anthony Howell. Inside, David Stuart Davies interviews the series' creator, Anthony Horowitz. Also in this issue, Paul M Chapman considers Holmes's involvement with America, M J Elliott investigates Jacques Futrelle's brilliant detective 'the Thinking Machine', Kathryn White asks whether Sherlock Holmes was a woman, Calum McLeod examines the *oeuvre* of Mark Billingham, Martin Edwards compares series and stand-alone, DSD views the screen career of Professor Moriarty, Alan Perry looks at the now almost forgotten Philo Vance. 'A Blessing of Unicorns' by Robert Sanderson introduces a new sleuth, Hilary Caine ... There's a report on the Sherlock Awards, and a host of further articles. The magazine is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $45.00) 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.

Geoff Bradley's admirable magazine *CADS* ('Crime and Detective Stories') has reached its 46th issue, and it's as full of interest as ever, with articles on Anthony Boucher, Freeman Wills Crofts, Michael Innes, Bernard Newman, Cornell Woolrich, Gladys Mitchell, and many more. You can get copies from Geoff at 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA.

On 13 November, beginning at 10.00 am, at the **Enoch Pratt Free Library** in Baltimore, **The Six Napoleons**, **The Carlton Club** and **Watson's Tin Box** will present the twenty-fifth annual *Saturday with Sherlock Holmes*. Half the programme will be a retrospective, including talks from the very first event in 1980, and the rest will honour Edgar Allan Poe, the father of the detective story. Poe was a sometime resident of Baltimore and is buried there. The library is at 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, MD, and admission is free. After coffee in the Edgar Allan Poe Room, the talks will be given in the Wheeler Auditorium. For more information, phone Bill Hyder on 410-997-9114.

You wait ages for a phantom hound, and then two come along! Maldon Drama Group will present Tim Kelly's play *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at the **Town Hall** in Maldon, Essex, from 14 to 16 October at 7.45 pm. Phone 01621 854289 for tickets. The musical *The Baskerville Beast* by Teddy Hayes will be given an abridged performance (rehearsed and costumed) at **Uxbridge Library** at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 20 October. Admission is free. It sounds really interesting, but the autumn meeting of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will be held that same evening, at *The Old Dr Butler's Head*. The producer John Elnaugh tells me that a full version will be staged in west London in March.

After his Irish tour, Roger Llewellyn will take a brief rest before performing *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* at the **Town Hall Theatre** in High Wycombe, Bucks. (box office 01494 514444). From 6 to 14 November he'll be in Malta, performing at the **Manoel Theatre** on Friday & Saturday.

The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection have two events coming up this autumn, both in the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium at **Toronto Reference Library**. On 23 October at 4.00 pm, the Sherlockian bibliophile Dan Posnansky will lead a panel discussion on 'What's Worth Collecting?' And on 12 November at 7.00 pm, Leslie Klinger will talk about 'the relevance of Sherlock Holmes and the challenge of annotating for a modern audience'. Both events are open to the public, and admission is free. The library is at 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario.

Heather Owen has passed on a message from Carol Bowen, associate member of the Society for Psychical Research, and director of a company called Haunting Breaks, which carries out psychical-paranormal research in allegedly haunted locations — and offers hotel breaks at some of them. One is **Baskerville Hall Hotel**, formerly the seat of the Mynors-Baskerville family, who knew it as Clyro Court. You can check the company's information, and a psychic report on the building, at www.hauntingbreaks.co.uk.

Rod Baser has departed for India to complete the necessary research for the Sherlockian pilgrimage he is organising to India and the Andaman Islands. You can find out more from his website at www.sherlockholmesinindia.com.

MC Black reports that from 3 December the British Library will have an exhibition in its entrance hall of the Conan Doyle papers left to the library by Dame Jean. No closing date is given. MC also recommends the **Museum of Victorian Science** at Glaisdale, near Whitby, which he says is well worth visiting by anybody interested in the Victorian period. Phone Tony Swift on 01947 897440 to arrange a visit.

The Sherlock Holmes computer game *The Case of the Silver Earring* was released last month by Digital Jesters (Unit 4, Weltech Centre, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL7 2AA; £29.99), and has been getting a good deal of attention — not just in the specialist games magazines, either. I hope to be able to review it in the next DM.

Another message forwarded by Heather Owen: Peter Day has fifteen DVDs of the Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series that he wants to sell. They're new and unviewed — but they're in Chinese! Contact Mr Day at peter@pday7.wanadoo.co.uk if you're interested. He doesn't say whether the language is Mandarin or Cantonese, or whether English is available as a feature on the discs.

Michael Cox, the man to whom we owe that television series, has for sale the complete Simon & Schuster set of *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on cassette. These are the classic 1940s radio broadcasts with Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce, in near mint condition. There are twenty-six cassettes, costing a total of over £200 new. Michael is asking £100 for them. If you're interested, please contact me, and I'll forward enquiries to Michael.

Jens Byskov Jensen sends the welcome news that a new, as yet unnamed, Sherlock Holmes society will hold its inaugural meeting on 19 October in New Orleans. Prospective members should be at *Doc Smith's Lounge* in Smith & Wollensky's at 1009 Poydras Street at South Rampart at 8.00 pm. Canonical toasts will be followed by a discussion of 'A Scandal in Bohemia', and the meeting will conclude with Vincent Starrett's sonnet '221B'. Contact Jens for more information at JByskovJensen@aol.com.

Two years ago, Brian Pugh dissolved **Gerard's Hussars**, because of a shortage on contributions to the newsletter *The Hussar*. He now intends to revive the group, with a new format of study. He says, 'I would like to see the research and articles being along the same lines as those of playing the Sherlock Holmes game.' Admirers of Brigadier Gerard should contact Brian at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN.

Periodicals received. ***Prescott's Press***, September 2004 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***Mayday Mayday*** and ***The Chronicler***, September 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP) *[*the Officers and Crew have done me the honour of making me an Honorary Crewmate — the third, I think, in the society's history*]*. ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 2004 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, # 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, September 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The School Report***, Autumn Term 2004 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

The Petrel Flyer, Summer 2004 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn-Winter 2004 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Magic Door***, Fall 2004 (**Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON, Canada M4W 2G8). ***The Camden House Journal***, September and October 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Irregular Newsletter***, September and September/October 2004 (**Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Torr***, Autumn 2004 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA).

Sherlock Holmes-Kurier, Sommer/Herbst 2004 (**Von Herder Airguns**, Uwe Sommerlad, Rödelheimer Landstrasse 32, 60487 Frankfurt a. M., Germany). ***Communication***, September-October 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, August-September 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2004 (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). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, October 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, August and September 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 247 16 November 2004

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

Peter Blau reports the death on 15 September of **Charles J Shields** ('17 King Edward Street', BSI), longtime journalist and Sherlockian in Chicago. The career of **Sheila Keith**, who died on 14 October aged eighty-four, encompassed cult horror films, television sitcoms, and a regular part in *Crossroads*. In 1965 she played Miss Stoper in the BBC TV production of *The Copper Beeches*, with Douglas Wilmer and Nigel Stock. **Steve Clarkson** ('Morse Hudson', BSI) died on 19 October at the age of sixty-five. His father was a founder of the Six Napoleons of Baltimore, and Steve maintained the tradition. For years he dealt with enquiries sent to the Baker Street Irregulars by younger enthusiasts, and he compiled *The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2003 — 'The Strength and Activity of Youth': The Junior Sherlockian Movement.* **Robert Lang** (d. 6 November, aged seventy) specialised in self-important characters, whom he made distinct and very human. In Peter Ling's dramatisation of *The Resident Patient* for BBC Radio 4, he played Blessington, to Clive Merrison's Holmes and Michael Williams' Watson.

In the last issue I gave an enthusiastic welcome to the first two volumes of *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (WW Norton Ltd, Castle House, 75-76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT; £35.00). Since then the finished article has arrived, and it's magnificent. There are a few errors (the photograph on page 1468 shows Charing Cross Hotel not the Grand Hotel, for instance), but as I said before, the notes are exemplary in their breadth, depth and accuracy, the bibliography is as extensive as anyone could wish, and the introductory essay, 'The World of Sherlock Holmes', is masterly. There are few who could have done the job as completely, as energetically or as amiably as Leslie Klinger. He is, as John Bennett Shaw used to say, a benefactor of the race. Publication date is 1 December. *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* will make an ideal Christmas present for the Sherlockian in your life, even if that Sherlockian is you. There's a website at www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com.

Études en noir: Les dernières aventures de Sherlock Holmes (Éditions de l'Archipel, 34 rue des Bourdonnais, Paris 1er; €18.95) was launched on 26 October. This French translation of *The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Peter Haining, contains most of Conan Doyle's extra-canonical writings about Holmes. This new edition boasts an introduction by Thierry Saint-Joanis, President of La Société Sherlock Holmes de France. *[*Haining's good but rather shallow collection has been republished several times in preference to the superior volumes edited by Jack Tracy (**Sherlock Holmes: The Published Apocrypha**) and Richard Lancelyn Green (**The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes**).*]*

From Sweden come two new books. *En studie i rött* (Bokförlaget Lind & Co, info@lindco.se) is the first volume in Mattias Boström's new Swedish translation of the complete Canon. The rather splendid illustrations by George Hutchinson are reprinted from the 1891 Ward Lock edition, and Mattias Boström has provided a critical afterword. *Sherlock Holmes 150 år: En jubileumsbok från The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden* is an equally attractive book, including essays on *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 'Silver Blaze', Holmes as a boxer, gent's clothing, early Sherlockian theatrical productions in Stockholm, and parody and pastiche — and an example of each of the latter. Two of the pieces, one by Stephen Fry and one by me, are translated from English. The rest are the work of distinguished Swedish Sherlockian scholars. *Sherlock Holmes 150 år* is published by the Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden, c/o Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden. The Club has a website at www.sherlockholmes.se. The books are available from Mattias (Domherrevagen 12, S-178 39 Ekero, Sweden; mattias.bostrom@telia.com) for £20.00 / $40.00 / €30.00 each. Cash only, please.

La Vendetta de Sherlock Holmes by Ugo Pandolfi (Éditions Little Big Man, 12 rue Rougement, 75009 Paris, France; □19.00) tells of an adventure in 1893. From Montpellier, Holmes goes to Corsica, still on the trail of Professor Moriarty's criminal organisation. He is helped by a friend of Guy de Maupassant, the engineer and geologist Ugo Pandolfi, whose great-nephew Jean Pandolfi-Crozier has edited this account. *La Vendetta de Sherlock Holmes* has received positive reviews from French Sherlockians.

From Italy, meanwhile, comes news of *Sherlock Magazine* edited by Luigi Pachi, who also edits the website at www.SherlockMagazine.it. The second issue runs to 200 pages, with full articles about the Canon by Stefano Guerra and Enrico Solito, and an introduction by the famous journalist Corrado Augias. The magazine is in Italian, of course. A three-issue subscription costs €32.00 from Delos Books at www.delosstore.it.

The Tryon Publishing Company of Chapel Hill, North Carolina (tryonpublishing@earthlink.net) is about to publish *The Masque of Sherlock Holmes: The Extraordinary Life of William Gillette* by Henry Zecher. This is, I think, the first full biography of Gillette for some decades. It can be ordered $32.00 plus postage from Brick Alley Books, 115 North Churton Street, Hillsborough, NC 27278, USA. Looks interesting! I hope to be able to review it before long.

John Gardner's website at www.john-gardner.com is worth a look. He says that the third Moriarty novel is blocked out and will be published under the title *The Redemption of Moriarty*, which is good news. He notes that the first two novels 'got much coverage in the USA where most of the many Sherlock Holmes societies got behind them. The most prestigious of these is the Baker Street Irregulars: a club that only accepts you as a member if they invite you to join. In the early '80s I was honoured by being invested

into the BSI in the name of Moriarty.' And he adds, 'At home in the UK, the Sherlock Holmes Society has never been in touch.'

After a long period of uncertainty it's good to be able to tell you that the Sherlockian part of Breese Books has been bought by a company owned by our old friend Antony Richards. That's a backlist of about thirty titles, plus eight or so not yet published. The next book to appear will be Matthew Booth's *Sherlock Holmes and the Giant's Hand*, followed next year by Eddie Maguire's *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Mission*. Existing Breese customers and new ones who want to buy *The Giant's Hand* direct from the publisher can have it at £5.00 plus £2.00 postage (shop price £7.50), and they can buy up to five titles from a list of ten at £3.00 each, with postage at a flat rate of £2.00. Get full details from Breese Books, c/o Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX (01226 473025; holmes@holmes andcompany.com.) There's a website at www.holmes andcompany.com.

The latest catalogue from The Book People (Parc Menai, Bangor LL57 4FB; www.thebookpeople.co.uk) offers the nine-volume Penguin edition of the Canon, plus *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Richard Lancelyn Green, for £9.99. That's quite a bargain.

The industrious Matthew (MJ) Elliott now has his own website at http://mjelliott.co.uk/. His story 'The Extraordinary Lodger' has been recorded by David Ian Davies, and can be downloaded from the Sherlock Holmes Society of London's site at http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/Media/Downloads/Audio/David_Ian_Davies/David_Ian_Davies.htm. Look out for a collection of Matthew's Holmes stories from Mad for a Mystery.

New catalogues are available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219. USA; www.sherlock-holmes.com) *[*as always, the Classic Specialties catalogue is really more of a magazine, full of interest*]*; **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (PO Box 204 Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0; www.batteredbox.com); and **Rupert Books** (58-59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; www.rupert-books.co.uk. Lots of Holmes and Doyle material there.

Bert Coules reminds me that BBC Worldwide has released the complete Canon on CD, in the Radio 4 series with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. The boxed set of sixty-four discs, with an updated edition of Bert's book *221 BBC* , is available from Amazon via Bert's website at www.bertcoules.co.uk/cassette.htm.

I'd love to be able to give you a favourable review of the computer game *Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Silver Earring*. I'd love to be able to give you any sort of review, but my PC, though it seems to meet all the requirements, just won't play the discs. The comments I've had from other people have been overwhelming good. Players have praised the way that the game actually challenges the player's intellect; the appropriate vocal acting for the characters, and the fact that it matches the graphics; the excellence of the graphics; and the feel for the Victorian period. The consensus holds that it's way ahead of earlier Sherlock Holmes games.

Edinburgh, birthplace of Arthur Conan Doyle, inspiration for so many great writers — Burns, Scott, Stephenson, Barrie, Kenneth Grahame, Muriel Spark, Irvine Welsh, Ian Rankin, JK Rowling, Alexander McCall Smith — has been named the first United Nations City of Literature.

Takeshi Shimizu reports that in Montevideo police are being trained specifically to deal with tourists to Uruguay. With the support of the British Embassy, the Interior Ministry last month dedicated the Sherlock Holmes Auditorium for the training courses.

Trinity Theatre Club of Tunbridge Wells is staging Brian Clemens' play *Holmes and the Ripper* this week, closing on Saturday 20 November. The box office number is 01892 678678 (10.00 am to 3.00 pm), and there's a website at www.ttctw.com. Trinity Theatre is in Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Co-President John Hall sends important news about **The Northern Musgraves**. The society is now called simply **The Musgraves**, and a new logo, an acorn and magnifying glass, symbolizes its renaissance. 'The primary aim remains always that of having fun in an atmosphere of Sherlock Holmes and good fellowship'. There will be three events and two or three newsletters a year. For the time being, at least, publications like *The Ritual* and *The Musgrave Papers* are formally abandoned. The next meeting will be on 20 February at the Huddersfield Hotel in Huddersfield, and the theme will be *a Study in Scarlet*. Confirmed speakers are MJ Elliott and Alan Duxbury. Get details from John Hall, 20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR (0113 258 4902).

Periodicals received. ***Canadian Holmes***, Michaelmas (Autumn) 2004 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 1P1). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, October 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Communication***, November-December 2004, and Special Political Issue 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *[*the latter is another of the PPoF's grand parody issues; try these 'slogans we'd like to see' — 'Jabez Wilson for Judge: Nothing Escapes Him', 'Ormond Sacker for MP: He's the Real Thing', 'Vote for Wiggins: When You're as Good as Me, You Don't Need a First Name'). ***Sherlockiana***, nr 3/4, 2004 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Hellebækgade 19, 3.t.v., 2200 Købnhavn N, Denmark).

Mayday Mayday, October 2004 and November 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Whaling News***, August 2004, September 2004 and October 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, November 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, November 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Explorations***, Summer/Autumn 2004 (**The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, John Bergquist, 3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122, USA) *[*includes a full and affecting reminiscence of Richard Lancelyn Green by his long-time friend Andrew Malec*]*.

3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles, October 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Parallelogram***, October 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, September 2004 (Sherlock Holmes Collections, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, October 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, 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. 248 16 December 2004

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

The death of **Chris Willis** on 11 November at the age of forty-four deprives the Sherlock Holmes Society of a recent member who would certainly have become an active regular contributor. As Matthew Sweet wrote in the Independent: 'Academic, campaigner, journalist, socialist, biker and aspiring sailor — the range of Chris Willis's passions, and the energy with which she pursued them, was a frequent source of amazement to her friends and colleagues.' An enthusiastic authority on Dorothy L Sayers, Margery Allingham, Wilton's Music Hall, mausolea and monuments, Wilkie Collins, M E Braddon, and much else, Chris is widely and deeply missed.

Frank Shelley, one of the last great actor-managers, died on 8 November at the age of ninety-two. He took unidentified parts in the 1957 BBC radio production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley as Holmes and Watson. The cartoonist and illustrator **Harry Hargreaves**, who died on 12 November aged eighty-two, was one of the few important illustrators of *The Wind in the Willows* to recognise the clear Sherlockian influence on the Wild Wood episode and dress the Rat in tweeds and a deerstalker.

Peter Blau reports the death on 15 November of **Elmer L Andersen**, businessman, bookman, philanthropist and former governor of Minnesota, who helped make possible the library at the University of Minnesota, named after him, that houses the Sherlock Holmes Collections. As a writer, **Stephen Mallatratt** (d. 22 November aged 57) is likely to be best remembered for his stunning play *The Woman in Black*, based on Susan Hill's ghost story. He was a successful actor too, and in 1984 played Percy Armitage in the Granada TV production of *The Speckled Band*. **Molly Weir** (d. 28 November aged ninety-four) became famous as Aggie in the 1950s sitcom *Life with the Lyons*, and achieved national fame all over again in the 1970s as Hazel the McWitch in the children's TV series *Rentaghost*. On BBC radio in 1964 she played Mrs McFarlane in *The Norwood Builder*, with Hobbs and Shelley.

Hugo Koch's latest monograph, *In Re: 55 Baker Street, with meditations on other matters evoked by the enclosures laid into a volumes of* ***Wellcome's Excerpta Therapeutica*** *owned by Vincent Starrett* throws new light on one of the great Sherlockian scholars. Hugo has generously sent me three extra copies, which I offer available free to the first three applicants the UK.

Just received is *The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2004*. This issue is entitled *Dubious and Questionable Memories: A History of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes* by Susan Rice, ASH, BSI (*The Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA $11.00 [$12.00 international]). It's a pleasure to read a full and reasonably authoritative account of an organisation that, more than most, revels in the sheer pleasure its members have in the company of Sherlockian kinsprits, female and male. The ASH achieved its original single purpose, to see women accepted on equal terms with men in the Baker Street Irregulars, and has since proved one of the most versatile and resilient Sherlockian societies, and one of the most likeable. You can order the 64-page booklet online at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. They take PayPal.

Recent books of interest. *Sherlock Holmes: The Hidden Years* edited by Michael Kurland (St Martin's Minotaur, 16365 James Madison Highway, Gordonville, VA 22942-8501, USA; $24.95). *In All Sincerity ... Peter Cushing* by Christopher Gullo (Xlibris, 436 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3703, USA; $32.00 hardback, $22.00 paperback). *Mrs Hudson and the Spirits' Curse* by Martin Davies (Berkley Prime Crime [no address to hand]; $13.00). *Sherlock Holmes and the Panamanian Girls* by Frank Thomas (Xlibris; £14.00). *Imagined London: A Tour of the World's Greatest Fictional City* by Anna Quindlen (National Geographic Society, c/o Hi Marketing, 38 Carver Road, London SE24 9LT; £12.99). *Cambridge: A Cultural and Literary History* by Martin Garrett (Signal Publishing, 36 Minster Road, Oxford, OX4 1LY; £30.00 hardback, £12.00 paperback). And yes, those last two do indeed feature Sherlock Holmes.

In the latest listing from **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; www.sherlock-holmes.com) are *The Canadian Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Stephen Gaspar ($20.50); *No Ordinary Terror*, the first exploit of the Watson twins by J Brook Van Dyke ($15.95); *A Distinct Touch, Watson* by David L Hammer ($13.95); *Sherlock Holmes: A Duel with the Devil* by Roger Jaynes ($8.95); *Sherlock Holmes' Solutions from the Sussex Downs* by Balaji Narasimhan ($16.95); and *Sigerson at the Pole* by Mary Ellen Daugherty ($5.95).

And some forthcoming titles. *Sherlock Holmes Was a Pompey Keeper* by Kevin Smith (December: Halsgrove, Halsgrove House, Lower Moor Way, Tiverton Business Park, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6SS; £19.99); *The Ghosts of Baker Street: New Tales of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Martin H Greenberg, Jon Lellenberg & Daniel Stashower (February: Carroll & Graf, 245 West 17th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10011-5300, USA; $13.95).

Susie Drost reports that **The Mongolia Society** (322 Goodbody Hall, Indiana University, 1011 East Third, Bloomington, IN 47405-7005, USA; e-mail monsoc@indiana.edu) has another batch of *Stories about Sherlock Holmes Book 6* (FIVE, SPEC & ABBE) and *Book 7* (DANC, CROO & SECO) in Cyrillic Mongolian script, priced at $30.00 each, plus postage.

There's much of interest in the new catalogues from **Rupert Books**, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge Cb3 8TE (www.rupert-books.co.uk); and. **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Despite an early setback, **Lloyd Scott** did manage to cycle across Australia in fifty days on a vintage 'ordinary' — that's the correct name for a penny-farthing bicycle — dressed more or less as Sherlock Holmes. A former leukaemia sufferer himself, his aim is to raise a million pounds for children with leukaemia.

Stimulated, I'm sure, by the very favourable reception of *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* vols 1 and 2 (WW Norton, £35.00) and by the publicity for the forthcoming TV movie *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Silk Stocking*, there's been a small spate of articles about the death last March of our colleague Richard Lancelyn Green, most notably in the *New Yorker* for 13 December, *The Mail on Sunday* 12 December and the *Sunday Times* of the same date.

Bob Cornwell gave Teddy Hayes' musical *The Baskerville Beast* a terrific review when it was given an abridged preview production at Uxbridge Library (unexpectedly but logically during Black History Month, as the multi-talented Mr Hayes is black). From 21 to 27 March the show will be staged in full at the famous **Questors Theatre** in Ealing, and it's to be hoped that a tour will follow. Teddy Hayes and his co-producer John Elnaugh, who plays Sherlock Holmes, are looking for backers for *The Baskerville Beast*. Prospective angels should call Mr Hayes on 020 8876 3984.

David E Jacobs sends word that Alan Barnes' *Sherlock Holmes Suite [*the CD was favourably reviewed in DM 233*]* will be performed on 26 February at the University of Bath's **ICI Arts Theatre** (01225 386777) and on 22 May at the **Theatre Royal**, Bury St Edmunds (01284 769505). Call Mr Jacobs for news of further performances on 01892 516722.

Matthew Elliott was the first British writer to contribute scripts to Imagination Theater's radio series *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Now Matthew Booth and John Hall have followed his lead, and Matthew E has branched out into a *Raffles* series (the first volume just out), and intends to adapt 'The Lost Special' and 'The Man with the Watches' as Holmes plays! Imagination Theater has a website at www.harrynile.com/.

I forgot to mention seeing posters in Brussels for the new French film *Arsène Lupin*, with Romain Duris as Lupin and Kristin Scott Thomas as the Comtesse de Cagliostro. Peter Blau says that there seems to be no Sherlockian content, but he recommends the website at www.club-internet,fr/arsenelupin/.

I need hardly mention that Allan Cubitt's new drama *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Silk Stocking* will be transmitted at 9.25 pm on Boxing Day, with Rupert Everett and Ian Hart as Holmes and Watson, Neil Dudgeon as Lestrade, and Helen McRory as Watson's intended, Mrs Vandeleur. *[*The only 'Mrs Vandeleur' who comes to mind ended up dead in Mr Cubitt's film of* ***The Hound of the Baskervilles****.*]*

Meanwhile the ITV film with Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie as Holmes and Watson seems to have been put on hold. Perhaps we'll find out more from Mr Fry at our Society's annual dinner next month, when he will be the Guest of Honour.

David Pirie is following his *Murder Rooms* series with a one-off TV film *The Strange Case of Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle*, which claims that Holmes was based on ACD's father Charles Altamont Doyle. According to the *Sunday Herald* Douglas Henshall, Brian Cox and Emily Blunt will play Conan Doyle, Joseph Bell and Jean Leckie. Filming will start in Scotland in the new year.

One episode of the fifth series of *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* will be called *Who Shot Sherlock Holmes?* According to talk.csifiles.com, the victim is actually 'Joe Bell, a man who has trouble distinguishing the difference between fact and fiction. Bell is the leading member of a literary society whose members dress up in period costume and role-play Sherlock Holmes mysteries with each other.' *[*Gosh! I wonder who they could be thinking of ...*]*

There's a sale of English literature at **Sotheby's** in London today that features a good deal of Conan Doyle material, including ten lots of letters and a first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. On 16 November the manuscript of 'The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist' was sold at Sotheby's in New York for $344,000.

The exhibition of Conan Doyle papers in the Front Hall of the **British Library** at St Pancras opened on 3 December and runs until 31 January. *[*A must for those attending the Society's annual dinner.*]*

Arthur Conan Doyle's name crops up now and again (as does Sherlock Holmes's, I'm sure) in the proceeding of **The Police History Society**. You can find out about it on the website at www.policehistorysociety.co.uk.

The Strand Magazine (PO Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012-1418, USA) has published a rather handsome *Sherlock Holmes Calendar* for 2005. Details are on the website at www.strandmag.com and the on-line bookshop at www.shopmysteries.com. **Mark Alberstat** also offers a 2005 Sherlock Holmes Calendar (US$12.00 from 5 Lorraine Street, Dartmouth, N.S., Canada B3A 2B9).

The cover of *Sherlock* no. 63 bears a striking photograph of Granville Saxton, Holmes in the Nottingham Playhouse production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Inside, David Stuart Davies interviews the play's author, Clive Francis. Also in this issue, DSD also interviews Allan Cubitt, Paul M Chapman exposes Holmes's failures, Paul Singleton reveals what happened at Reichenbach, Alan Perry looks at the dazzling mysteries of John Dickson Carr, Calum McLeod examines the *oeuvre* of Judith Cutler, Martin Edwards seeks out European crime writers, MJ Elliott contributes a new Holmes story, my column looks at the crime fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson and Arthur Machen ... And there's more! The magazine is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $45.00) 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.

Our good friend Marcus Geisser reports that the **Société d'études de Sherlock Holmes de la Suisse Romande** has recently unveiled a plaque in Lausanne to commemorate Dr Watson's stay at the Hôtel National during the case of Lady Frances Carfax. Lausanne is the home town of the society's Chairman, Vincent Delay. No doubt **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will pay its respects at the plaque during the Swiss Pilgrimage of 2005.

Periodicals received. ***Tonga Times***, Fall 2004 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E 19th Street #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA) *[*I managed to miss this one when I wrote DM 247 — apologies*]*. ***The School Report***, Winter Term 2004 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***Communication***, Special Caption Issue (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *[*Sidney Paget's illustrations do seem to lend themselves to scurrilous captions, don't they?*]* ***Ineffable Twaddle***, December 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA).

Mayday Mayday and ***Chronicler***, December 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, November 2004 (**221B: The International Sherlock Holmes Study Group**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU; e-mail 221b@acd-221b.info). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2004 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, November 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA *[*note the new address*]*). ***The Petrel Flyer***, November/December 2004 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***The Passengers' Log***, Spring 2004 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Now ***The District Messenger*** and I shall take a break until around the beginning of February, so I'll wish you all

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: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 249 5 February 2005

Humphrey Carpenter, broadcaster, musician and biographer, died on 4 January, aged fifty-eight. A few years ago he presented a BBC Radio 4 programme, *The Secret History of Conan Doyle*, produced by Nicholas Utechin.

Several companies have released various of the once hard-to-find Sherlock Holmes films of Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce on DVD. Some sell for as little as £2.00, but they're pretty rough. In justice to the films and the actors, I say ignore them and stump up £49.00 for the complete set from Optimum! That's less than £4.00 a film, and you get all fourteen movies in digitally remastered prints, with audio commentaries by David Stuart Davies for *The Hound of the Baskervilles, Sherlock Holmes Faces Death, The Scarlet Claw* and *The Woman in Green,* and by Richard Valley for *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, production notes for all fourteen films by Richard Valley, a short documentary about the restoration project at UCLA, and a gallery of stills and posters. Most importantly, these prints are clear and sharp, pretty much as good as when they were first seen. This is the set released in America a couple of years ago by MPI. I'm delighted to welcome its release on this side of the ocean in Region 2! *[*Richard Valley, editor of **Scarlet Street**, is writing a book about Rathbone's Holmes.*]*

Breese Books' schedule is on course again with *Sherlock Holmes and the Giant's Hand* (£7.50), three tales by Matthew Booth, which tell of the Addleton Tragedy (and the Singular Contents of the Ancient British Barrow), Colonel Warburton's Madness, and the Abernetty Murder. The stories are clever, atmospheric and well written, and the book is as attractively produced as all the Breese publications. Readers of *The District Messenger* can buy *The Giant's Hand* at the reduced price of £5.00 (plus £2.00 postage) and buy up to five books from the backlist at £3.00 each (plus £2.00 flat rate additional postage). For details contact Breese Books, c/o Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX (phone 01223 473025; fax 01223 473053; e-mail sales@baker-street-studios.com). There's a website at www.baker-street-studios.com.

The Pocket Sherlock: A Portable Guide to the Canon compiled by John Sherwood (Mystery Visits, 120 Quimby Road, West Grove, PA 19390, USA; jcs@mysteryvisits.com; $9.00 plus $3.00 postage) contains synopses of all sixty cases, personal data on Holmes and Watson (from Baring-Gould), a brief summary of historical events 1874-1903, a few Canonical quotations, a short list of writings about the writings, and not much else. It's a pleasant little volume, but outclassed by Mark Campbell's *The Pocket Essential Sherlock Holmes* and Philip Weller's *Elementary Holmes*.

Very much more substantial is *The Suicide Club & Other Dark Adventures* by Robert Louis Stevenson (Tartarus Press, Coverley House, Carlton-in-Coverdale, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 4AY; £35.00). You may know that Stevenson's writings influenced Conan Doyle's. Moreover he knew Joseph Bell and recognised him in Sherlock Holmes. *The Dynamiter*, the second part of *The New Arabian Nights*, had a profound influence on *A Study in Scarlet* — though you won't find it in this volume, because it was a collaboration between RLS and his wife Fanny Van de Grift Stevenson. What we do have is the first part of *The New Arabian Nights*, comprising 'The Suicide Club' and 'The Rajah's Diamond', along with *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, 'The Body Snatcher, and, in all, five hundred pages of 'dark adventures'. Conan Doyle loved and admired Stevenson and his work. Tartarus Press has done us a great favour with this big satisfying collection of his weird tales.

So, farewell then, *The Shoso-in Bulletin*. The final issue, Volume 14, maintains the *Bulletin's* reputation as the most international Sherlock Holmes periodical. Here are articles from Japan, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the Czech Republic and India. The topics include the sober (Godfrey Hunt on Watson's background, Joe Marino on Jonathan Small), the abstruse (Michael J Brady's mathematical poser), the humorous ('Cockroach Bones and the Five Orange Peeps' by Kevin Reed), the nostalgic (Alan Olding interviewed by Bill Barnes, Ron De Waal's envoi to his career as Holmes's bibliographer), the whimsical (Brad Keefauver's 'Winding Your Way Down on Baker Street'), and the factual (reports on the Sherlockian year from around the world). There's also a devastating critical review of Rodger Garrick-Steele's *The House of the Baskervilles*. I'm pleased to express my gratitude to Hirayama Yuichi and Mel Hughes for fourteen volumes of stimulating and sympathetic Sherlockiana. John Hall (20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR) is the British agent. Or volume 14 is in stock at Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA). Check the website at www.sherlock-holmes.com for price.

Bjarne Nielsen's Sherlock Holmes Museet (Egebjergvej 206, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark) has published a facsimile of a rare and unauthorised early pulp, *Opdagernes Konge Sherlock Holmes* (The King of Detectives, Sherlock Holmes'). It's all in Danish, of course, but the synopsis in English is pretty startling: 'Sir Cyrith, Count of Douglas, lives in his ancestral home The James Palace on the corner of Trafalgar Square ...' A real collectors' piece, available from the publisher at 60 Kroner, which works out at about £6.00.

Cenarth Fox tells me that his fifth and final 'schoolboy Sherlock Holmes' book is due in June, in which Nicholas Twit will a) die the same way as Holmes, and b) not die the same way as Holmes! Check the website at www.twit.biz.

Alan Stockwell reports that his latest story 'The Singular Adventure of the Red-Nosed Artist' can be found on his website at www.mrsherlockholmes.co.uk.

There's much good stuff in the catalogues from **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE; 0116 251 2756; www.blackcatbookshop.com); **Rupert Books** (58-59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; 01954 781861; www.rupert-books.co.uk); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); and **Adrian Harrington Rare Books** (64A Kensington Church Street, London W8B 4DB; 020 7937 1465). Also check **221Books** online catalogue at www.221Books.com.

The cover of *Sherlock* no. 64 has a still of Felicity Kendall and Pam Ferris from the television series *Rosemary & Thyme*. Inside, Rebecca Tope reports on the experience of turning one of the stories into a novel. Also in this issue, Paul M Chapman looks at Holmes's murder investigations, Barbara Roisman-Cooper interviews Inga Swenson (Irene Adler in the 1965 musical *Baker Street*), Calum McLeod examines the work of Stuart Pawson, MJ Elliott investigates *Kolchak*, Martin Edwards considers murder, Alan Perry meets Reginald Fortune, David Stuart Davies recognises Holmes in disguise, Danutah Reah contributes a new crime story, my column looks at Stevenson's influence on Conan Doyle ... The magazine is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $45.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton

Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The website's at www.sherlockholmes.com. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Teddy Hayes' musical *The Baskerville Beast*, enthusiastically received in its abridged preview at Hillingdon, will be staged in full at the **Questors Theatre** in Ealing, 22-26 March. The theatre is at 12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, London W5 5BQ (box office 020 8237 1111). There are matinees on Wednesday and Saturday. By all accounts the play deserves a national tour. Let's hope!

Cenarth Fox's play *The Real Sherlock Holmes* will be touring Victoria, Australia: **Phillip Island Arts Society** 10 April, **Cameron Close Theatrette**, **Burwood** 16 April, **Donvale Village Performing Centre** 6 May, **Burwood Terrace Village** 25 May, **Cathouse Players Inc, Craigieburn** 2-4 June, and **Peridot Theatre, Mt Waverley** 16-19 June. Details from kevintrask@bigpond.com.

Cen Fox will speak on 'Meet Sherlock Holmes' at **Waverley Ladies Club** 2 March, and **St Aidan's Church Hall, Strathmore** 5 May. Enquiries to Mr Fox at writer@labyrinth.net.au.

Tim Evers will perform his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* from 28 April to 15 May at **The Strand Theatre** in Galveston, Texas (phone 409 763-4591 or toll-free on 877 STRAND-9). Details from Tim at TheatreBahHumbug@aol.com.

The Final Problem for Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson, a play by David Fletcher, will be produced at the **Loft Theatre** in Leamington 8-18 June. Chris Dobson of the Loft Theatre says that the play 'interweaves two or three stories from the Canon and puts a particular spotlight on the relationship between the two protagonists'. Check the website at www.loft-theatre.co.uk/shows/sherlock.php .

Melanie Odell, Chairman of **Hasemere Initiative**, reports that the Initiative wants to hold a literary weekend in May**,** when the local Educational Museum will have an exhibition on Surrey Writers, including Arthur Conan Doyle, whose house Undershaw is at nearby Hindhead. They'd like to feature lunch at Undershaw and a film at the local cinema alongside the exhibition. Interested groups and individuals should contact Melanie c/o Grayswood Computer Services, 1A Causewayside, High Street, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 2JZ (phone 01428 644858; e-mail melanie@haslemere.com.

Gerard Van der Leun alerts me to *The Quotable Holmes* free on the web at http://americandigest.org/mt-archives/004817.php.

At the annual dinner of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, Stephen Fry said: 'I was asked if I might consider essaying the part of Holmes for the television, with my colleague Hugh Laurie giving it John H Watson. After much agonized thought we have judged ourselves unworthy and reluctantly decided against such a project.' So now you know. And you can read Mr Fry's address in full in the next *Sherlock Holmes Journal*. (Advt.)

David Pirie, who stretched history beyond the limit in *Murder Rooms*, does it again with a one-off BBC2 drama *The Strange Case of Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle*, filmed in Scotland for transmission in the summer. This time he's concentrating on the relationship between Arthur and his father. Douglas Henshall plays Conan Doyle, with Sinead Cusack as his mother Mary, Emily Blunt as Jean Leckie, and (rather excitingly) Brian Cox as Joseph Bell.

Faith Stern alerts me to an interesting article, 'Mind and Sherlock Holmes' by Ellen Reiss, accessible online at www.elisiegel.net/tro-04/tro1624.html.

The weekend 10-13 March sees the London Mini-Festival of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, entitled *A Capital Idea, Watson*. It kicks off at 7.00 on Thursday, when Bernard Davies leads his final Marylebone Mews Walk, starting at the Devonshire Arms, Duke Street, W1, and concludes with MC Black's walking tour of St James's and Mayfair on Sunday, starting at the Duke of York's Column at 10.30. On Friday at 3.30 tea at the Diogenes Club (i.e. the Travellers'), and in the evening at the Savage Club the first *Richard Lancelyn Green Memorial Lecture:* 'Richard Lancelyn Green and Raffles' by Owen Dudley Edwards. Saturday morning: a visit to the Enlightenment Gallery at the British Museum or to the Turkish bath at Porchester Baths (men only); in the afternoon a trip on an 1896 steam launch 'in pursuit of the Aurora'; and in the evening a Victorian Music Hall at the Old Dr Butler's Head. Book with Pam Bruxner (2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB).

Kent Ross notifies me of an informal *Gathering of Southern Sherlockians* on 16 April at the Sheraton Read House in Chattanooga, Tennessee, planned by **The Confederates of Wisteria Lodge** and **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**. Contact Mr Ross for details at 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA.

Periodicals received. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Winter 2004. ***The Baker Street Bugle***, November 2004 and January 2005 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7BA). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Winter 2004 (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 Camden House Journal***, January 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Christmas (Winter) 2004 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada).

Christmas Annual 2004: The Architectural Holmes (**The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Communication***, Special Merchandising Issue 2004 and January/February 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, December 2004 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, December 2004 and February 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, January and February 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Irregular Newsletter***, January 2005 (**Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Magic Door***, Winter 2005 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4).

The Master's Trestleboard, January 2005 (**The Master's Masons**, Ron Fish, PO Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, January 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Parallelogram***, December 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, January/February 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Prescott's Press***, December 2004 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, November/December 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Whaling News***, November and December 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 250 13 March 2005

Thomas W Ross died on 2 January at the age of eighty-one. Academic, jazz musician and churchman, Tom Ross wore his learning lightly and had a great gift for friendship. His 1997 *Good Old Index: The Sherlock Holmes Handbook* is a distinctly idiosyncratic reference work**. Basil Hoskins**, who died on 17 January aged seventy-five, had a long and successful acting career, mainly on the stage, alternating between the classic drama and musical comedy. In 1988 he played the Tiger of San Pedro in Granada's TV production of *Wisteria Lodge*, with Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke.

Bill Barnes reports the death at the age of ninety-four, in Newcastle, New South Wales, of **Sherlock Holmes**. Yes, that was his real name! 'He once attended a Sherlockian convention in Australia and those who met him said he was a very nice fellow.' The producer **Otto Plaschkes** died on 14 February aged seventy-five. His most successful film was *Georgy Girl*. His many other productions included the 1983 TV movies *The Sign of Four* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, both with Ian Richardson. Otto Plaschkes was at school with William Golding and is believed to have been the inspiration for 'Piggy' in *The Lord of the Flies.*

Better late than never, I hope! The following investitures were announced at the annual dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** in January: John Bergquist ('The King of Scandinavia'), Peter Calamai ('The *Leeds Mercury*'), Neil Gaiman ('The Devil's Foot'), Art Renkwitz ('The Bar of Gold'), Barbara Roden ('Beryl Stapleton') and Gianluca Salvatori ('The Dacre Hotel'). Two-Shilling Awards (for extraordinary devotion to the cause beyond the call of duty') were presented to Leslie Klinger, Julia Rosenblatt and Steven Rothman. *[*I think it's the first time that three have been awarded in one year.*]*

The title of Kevin Smith's book *Sherlock Holmes Was a Pompey Keeper* (Halsgrove Ltd, Halsgrove House, Lower Moor Way, Tiverton Business Park, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6SS; £19.95) is a deliberate attention-grabber. It was actually Arthur Conan Doyle who played in goal for Portsmouth AFC, and it's that club's successor that is known as 'Pompey' — which has long been the British sailor's name for Portsmouth. This is not a life of Conan Doyle. What Mr Smith gives us is an engrossing and handsomely presented history of Portsmouth's first, strictly amateur soccer club, with lots of information about outstanding members during the twelve years of its existence. Of most interest to us, of course, are Arthur Conan Doyle (to biographical data mainly taken from Geoffrey Stavert's *A Study in Southsea* is added material about his achievements on the football pitch) and Alfred H Wood, who captained the team that won the Portsmouth Senior Cup in 1891 and who much later became Conan Doyle's secretary. I am neither a player nor a follower of the game, but I found that *Sherlock Holmes Was a Pompey Keeper* threw a new light on social and sporting aspects of late Victorian life. Halsgrove, who published Philip Weller's *The Hound of the Baskervilles: Hunting the Dartmoor Legend*, have here produced an equally admirable volume: a splendidly illustrated 152-page hardback measuring 12" x 8½". It's available from booksellers in the Portsmouth area or from Halsgrove Direct on 01884 243242.

John Hall is one of three English writers now contributing scripts to Jim French's Imagination Theater radio dramas. Well known as a Holmesian, he has, like many others, turned his attention to Holmes's near mirror-image, and the result is *The Ardagh Emeralds, and Other Exploits of A J Raffles* (Plane Tree, Unit E, Old Station Offices, Llanidloes, Powys SY18 6EB; £5.99). This sturdy, attractive paperback contains an informative introductory essay and eight ingenious and engaging stories. I have admitted publicly to a dislike of E W Hornung's tales of the 'gentleman thief', but I've so enjoyed reading John Hall's new adventures that I'm determined to give the originals another go! The publishers have a website at www.planetree.com.

Jean-Marc Lofficier of the Black Coat Press (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; website www.blackcoatpress.com) tells me that the second volume of stories about the other great 'gentleman burglar' has just been published. *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Blonde Phantom* by Maurice Leblanc was first published in 1906. This new translation includes Leblanc's two novellas 'La Dame Blonde' and 'La Lampe Juive' plus two new stories, 'Arsène Lupin Arrives Too Late' and 'The Unkindest Cut'. I hope to review the book in the next DM. (*Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Stage Play*, will be published next month.)

From Hakon Holm Publishing (Borgmester Nielsens Vej 24, 3700 Rønne, Denmark; e-mail post@hakon-holm.dk) comes a splendid new edition of *A Study in Scarlet* — in English — with 600 magnificent illustrations by Nis Jessen, whose work has featured on Chris Redmond's excellent website at www.sherlockian-net. The regular edition costs €60.00; the deluxe edition is €70.00, and the special limited edition of 500 numbered and signed copies is €78.00. You can get an idea of the lovely quality of the book at www.mr-holmes.com.

Luke Steven Fullenkamp's trilogy, concluded with *Sherlock Holmes and the Search for Excalibur*, is available 'from most online retailers' and from www.authorhouse.com. The other volumes are *Sherlock Holmes and the Three Dragons* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Ghost of the Flying Dutchman.*

The Holmes Factor, a follow-up to Brian Freemantle's very dubious pastiche *The Holmes Inheritance*, is due this month from Severn House (9-15 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1DF) at £18.99. Next month the same publisher will issue *Sherlock Holmes and the King's Governess* by Barrie Roberts (£18.99). In July come Julian Barnes's new novel *Arthur and George*, about the Edalji case (Jonathan Cape, Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA; no price) and *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* by someone named only as Wagner (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester PO19 8SQ; £13.95). I'm told that Caleb Carr, author of *The Alienist*, wrote *The Italian Secretary* (Little, Brown, Brettenham House, Lancaster Place, London WC2E 7EN; 4 August, £12.99) 'at the invitation of the Conan Doyle Estate'.

Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; phone 01708 749119; fax 01708 736213) has a singular variety of Sherlockiana available. Ask for a catalogue.

Andrew Lycett is working on a biography of Arthur Conan Doyle, and would like to hear from anyone with new or unusual Doyle material. Please contact him at 34 Torbay Road, London NW6 7DY, or e-mail altorbay@btinternet.com. Congratulations to Leslie Klinger; *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (WW Norton Ltd, Castle House, 75-76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT; £35.00) has been nominated for an Edgar award by the Mystery Writers of America and for an Agatha award by Malice Domestic. The winners will be announced next month. Norton's have ordered a second printing for late spring, in which errors noted to date will be corrected.

For World Book Day last Tuesday, The Independent asked 100 'literary luminaries' to name their favourite characters. A N Wilson chose Sherlock Holmes, and Judith Kerr opted for Dr Watson.

David Timson is coming closer to recording the whole Canon for Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ). The first four titles in the Naxos Complete Classics series of unabridged readings include *The Hound of the Baskervilles* on five CDS and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on eighteen CDs. Although Mr Timson's readings of *The Adventures* (including *The Memoirs*) have already been released in six volumes, the texts in the first were abridged; now we can hear them *in toto*. I've reviewed each Naxos volume as I've received it, and now I'm delighted to welcome the greatest adventure of Sherlock Holmes told by one of the finest readers of our time. David Timson's pacing is immaculate — helped, of course, by Nicolas Soames' production, and by the usual inspired choice of incidental music. For the first time in the series this production uses film music from the Marco Polo catalogue, specifically Frank Skinner's from *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* and Hans Salter's from *The House of Frankenstein.* It works beautifully, providing just the right atmospheric frisson. Even more impressive is Mr Timson's subtle vocal versatility (and it is subtle — just listen to Holmes in conversation with Dr Mortimer or with Jack Stapleton). You never get the feeling that he is showing off his range of voices and yet you're never in doubt as to who is speaking. Moreover, unlike some readers, David Timson doesn't force his own personality or his own interpretation upon the story. What you get is unadulterated Conan Doyle, and the storyteller is unmistakably John H Watson. Six and a quarter hours of storytelling at its best, in fact, for £19.99.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes costs £58.50, and provides twenty-eight hours' listening, but of course the set comprises twenty-four separate narratives. (The other two books in the initial Complete Classics release are *Pride and Prejudice* and *Three Men in a Boat*.)

Briefly available on video several years ago, *A Study in Terror* will be released on DVD by Fremantle Home Entertainment on 28 March, at £12.99. I for one say hurrah! It was the first really lavish Sherlock Holmes film since 1939, and the first since then to use a really good apocryphal story — for which the writers, Donald and Derek Ford, are rarely given proper credit. It was the first major work in any medium to pit Holmes against the butcher of Whitechapel, though the film presents Jack the Ripper's East End as more picturesque than the atrocious, squalid reality. In an outstanding cast, Robert Morley's performance as Mycroft and Frank Finlay's as Lestrade must surely be definitive. John Neville and Donald Houston, meanwhile, present an eminently acceptable partnership as Holmes and Watson. The result is a film that seems to mature with age, like a good whisky. Check the website at www.fremantlehomeentertainment.com.

Due on 21 March from BBC Worldwide, and also priced at £12.99, is the DVD recording of *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Silk Stocking,* with Rupert Everett and Ian Hart as Holmes and Watson. Available only on Region 1 DVD is Granada TV's very entertaining 1984 serial *Young Sherlock: The Mystery of the Manor House*, with Guy Henry as the teenage Holmes. Look on www.amazon.com.

A reminder that Teddy Hayes' musical *The Baskerville Beast,* will be staged at the **Questors Theatre** at 12 Mattock Lane, Ealing, London W5 5BQ (box office 020 8237 1111), 22-26 March. The director & choreographer is Peter Gordeno, and Holmes is played by John Elnaugh. There are matinees on Wednesday and Saturday.

The Sherlock Holmes Outpost restaurant opened on 26 February in Fort Davis, Texas. The restaurant, incorporating Dr Watson's Club, Mrs Hudson's Dining Room and Dr Watson's Pub, is at 210 front Street along the old San Antonio-El Paso Road. The owner, Bob Bauer, is a longtime Sherlockian collector.

Issue 47 of Geoff Bradley's estimable magazine *CADS* features a provocative article by H R F Keating, 'Deep under the Deerstalker', looking at the last Professor Challenger narrative, *The Land of Mist*, as a detective story. There's much else, of course, on crime and detective stories old and new. *CADS 47* cost £5.00 from G H Bradley (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA).

Desmond Tyler passes on a message from John Shelton of the Portsmouth Jazz Society, who will be putting on Alan Barnes's acclaimed *Sherlock Holmes Suite* at The Garden (Inn Lodge, Burrfields Road, Portsmouth) at 8.00 pm on Monday 6 June. Get more details from johnshelton@btinternet.com.

Russell Paterson points out that the latest edition of the Ordnance Survey Landranger Sheet 66 — the 1:50,000 map of Edinburgh — has on its cover 'a magnificent photograph of the Sherlock Holmes statue in Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

In view of the tsunami disaster, Rod Baser has postponed plans for a Sherlockian pilgrimage to India and the Andaman Islands. Keep an eye on his website at www.sherlockholmesinindia.com.

Talking of such matters, check out the discussion group at www.jamesbondandbeyond.com/detectives/index.php?act=idx — it's not by any means limited to 007.

A few society events. On 2 April **The Sound of the Baskervilles** hold their 25th anniversary celebration. All are welcome. Get details from Terri Haugen (3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA; phone 253-853-5187; e-mail terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com). 'The Return' dinner of **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** is at The Nobody Inn on 15 April (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). **The Confederates of Wisteria Lodge** and **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** host a *Gathering of Southern Sherlockians* on 16 April at the Sheraton Read House in Chattanooga, TN (Kent Ross, 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA). *The STUD/Watsonian Weekend* opens on 29 April at the Sheraton Four Points, Schiller Park, IL, and includes the 46th Chicago Silver Blaze and the Solar Pons/Fortescue Honours Brunch (Bill Sawisch, 418 Galahad Road, Bolingbrook, IL 60440, USA). **The Sydney Passengers** celebrate twenty years of 'An Excellent Voyage' on the weekend of 14th/15th May (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; bbarnes@ozemail.com.au). **The Parallel Case of St Louis** host the *Holmes Under the Arch II* symposium from 20th to 22th May (Barbara Roscoe, 7101 Mardel, St Louis, MO 63109, USA).

Periodicals received. ***Sherlock Holmes-Kurier***, Winter 2004/5 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Uwe Sommerlad, Rödelheimer Landstrasse 32, 60487 Frankfurt am Main., Germany). ***The Confederate Chronicles***, 5 March 2005 (**The Confederate of Wisteria Lodge**, Kent Ross, 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, February 2005 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, March 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen (3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, February 2005 and March 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Baker Street Picayune***, vol. I no. 1 (**Le Cercle de Sherlock Holmes**, Jens Byskov Jensen, 5316 Wingate Drive, Apt B, New Orleans, LA 70122, USA). ***Antipodean Holmesian Society Newsletter***, March 2005 (**Antipodean Holmesian Society**, Ted Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand). ***The Parallelogram***, January 2005 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, January 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Passengers' Log***, Summer 2005 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, January 2005 and February 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 251 17 April 2005

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send £6.00 or US$15.00 (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me) or 12 International Reply Coupons, for 12 issues. 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.

David Kossoff, who died on 23 March at the age of eighty-five, was loved and respected as an actor, a writer and a raconteur. In 1952 he played Peterson in Felix Felton's BBC Radio dramatisation of *The Blue Carbuncle* with Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley, but his role in Billy Wilder's film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* was cut (with much else) from the release print. After his son Paul, lead guitarist with Free, died of a heroin overdose, David Kossoff devoted much of his time to campaigning against hard drugs.

Happier news is that on 19 March **Patricia Morison** celebrated her ninetieth birthday. After years of amiable movies, including Basil Rathbone's last Sherlock Holmes film *Dressed to Kill*, she got rave reviews opposite Alfred Drake in the original production of *Kiss Me, Kate*, and quickly established herself as a Broadway legend.

Last October **The Baker Street Irregulars** held their first organised expedition to a Canonical location, the Pennsylvania coal country of *The Valley of Fear*. In the tradition of our own Society's excursions, an accompanying book has been published: *Murderland*, edited by Steven T Doyle (*The Baker Street Journal*, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; $19.95). What a pleasure it is to see this, the most inexplicably under-rated of the chronicles of Sherlock Holmes, given the attention it deserves! In *The Valley of Fear* Conan Doyle not only gave us Holmes and Watson at their best and most assured, but in 'The Tragedy of Birlstone' he wrote a dazzling detective story, and in 'The Scowrers' (as Gary Lovisi maintains in his contribution to *Murderland*) he effectively created the American private eye thriller. There are Sherlockians, intelligent people but blinkered, who regard *The Valley of Fear* as in some way negligible. *Murderland* is unlikely to open their eyes, but for those who appreciate quality, the essays by Julia Rosenblatt, Steven Doyle, David Hammer, Pasquale Accardo, Gary Lovisi, Catherine Cooke, Pat Ward and Jon Lellenberg will surely enhance their enjoyment of this, the best of the long stories. And there are bonuses: a reprint of 'The Overthrow of the Molly Maguires' from *McClure's Magazine* for June 1893, and a facsimile (with a surprisingly inaccurate transcription) of Conan Doyle's manuscript notes for the novel, which show that 'the Valley of Fear' replaced 'Murderland' as an epithet for the Scowrers' country. (*Murderland* can be ordered online from www.bakerstreetjournal.com).

Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Blonde Phantom by Maurice Leblanc, adapted into English by Jean-Marc & Randy Lofficier (Black Coat Press, PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; www.blackcoatpress.com; $20.95) completes the account begun in *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Hollow Needle* (reviewed in DM 243). Here we have the two novellas, 'The Blonde Phantom' and 'The Jewish Lamp' (originally published together in English as *The Arrest of Arsène Lupin, The Blonde Lady* or *The Fair-haired Lady*, depending on the publisher) along with two short stories by the translators, which neatly fill gaps in the saga. The Lupin-Holmes tales appeal to me for several reasons. The protagonists are remarkably evenly matched; unlike Chief Inspector Ganimard, Holmes really gives Lupin a run for his money, though of course Lupin comes out on top. The narrator (named as Leblanc himself) admires the detective but is firmly on the burglar's side, and the portrayal of Holmes and Watson is refreshingly different from that given in the Canon, as Anthony Boucher pointed out long ago. Moreover, the plotting is ingenious, and there's that touch of the outrageous that British writers didn't seem to master fully until the television age (when it flowered gorgeously in *The Avengers*). There's nothing actually impossible in the exploits of Arsène Lupin, but there's a great deal that's improbable, and the better for it. Maurice Leblanc was not allowed to use the name of Sherlock Holmes in the original publications; he resorted to 'Herlock Sholmès', which a British publisher cleverly transformed into 'Holmlock Shears'. But how nice to encounter Holmes under his real name in this extraordinary continuing duel.

There's a new catalogue, worth looking at, as always, from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

On 19 March The Scotsman reported that James Boyle, chairman of Scotland's cultural commission, urges Scotland to exploit Sherlock Holmes 'as a prime example of Scottish rationalism'. Owen Dudley Edwards adds: 'Conan Doyle remained a great Scottish writer to his death. So did Robert Louis Stevenson and so did J M Barrie.'

Several items are due in July. From Stone Publishing House — no author given — there's *Dr Joseph Bell: The Original Sherlock Holmes* (17 Stone House, North Foreland Road, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 3NT; £4.99). From Gaslight Publications comes *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Clothes-Line* (c/o Players' Press [UK], 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £7.00). And BBC Worldwide will release on CD *The Adventures, The Memoirs, The Return, His Last Bow, The Casebook* and series 1 of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, all with Clive Merrison. Thirteen double-CD sets in all, at £17.99 each, according to Whitaker's LibWeb. They'll be available online from www.bbcshop.com.

In November Atlantic Books (Ormond House, 26-27 Boswell Street, London WC1N 3JZ) will publish *Sherlock Holmes: The Biography* by Nick Rennison, priced at £14.99. The publisher's description suggests that this 'biography' is as imaginative as those by W S Baring-Gould, Michael Hardwick and Michael Harrison.

The Haslemere Literary Weekend 'featuring the life and times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle' runs from 6 to 8 May. Events include a a talk on Saturday by Philip Weller of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, who will also attend the lunch at ACD's old home Undershaw at Hindhead, and a talk on Sunday by Catherine Cooke BSI, who needs no introduction. For details contact Melanie Odell at initiative@haslemere.com or check www.haslemere.com.

Pam Bruxner sends a flyer from the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery in Castle Lane, Bedford, whose exhibition *Inspired: The Golden Age of Watercolours* (till 19 June) feature's Turner's magnificent painting 'Great Fall of the Reichenbach'. The website is at www.cecilhigginsartgallery.org.

From 23 April to 7 May the **New York State Theatre Institute** at Try, NY will stage the professional world premiere of *Sherlock's Legacy* by Ed Lange, author of *Sherlock's Secret Life*. The new

play is a mystery set in Holmes's retirement cottage. The NYSTI website is at www.nysti.org.

Nearer home (my home, anyway) from 8 to 18 June **The Loft Theatre**, Victoria Colonnade, Leamington Spa will give the first production of *The Final Problem for Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson* by David Fletcher. 'This new play includes some of Conan Doyle's best stories of Holmes and Watson dealing with high level politicians, low level murders and the infamous Professor Moriarty. But Fletcher also focuses on the darker aspects of the lives of two complicated human beings, who struggle to maintain a balances relationship and who carry deep psychological scars.' Details and tickets are available from the theatre box office on 01926 426341, or the Tourist Information Office on 01926 742756.

A reminder that Alan Barnes & his Octet will perform his *Sherlock Holmes Suite* at 7.30 pm on 22 May at the **Bury St Edmunds Festival** (Theatre Royal, Westgate Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; phone 01284 769505 or e-mail booking@theatreroyal.org) and at 8.00 pm on 6 June at **Portsmouth Jazz Society** (The Garden Room, Inn Lodge, Burrfields Road, Portsmouth; phone 02392 824373 or e-mail portsmouthjazz@btinternet.com).

Cenarth Fox, author of the play *The Real Sherlock Holmes* and of the Nicholas Twit mysteries, has a new agent for the United Kingdom and the EU: Gareth Bannister, Fox Plays UK, 9 Forsyth Court, 6-8 Cambridge Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4JE (phone 07812 547462; e-mail foxplays@magicfox.co.uk).

CSA TellTapes (6A Archway Mews, London SW15 2PE) have released a CD set of *Classic Detective Stories* read by Edward Hardwicke. The authors are Arthur Conan Doyle, Edgar Wallace, Muriel Spark, Colin Dexter, G K Chesterton, Nicholas Blake and Sax Rohmer. Retail price is £15.99.

Blackstone Audiobooks (PO Box 969, Ashland, OR 97520, USA; sales@blackstoneaudio.com) have released *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Theatre* on CD ($45.00), cassette ($34.95) or MP3 CD ($29.95). The set comprises William Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes*, Conan Doyle's *The Speckled Band*, and the director Yuri Rasovsky's *Ghastly Double Murder in Famed Detective's Flat*. Martin Jarvis plays Holmes and Kristoffer Tabori is Watson. There's a website at www.blackstoneaudio.com.

Matthew Elliott, who put me on to that enticing production, also points out that Jim French Productions have released several volumes of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on CD *[*a different project, of course, from the BBC Radio series*]* and so far two sets of *Raffles - The Gentleman Thief*. Both series include episodes scripted by M J (Matthew) Elliott. In May Matthew's own original series *The Hilary Caine Mysteries* begins transmission on Imagination Theater. Information about the company's radio dramas and recordings is at www.harrynile.com.

Matthew has also directed me to a website with information and clips from the recent French movie *Arsène Lupin*, about the other great 'gentleman burglar': www.club-internet.fr/arsenelupin/. It looks very stylish and great fun.

Lenny Picker is trying to find the script for the unmade Tyburn movie *The Abbot's Cry*. If anyone can help him, please let me know, as I'd like to see a copy as well!

Canadian singer-songwriter Emerald Doyle, whose debut single *Move On* is just released in the UK, reckons to be related to Arthur Conan Doyle. Whether or not that's so, she's evidently talented and attractive. See www.emeralddoyle.com.

A reminder of a very worthwhile website: Adrian Nebbett, at www.schoolandholmes.com, provides excellent indexes for more than twenty classic Sherlockian texts whose publishers omitted them. They range from *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* by Vincent Starrett and James Edward Holroyd's *Baker Street Byways* to *The Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes* by John Radford and June Thomson's *Holmes and Watson*.

Until 31 May, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI [Sales] Ltd, Freepost BH1654, Poole, Dorset BH15 1BT; phone 0845 126 6999; e-mail sales@rnli.org.uk) is offering the classic *221B Baker Street* board game by mail order for £10.00. Even with £4.50 postage & packing that's a saving of over £5.00 on the shop price.

A reminder that **The Sydney Passengers** celebrate twenty years of 'An Excellent Voyage' on the weekend of 14th/15th May (get details from Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; bbarnes@ozemail.com.au), and that **The Parallel Case of St Louis** host the *Holmes Under the Arch II* symposium from 20th to 22th May (Barbara Roscoe, 7101 Mardel, St Louis, MO 63109, USA).

The Musgraves will spend the weekend of 3 to 5 June in the lovely city of Edinburgh, birthplace of Arthur Conan Doyle, who also graduated from the city's famous and ancient University. Echoes of the Scottish capital are evident throughout the Sherlock Holmes Canon, so it's fitting that the expedition title is *A Study in Scarlet* and that the party will stay in Lauriston Place. Get details of the Musgraves from Lesley Skoyles, 138 Albert Street, Leith, Edinburgh EH7 5LT.

In Exeter on 5 June **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will enjoy Sunday lunch, croquet and afternoon tea (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR).

Periodicals received. ***The Alibi***, no. 1 (**The Baker Street Fellowship**, Simon Hall, 67 Lower Kirtlington Road, Southwell, Notts.; sdehall2000@yahoo.co.uk). ***The Camden House Journal***, March 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Communication***, March/April 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2005 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, March 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, January and April 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, April 2005, and ***Chronicler***, March 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

The Parallelogram, March 2005 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Spring 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Prescott's Press***, March 2005 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, March 2005 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***The School Report***, Spring Term 2005 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 2005 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, February/March 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Torr***, Spring 2005 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA). ***The Whaling News***, January, February & March 2005 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, March 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

I've occasionally been asked about availability of early issues of *The District Messenger*. Such are the wonders of modern technology that I can now provide the first hundred issues (1 December 1982 - 23 July 1990) on CD-ROM. They're in (non-searchable) PDF format, requiring an easily and freely down-loadable Adobe Acrobat reader. It's all here, on one disc, cased and labelled, for £6.00 or $15.00, including postage and packing. Please make sterling cheques payable to me and US dollar checks to Jean Upton.

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. 251 17 April 2005

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

Further to the brief obit of **David Kossoff** in DM 251, Bert Coules reminds me that nearly forty years after playing Peterson the Commissionaire, he appeared as 'Count Orlovsky' in Peter Ling's BBC Radio 4 adaptation of *The Resident Patient*, with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams.

John Bennett died on 11 April, a month before his seventy-seventh birthday. His major rôles included Philip Bosinney in *The Forsyte Saga*, Xenophon in *I, Claudius* and Dr Ehrlich in *The Pianist*. His Sigmund Freud was one of the better features of the 1992 film *Sherlock Holmes and the Leading Lady*, with Christopher Lee and Patrick Macnee. **Kay Walsh**, who died on 16 April aged ninety-three, was an actress and writer of great talent, contributing the conclusion of *Great Expectations* and the opening sequence of *Oliver Twist* (in which she played Nancy), both directed by her first husband David Lean. She had leading rôles in *This Happy Breed*, *Vice Versa* and Hitchcock's *Stage Fright* among others, and a cameo as Cathy Eddowes in *A Study in Terror*, with John Neville and Donald Houston. In Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve* Kay Walsh was partnered with **John Mills**, who died one week after her, at the age of ninety-seven. His long and varied career began in 1933 and ended seventy years later with a cameo in Stephen Fry's *Bright Young Things*. He played military types of all ranks, Pip in *Great Expectations*, Mr Polly, Captain Scott, the Oscar-winning Michael in *Ryan's Daughter*, and in 1984 an excellent Watson to Peter Cushing's equally fine Holmes in *The Masks of Death*. He was knighted in 1976.

Peter Blau reports the death on 21 April of **Robert H Dinegar**, who was both an episcopal priest and a chemist at Los Alamos! In our world, he was a stalwart of **The Brothers Three of Moriarty** (I first met him twenty-five years ago at the Shaw home in Santa Fe), and was invested as 'Henry Ward Beecher' by the BSI in 1984.

Our old friend **George Welch**, a long-time member of our Society, has been in very poor health for a long time but continues to take an interest in matters Sherlockian. 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.

The Italian Secretary by Caleb Carr (Carroll & Graf, 245 West 17th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10011, USA; $23.95) is the only Sherlock Holmes novel to have been commissioned by the Estate of Dame Jean Conan Doyle. Mr Carr, as crime fiction aficionados will know, is the creator of Dr Laszlo Kreizler, an early criminal psychologist, introduced in the best-selling novel *The Alienist;* he is also a military historian, specialising in terrorism. As this book proves, he knows his period and his Sherlock Holmes. He submitted a short story for Jon Lellenberg's forthcoming anthology *The Ghosts of Baker Street*, but Lellenberg recognised that it deserved to be treated at book-length, and the result is *The Italian Secretary*. Mycroft Holmes summons Holmes and Watson to Edinburgh, where two of the party renovating Holyrood House for Queen Victoria have been murdered. Mycroft suspects a plot against the Queen herself, and Sherlock is reminded of the violent murder in 1566 of David Rizzio, the Italian secretary of Mary, Queen of Scots. The place and the time are richly evoked, and the characters ring true. Caleb Carr evidently has an accurate ear for the nuances of Scottish and English speech, too, and conveys it without the impenetrable phonetic rendering that Victorian authors (though rarely Conan Doyle) seemed to love. This is a darker tale than most in the true Canon, but Mr Carr has resisted any temptation to make Holmes a double of Dr Kreizler. If I were new to Sherlock Holmes, and this book was presented to me as the work of Arthur Conan Doyle, I might well accept it as such. Caleb Carr is an exceptional writer, and *The Italian Secretary* is an exceptional story. (One quibble: Holmes might have said a century ago that the telegraph lines were subject to 'electric eavesdropping', but surely not 'electronic eavesdropping'!) Jon Lellenberg has contributed an engaging afterword.

Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Stage Play (Black Coat Press, PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; www.blackcoatpress.com; $20.95) is not the work of Maurice Leblanc, but of Victor Darlay and Henri de Gorsse, who present to us a Holmes accompanied not by Dr Watson, but by his young son Frederick Holmes, known as 'Little Sherlock'! This gives rise to such unfortunate dialogue as: 'Ah! Bravo, Papa. You are truly the greatest detective in the world.' 'Oh, a simple consulting detective, Frederick.' 'Yes, but smarter than all the other detectives combined. Oh, Papa, one day I'd like to be as good a detective as you.' — and so on. That aberration apart, however, this is an ingenious and imaginative comedy, matching the master burglar once again with the master detective. Holmes actually does arrest Lupin and recover the Sultan Diamond, but of course Lupin escapes. It would be nice to see *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes* staged, though the fact that it requires a cast of over thirty might make that difficult. As a bonus, the translator has contributed an original one-act play *The Real Sherlock Holmes*, which turns upside-down all we thought we knew about Professor Moriarty.

The latest Sherlockian publication from Magico (PO Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA) is an attractive 56-page chapbook by Bud Livingston, *Some More Trifling Monographs*, fourteen short articles on Canonical subjects including overcoats, alcoholic drink, the Deity and the devil, and praise and blame. The most interesting (and by far the most substantial) is an essay on Henry Ward Beecher. *Some More Trifling Monographs* costs $9.95 plus $2.00 postage with any other title from Magico; write for a catalogue. (Only a few copies remain of the 2002 Magico volume *A Singular Sense of Humor* [reviewed in DM 237], priced at $29.95 plus postage.)

Sherlock Holmes Museet Antikvariatet (Egebjergvej 206, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark) has issued a new catalogue with items, some of them *very* desirable, in English and Danish. Newly published are *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes, World Detective* by Nils Nordberg (a 32-page survey in English, with bibliography by Bjarne Nielsen, of the series of *groschen*, or penny dreadfuls published in various European countries from about 1907 and featuring unauthorised and apocryphal exploits of the detective) and *Detectivkongen Sherlock Holmes: Det Dobbelte Juveltyveri* (a Danish example reprinted from 1909). Both booklets are nicely presented, with full colour illustrations, and both are priced at Kr.75 (approximately £6.85, $13.00 or €10.00). *The Great Northern Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Bjarne Nielsen's authoritative study in English of the many Danish and German Holmes movies produced in the early silent era, is still available (Kr. 180, £15.00 or

$30.00) and so is a very nice region-free DVD recording of the only survivor of those films, *Sherlock Holmes i Bondefangerkløer* (*The Confidence Trick*) (Kr. 100, £10.00 or $16.00). Prices exclude postage. Check the website at www.sherlockiana.net.

Mitch Cullin's *A Slight Trick of the Mind*, published last month by Doubleday at $23.95, 'imagines a 93-year-old Holmes living in a Sussex farmhouse, coping with old age and a faulty memory'. It's been getting very good reviews. Peter Blau notes HighBridge has released an unabridged recording by Simon Jones on cassette and CD ($29.00). In June comes Laurie R King's latest Mary Russell mystery *Locked Rooms* (Bantam, $24.00), in which Russell and Holmes are in San Francisco 'settling her parents' estate and coping with Russell's unsettling dreams'. Catherine Cooke reminds me that Julian Barnes' novel *Arthur and George*, about the Edalji case, is due in July from Jonathan Cape (Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA; no price).

There are Sherlockian references in my *[*modest cough*]* award-winning collection of ghost stories *A Ghostly Crew: Tales from The Endeavour* (Sarob Press, 2001). It's now out of print, but I have half a dozen copies which I'm offering at £15.00 or $30.00 plus postage — about a third off the published price.

The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Short Stories edited by Leslie S Klinger has won the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Allan Poe Award for the best critical or biographical work of 2004. A well deserved honour!

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

Sherlock no. 65 is the last issue to be edited by David Stuart Davies. The new editor is Teddy Hayes, creator of *The Baskerville Beast*, who reckons to run the magazine on a greatly reduced budget. I wish him luck, but I think he'll find it difficult, as all the regular contributors have decided not to continue (they were working for peanuts anyway). Well, this isn't a bad issue to go out on. It shows what high standards David brought to the magazine. Paul Chapman compares Sherlock Holmes's urban and rural cases, MJ Elliott cracks *The Da Vinci Code*, DSD watches *The Case of the Silk Stocking*, Calum McLeod reads Zoë Sharp's novels, Mark Valentine reassesses Philip MacDonald, part four of DSD's survey of Moriarty on screen ends on a cliffhanger (will we ever see part five?), Robert Sanderson looks at Ellery Queen on TV, Leonard Rose reviews *The Baskerville Beast*, Martin Edwards meets HRF Keating, Alan Perry considers Holmes's imperfections; there are the usual columns from Roger Forsdyke, Pat Ward, Bob Byrne, MJ Elliott, Kathryn White, Moriarty and me; and a fine new Johnny One Eye story from DSD. *[*Hale will publish Johnny's first novel-length adventure **Forests of the Night** next month*]*. *Sherlock* is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or $45.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The website's at www.sherlockholmes.com. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Brian Pugh tells me that he bought all three Blackstone Audiobooks releases — *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Theatre*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Lost World* — and had to pay an import charge and Royal Mail clearance charge totalling £13.13. Be warned! (Blackstone Audiobooks, PO Box 969, Ashland, OR 97520, USA; sales@blackstoneaudio.com).

BBC Scotland is preparing a biographical television documentary about Arthur Conan Doyle. No transmission dates yet.

Heather Owen reminds me that the Undershaw restaurant (Conan Doyle's old home in Hindhead) is due to close about now. The idea is to convert the house into flats, but I understand that there are planning and/or financial problems. In Edinburgh, a lack of funds may scupper the plans to turn ACD's childhood home Liberton Bank House, saved from becoming a McDonald's 'restaurant', into a special school, with a GP's practice in the grounds.

From Mark Valentine: 'The Government has ordered the killing of at least one in ten British cormorants, in defiance of its own scientists' advice, to appease anglers and fish farms who say the dark bird is stealing too much of their quarry. Amongst the argument advanced by anglers for the cull were that "in the Bible, cormorants are described as an abomination, so we have God on our side!" ... Under the announcement, sneaked out [in early April], at least 1,800 and up to 3,000 of the cormorants, normally protected by wildlife laws, can be shot each year: the total population is currently only 17,000. *[*Almost unbelievable, isn't it?*]* The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is strongly opposed to the move, and believes more humane deterrents against cormorants around inland fishing sites have not been properly tried.' Look at the RSPB website: www.rspb.org.uk/policy/wildbirdslaw/1in10shot.asp.

The Musgraves have 'finally embraced new technology' and can be contacted by e-mail at the.musgraves@amserve.com.

The annual spring meeting of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** will be held in New York on Saturday 28 May. The contact address for the Principal Unprincipled Adventuress, Evelyn Herzog, is now 301 Warren Avenue, #203, Baltimore, MD 21230, USA.

Le Cercle de Sherlock Holmes will hold its first annual Baskerville Banquet on 14 June at Andrea's Italian Restaurant in Metairie, New Orleans. Get full details from the President, Jens Byskov Jensen at byskovjensen@cox.net.

The Maiwand Luncheon of **The Friends of Dr Watson** will be held at the Rajdoot Tandoori Restaurant in Paddington Street, off Baker Street on 23 July. Get details from Nino Cirone, Flat 2, 31 Muswell Avenue, London N10 2EB; Dr_Watsons_Surgery@hotmail.co.uk.

Periodicals received: ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2005 (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). ***Canadian Holmes***, Lady Day (Spring) 2005 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***Communication***, May/June 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, May 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, May 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

Mayday Mayday, May 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Spring 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Practice Notes***, June 2005 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Flat 2, 31 Muswell Avenue, London N10 2EB) *[*this issue is actually the last edited by Brian Scrivener, who is relinquishing the post of Practice Manager to Nino Cirone — thanks for three years of hard work, Brian, and welcome, Nino!*]*. ***The Scion***, Spring 2005 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP) *[*it's good to see the Musgraves publishing something reasonably substantial again, but — this is Issue 2 of **The Scion**, and I'm still waiting for Issue 1...*]*. ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 1 2005 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Nivågade 3, 2 th., 2200 København N, Denmark) *[*it was good to get together for a drink and a chat last weekend, though briefly, with the President of the Club, Bjarne Nielsen*]*.

And the invaluable newsletter ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

The first hundred issues of *The District Messenger* (1 December 1982 - 23 July 1990) are now available in (non-searchable) PDF format on CD-ROM, cased and labelled, for £6.00 or $15.00, including postage and packing. Please make sterling cheques payable to me and US dollar checks to Jean Upton.

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. 253 26 June 2005

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

Peter Blau notes that **Kay Walsh**, who died on 16 April (see DM 252), played Mrs Hudson in various instalments of Sheldon Reynolds' sadly little-seen 1979 TV series *Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson*, with Geoffrey Whitehead and Donald Pickering as Holmes and Watson. Also from Peter: **Sylvian Hamilton**, a notable specialist Sherlockian dealer (and subscriber to this newsletter) in the 1980s and early 1990s, died on 28 February; her mediaeval detective novels, beginning with *The Bone Pedlar*, are highly regarded. **Edgar B Smith** ('Moore Agar', BSI), who was distinguished both as a Sherlockian and a dermatologist, died on 12 May.

Norman Bird, who died on 22 April aged eighty, was an impeccable supporting actor in all media. On BBC1 in 1973 he played Inspector Street in N F Simpson's surreal comedy *Elementary, My Dear Watson*, with John Cleese and William Rushton as Holmes and Watson. His other Sherlockian performances were all on BBC Radio 4: he was Arthur Frankland in Bert Coules's 1988 dramatisation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, with Roger Rees and Crawford Logan; opposite Clive Merrison and Michael Williams he was Dr Huxtable in Michael Bakewell's 1993 *The Priory School* and Peterson in Bert Coules's 1995 *The Retired Colourman*. Alexis Barquin alerted me to the death on 8 June, three days short of his seventy-third birthday, of **Ed Bishop**, one of Britain's most notable resident American actors. In 1968 he played Joseph Stangerson in BBC TV's *A Study in Scarlet* with Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock, and twenty-one years later played Enoch Drebber in Bert Coules's BBC Radio production with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. Later in the radio series he was an unnamed Agent in 1994's *His Last Bow*. **Jonathan Adams**, actor and artist, died on 13 June aged seventy-four. In 1985 he played Jonas Oldacre in Granada TV's *The Norwood Builder*, with Jeremy Brett and David Burke (and Rosalie Crutchley perfect as Mrs Lexington), and in 1993 appeared as Mr McFarlane in Bert Coules's Radio 4 adaptation of the same story, with Merrison and Williams. In 1995, he was Josiah Barnes in Radio 4's *Shoscombe Old Place*, scripted by Michael Bakewell.

Dr Robert Hume has drawn on the most authoritative sources — Jessie M Saxby and Ely M Liebow — and distilled the essentials of Joe Bell's life and career into the eighty engrossing pages of *Dr Joseph Bell: The Original Sherlock Holmes* (Stone Publishing House, 17 Stone House, North Foreland Street, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 3NT; 7 July; £4.99). Interestingly, he opens with an anecdote that has been told over the years of various scientists, and was first recorded of Bell by Harold Emery Jones in 1904 (see the Urban Legends Reference Pages at www.snopes.com). The book is well researched and written, and will surely prove an excellent introduction to Dr Bell for young readers. Mind you, I'd always understood that Victorian Edinburgh was called 'Auld Reekie' (spelled here 'Aulde Reakie') because it was smoky, not because it was — as it undoubtedly was — smelly!

Leslie S Klinger and his publishers have put us yet deeper in their debt with the seventh volume in the Sherlock Holmes Reference Library, *The Valley of Fear* (Gasogene Books, PO Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; $19.95). The standards of scholarship and of production were established with the first volume, *The Adventures*, back in 1998, and they have never faltered. *The Valley of Fear* is a rich novel — Christopher Redmond suggests that its two strands make it a masterpiece twice over — but it is scandalously underrated and sadly neglected. Well, this volume, along with the BSI's admirable *Murderland* (see DM 251) is helping to set that situation right. Julia Carlson Rosenblatt contributes an admirable introduction about Conan Doyle's Scowrers and the real-life Molly Maguires. She comes as close as anyone can, I suspect, to the reason for the book's lack of popularity: 'I tend to blame Part Two, which makes us uncomfortable. It takes us into disquieting, lawless territory. When the rule of law breaks down, we lack the reassurance that Holmes can make everything better.' Leslie Klinger's scholarship is no less perceptive and thorough, and is expressed with concision: his summary of the research into Moriarty's Greuze, for example, is exemplary. As always, he notes any significant variations between the texts of different editions of the book, which differ more in this case than with any other volume in the Holmes Canon. American terms and language are more accurate, unsurprisingly, in the American texts, but some expressions were toned down by the American editors, even to the extent of referring simply to 'the mine police' rather than the Coal and Iron Police. Besides the extensive bibliography, this volume has two appendices: a survey of the speculations about the enigmatic Fred Porlock, and the bridging material that preceded some instalments in *The Strand Magazine*, with a fragment from the manuscript that was omitted from published texts. It's a wonderful project, excellently carried out. Highest recommendation.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has a special offer on two of his booklets: *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* (£1.80), and *On Stage Sherlock Holmes* (£2.50). Prices include postage, and you get two free caricature postcards with each order.

Due in late summer (probably) from **Black Coat Press** (PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; www.blackcoatpress.com) is *Sherlock Holmes: The Grand Horizontals, and Other Plays* by Frank J Morlock, in which Holmes crosses the paths of Fantômas, Father Brown and Teddy Roosevelt.

The **Calabash Press / Ash-Tree Press** summer sale continues until 30 June, so there's still time to bag a bargain. Check the available titles at www.ash-tree.bc.ca.

There's a new catalogue out from **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada), much of it Sherlockian, but not all by a long way. Forthcoming, among much else, are Tim Johnson's update to *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* and *The Solar Pons Encyclopaedia*. The range of material on CD-ROM includes *The Sherlock Holmes Journal 1952-2002*. The catalogue is also the website at batteredbox.com. **Gryphon Books** (PO Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209, USA) also have a new catalogue, mostly non-Sherlockian.

There's always a Sherlockian bargain or two in the catalogues from **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; website www.bibliophilebooks.com). And Philip Attwell notes that the June magazine from **The Book People** (Parc, Menai, Bangor LL57 4FB; www.thebookpeople.co.uk) offers Penguin's nine volumes of the Canon plus Richard Green's *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* for £9.99 plus £3.50 postage. The new catalogue from **Nigel**

Williams Rare Books (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) has much of interest.

Penguin Books (80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL) celebrate their seventieth anniversary with the release of seventy 'Pocket Penguins', of which no. 68 is Jonathan Coe's *9th & 13th* (£1.50) — three short stories and an engaging account of his obsession with Billy Wilder's film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*.

Two distinguished Sherlockians have new novels out, each the novel-length debut for the author's own detective. *Death of a Collector* by John Hall (Authors OnLine, 40 Castle Street, Hertford SG14 1HR; £9.99) winner of the recent *Sherlock* magazine Crime Writers Competition, introduces the aristocratic 1920s sleuth Freddie Darnborough. *Forests of the Night* by David Stuart Davies (Robert Hale, Clerkenwell House, Clerkenwell Green, London EC1R 0HT; 30 June; £16.99) is the first 'Johnny One-Eye' novel, set against the grimier background of wartime London. Both books are well worth seeking out.

The English Literature sale at **Sotheby's** (34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA; phone 020 7293 5000; www.sothebys.com) features some very important Sherlockians, including Richard Lancelyn Green's first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and some lovely paintings by Richard Doyle.

Amanda Field tells me that Portsmouth Museums & Library have appointed Dr Neil McCaw of University College, Winchester as curator of the Richard Lancelyn Green Collection. He has appointed a part-time cataloguer, and Amanda herself will be helping out on a voluntary basis.

The Healing Touch is the title of an exhibition running until 27 November at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, to celebrate the quincentenary of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Dr Joseph Bell is among the medical notables featured.

David Hernandez is a young Sherlockian in Mexico who is looking for e-mail correspondents (he uses his local internet café). He writes good English, and is obviously intelligent and enthusiastic. You can write to him at david_111953@yahoo.com.

The Society's Swiss Pilgrims returned a couple of days ago. There's a good illustrated report in English on their adventures at www.swissinfo.org/sen/swissinfo.html?siteSect=108&sid=5891396&cKey=1119455975000. Thanks to Laura Kuhn for the link.

Thanks to Michael Cox for information about the newly restored DVD release by Granada Ventures of the now-classic Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series. The new edition, which is reportedly vastly superior to the Cinema Club DVDs, comes as two separate multi-disc sets or as one 16-disc collection. David Stuart Davies adds that MPI (who did the superb remastering of the Rathbone movies) plan to restore the first couple of series for release in America, with commentaries on some of the films.

An unconfirmed report says that Walden Media *[*who they?*]* has bought Julie Golden's script *Sherlock's Secretary*, about a present-day occupant of 221B Baker Street who 'decides to take on a case from one of the many letters sent from all over the world asking the great detective for help in solving real life crimes'.

Andrew Baldwin notes that Choices Direct offers a three-DVD boxed set of *The Classic Sherlock Holmes vol. 1* for £8.49 post-free. The stars include Raymond Massey, Arthur Wontner and Ronald Howard. The Massey film is *The Speckled Band*, and one Wontner should be *Silver Blaze*, but I've no information about the others. It's not a bad price, though. Go to www.choicesdirect.co.uk.

Jim French Productions Inc. has released a new CD, *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, vol. 8*, comprising *The Singular Affair of Madame Planchette* by Jim French and *The Ripper Inheritance* by our own M J Elliott. These are from the excellent Seattle-based **Imagination Theatre** radio productions, authorised by the Estate of Dame Jean Conan Doyle. Check the website for details at www.harrynile.com. *[*John Hall and Matthew Booth also contribute scripts to the series.*]*

The remarkable vocal versatility of David Ian Davies, including his many Sherlockian recordings, can now be heard on-line at www.audible.co.uk as well as at www.onevoicerecordings.com and www.spokennetwork.com — which also offers the fine recordings by the One Act Players.

Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com) offer a couple of seriously esoteric collectors' items. 'The original "Curse of the Baskervilles" historical document' ($46.50) is 'heavily aged by hand' and 'printed from a master which was entirely hand-written using an old-fashioned dip-pen in an historically accurate 18th century script'. But even that's outclassed by 'Sherlock Holmes's (as portrayed by Basil Rathbone) official British passport' ($125.00), 'authentically reproduced from vintage British passports from the World War II era', with Basil Rathbone's photograph and a signature 'compiled from Mr Rathbone's own handwriting', and visas representing the countries visited in the Universal movies. *[*rather worryingly the online catalogue refers to Paramount Pictures!*]*

Brian Pugh reports that the Summer 2005 issue of *This England* features a four-page article on 'The Hampshire Home of Arthur Conan Doyle'.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Picayune*** vol. I no. 2 (**Le Cercle de Sherlock Holmes**, Jens Byskov Jensen, 5316 Wingate Drive, Apt B, New Orleans, LA 70122, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, April 2005 and May 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Birthday Newsletter and Research File XII*** (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Confederate Chronicles***, 25 April 2005 (**The Confederates of Wisteria Lodge**, Kent Ross, 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, June 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA).***Ineffable Twaddle***, June 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Magic Door***, Spring 2005, and ***Arthur Conan Doyle in Canada*** by Doug Wrigglesworth (Occasional Paper no. 1) (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4) *[*Victoria Gill, Cameron Hollyer's successor as Curator of the Collection, is retiring after fifteen years' hard but no doubt rewarding work*]*.

Mayday Mayday, June 2005, and ***Chronicler***, June 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Prescott's Press***, June 2005 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***The School Report***, Summer Term 2005 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Scion***, Autumn 2004 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP) *[*yes, the date is correct — for some reason issue 2 reached me before issue 1; well, it's really good to see the Musgraves producing entertaining and informative publications again*]*. ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, April 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net) *[*I hadn't noticed it before, but April actually is the date on this issue. Hm...*]* ***The Vermissa Herald***, April 2005 (**The Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco**, Carol Russell, c/o Marilyn MacGregor, 1515 Shasta Drive #4210, Davis, CA 95616-6692, USA) *[*this is the first issue of the New Series; unfortunately there's no address given for the editor, so I've given that of the Bodymaster, our good friend Marilyn MacGregor*]*. ***The Whaling News***, April and May 2005 (**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***, May 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

The first hundred issues of *The District Messenger* (1 December 1982 - 23 July 1990) are now available in (non-searchable) PDF format on CD-ROM, cased and labelled, for £6.00 or $15.00, including postage and packing. Please make sterling cheques payable to me and US dollar checks to Jean Upton.

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. 253 29 July 2005

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

Peter Blau reports that **Helen Heinrich** ('Lady Hilda Trelawney Hope', ASH) died on 19 June. 'She presided over The Long Island Cave Dwellers and was active in Sherlock Holmes societies in the New York area.' She took part in our Society's 1987 pilgrimage to Switzerland. I'm grateful to Anna Smyth for informing me of the death of **Maurice Casket** on 25 June. Maurice joined the Society in 1987, and although the distance from Cheshire to London made it impracticable for him and his wife Maureen to attend regular meetings they were always excellent company on the weekend jaunts and at the annual dinners. Our thoughts are with Maureen.

Good news from M C Black: donations from those who have requested copies of the catalogue of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection sold at Christie's in May 2004 have amounted to £82.40, which he has sent to the Parkinson's Disease Society.

The major publication this month is *Arthur & George*, Julian Barnes's novel about the case of George Edalji (Jonathan Cape, The Random House Group Ltd, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA; £17.99). Mr Barnes says that he was astonished to discover how important and how little-known this miscarriage of justice is, in contrast to the notorious and equally important Dreyfus case in France. Each involved what we now know as institutional racism, official whitewash, and possible official corruption, and each attracted the crusading zeal of a famous author (Zola, in the French case) with results that eventually helped influence a change in the law. We are all familiar with Arthur Conan Doyle's investigation into the Great Wyrley outrages — the vicious maiming of animals and the anonymous letters accusing the son of the local vicar. The accused man was an industrious solicitor, and his family was thoroughly respectable, but his father was a Parsee, an Indian of Persian descent. (I am reminded of the more recent case of Sergeant Gurpal Virdi, convicted of sending racist e-mails to himself, despite clear proof that he could not have done so.) The Edalji story is told in just about every biography of Arthur Conan Doyle, but no full authoritative account of the case has yet been published. *Arthur & George* is not such an account, of course, not does it pretend to be. Even though all but one of the many documents quoted are authentic, Julian Barnes's rich imagination is not ultimately subservient to his deep and wide research. This could so easily have been no more than a shallow fictionalised retelling of historical events; instead the author has recreated Arthur and George, their families, their friends and their enemies, bringing them to life for us, as complex human beings. Particularly Arthur and George, whose lives he covers almost from birth to death, so that we can appreciate and understand them. as — in the phrase he gives Conan Doyle — 'unofficial Englishmen' who do not always understand each other. They are both good men, and he does not patronise them or the codes, which may seem very quaint today, by which they live. The narrative is elegantly handled, giving us both a revealing dual biography and a thrilling criminal investigation, which, sadly, must lack the neat conclusion of a fictional detective story. *Arthur & George* is authentic literature, though not without a few flaws (Sir Arthur's second wife was Lady Conan Doyle, not 'Lady Jean'), and this reader was slightly shocked now and then to be reminded that it is post-Lawrence literature. The book as an object is a treasure: the cloth binding (there is no dustwrapper) is beautifully designed in a style that is completely right for the story's period.

I'm sure that David Upton will agree that in *Sherlock Holmes's Christmas* (Park Publishing, Flat 15, 51 Upton Park, Slough, Berks. SL1 2GB; £8.50 — plus £1.50 if ordering direct; make cheques payable to D W Upton) he set out with no more exalted aim than to write a cracking good detective story about Holmes and Watson. He's certainly succeeded. The plot takes the detective and the doctor to a Christmas house party just outside Eton, to investigate the murder of the host's secretary. Inevitably the guests at Tilstone Court are not all as respectable as they seem, and their host, Major Yates, presents some increasingly mysterious features. More deaths follow, and an old enemy re-emerges. It's a complex plot, handled astutely, and the explanations at the end are generally very satisfactory. Three things are vital to the story's success: an unerring sense of place (Mr Upton knows Eton and Windsor intimately), an equally sound feeling for period, and a thorough familiarity with Sherlock Holmes. The writing is sometimes less fluid than Conan Doyle's, and perhaps there are too many phrases repeated verbatim from the Canon, but *Sherlock Holmes's Christmas* is a jolly good read, presented as a handsome strong paperback. Just one thing puzzles me. Major Yates's arrival at Baker Street is announced by 'the stamping of a horse's hoofs in the heavy snow and the long grind of a wheel as it rasped against the icy kerb', yet no one comments on his statement that he walked from Paddington Station! *[*Neither David Upton nor Upton Park is, as far as we know, related to my wife Jean Upton.*]*

In 1983 BBC Television broadcast a hugely enjoyable children's series called *The Baker Street Boys* — four adventures of Holmes's band of street urchins. Two of the scripts were written up as novellas by Brian Ball, whose book has become quite a collectors' piece. Now, more than twenty years later, the series' creator Anthony Read has revived it with *The Baker Street Boys: The Case of the Disappearing Detective* (Walker Books Ltd, 87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ; £4.99). While investigating a suspicious American in London, Sherlock Holmes is kidnapped, and it is up to the Irregulars to find him — and to foil a Fenian plot against Queen Victoria, masterminded by the Napoleon of Crime himself. This is unashamedly a story for the intelligent younger reader, which means that older readers will enjoy it too. Conan Doyle himself said that he wrote for 'the boy who's half a man and the man who's half a boy'. Like David Upton's book, Anthony Read's is partly set in Windsor, and the same old foe reappears; that apart, the two are quite different. *The Case of the Disappearing Detective*, the first in proposed series, is published on 1 August. It's a pleasure to welcome back the Baker Street Boys.

Caleb Carr's fine Sherlock Holmes novel *The Italian Secretary* — reviewed in DM 252 — will be published on 8 August by Little, Brown, Brettenham House, Lancaster Place, London WC2E 7EN, at £12.99. Mr Carr will be in Dublin 5-6 August, in London 8-9 August, and in Edinburgh 12-13 August. And Catherine Cooke tells me that she is hugely impressed with the new edition of *A Study in Scarlet* with 600 magnificent illustrations by Nis Jessen (Hakon Holm Publishing, Borgmester Nielsens Vej 24, 3700 Rønne, Denmark; e-mail post@hakon-holm.dk). The regular edition costs

€60.00; the deluxe edition is €70.00, and the special limited edition of 500 numbered and signed copies is €78.00. See the website at www.mr-holmes.com. Breese Books (Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) continue their schedule of new Holmes stories. Look out for books by Eddie Maguire and Val Andrews among others. There's a website at www.baker-street-studios.com.

There's much of interest in the latest catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk). **Sherlock's Books** (Brian Grimshaw; phone 01942 200340 or e-mail bg@221b.co.uk) is selling a collection of Holmesiana valued at £27,000. Offers of £10,000 and above will be accepted up to 7 August.

On 18 July, BBC Worldwide (Woodlands ,80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) released on CD all the remaining programmes in the complete Radio 4 series with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams, as well as the first series of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* written by Bert Coules and starring Clive Merrison and Andrew Sachs. Each four-disc set costs £17.99. It's a worthy issue of wonderful achievement. Now, BBC Worldwide, how about releasing the 1965 Douglas Wilmer TV series on DVD...?

Both Anna Smyth and Bob Ellis alerted me to the splendid photos of *Making a Beeline for Switzerland* posted on the Switzerland Tourism site at http://uk.myswitzerland.com/en/news_list.cfm. Alas, over the past few days the whole file has disappeared from the site! I very much hope that when I next check they'll have been restored — they really are excellent.

The Society's new webmaster Charles Markham has really got stuck in to updating our website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk. Take a look.

If you've received the summer issue of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal* you'll have found enclosed with it the summer 2005 *Newsletter* of **The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection Lancelyn Green Bequest** (Stephen Baily, Head of Culture, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth PO1 2AD). If not, you can access it at www.portsmouthand.co.uk/history/213.htm as a PDF file. *[*Thanks to Oscar Ross for the website address.*]* Enquiries can be sent to LancelynGreenCollection@portsmouthcc.gov.uk. The Director of the Collection is Dr Neil McCaw of University College Winchester, and the Patron is Stephen Fry. It's hoped to mount an introductory exhibition in 2006 and a more substantial one in 2007.

From Peter Blau: the **Sherlock Holmes Festival** scheduled in Tryon, NC on 11-13 November can be contacted at 317 North Trade Street, Tryon, NC 28782, USA (phone 800-440-7848), and there's now a website at www.sherlockholmesfestival.com. David Milner reports that Henry Zecher and his new biography of William Gillette will feature in the festival.

Also from Peter, a reminder of **Springtime in Baker Street**, to be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Tarrytown, NY on 22-23 April 2006. Bob Thomalen has details at the3garridebs@sus.com.

There's usually at least one Sherlockian production in the Edinburgh Fringe. This year there's E D Darling's one-woman play *The Lipstick Sherlock Holmes*, staged at **Studio 2, Greyfriars Kirk House** by Femme Sole Theatre from 23 to 29 August. Phone 08452 262721 or e-mail edvenue@paradise-green.co.uk.

From 17 to 22 October **The New Wolsey Theatre** (Civic Drive, Ipswich IP1 2AS; phone 01473 295900) will house a new play by Carl Miller, *Sherlock Holmes: The Athenaeum Ghoul*. You can book on-line at www.wolseytheatre.co.uk. *[*It's a Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds production, so presumably is on tour.*]*

Last Wednesday's BBC 2 production *The Strange Case of Sherlock Holmes & Arthur Conan Doyle* was at least dramatic and thought-provoking.. There should still be background material accessible at www.bbc.co.uk/print/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2005/07 and Oscar Ross notes that www.douglashenshall.com has stills.

Naxos AudioBooks (3 Wells Place, Redhill, Surrey RH1 3SL; phone 01737 645600; e-mail cds@selectmusic.co.uk) has a discount on cassettes (including ten Sherlock Holmes sets) until 30 September.

Old time radio fans may like to check on **OTR Club** (78 Leeds Road, Liversedge, West Yorks. WF15 6HX), which has an archive of over 35,000 programmes.

Till I read about them in *Scuttlebutt* I didn't know about the *other* Baker Street Irregulars. They're a nine-piece pop band from Preston, Lancs! There's a website at www.thebakerstreetirregulars.com.

Jaron Summers has alerted me to *Sherlock Holmes: The New Beginning*, a film which he and Jon Povill have scripted and which is now in 'active development' by the Ilya Salkind Company. See www.ilyasalkindcompany.com/current/current.php. 'This wry action-adventure love story brings Sherlock Holmes to the present day for a final showdown with his arch-Nemesis Moriarty, and an unexpected, highly unorthodox love affair with Samantha Watson, the great-great-great-granddaughter of his old comrade.' Ye-e-essss. Well, I'll let you know what I think when I've read the script.

Sherlock no. 66 is Teddy Hayes's first as editor and co-publisher, and it's very different from the magazine that David Stuart Davies built up. It's punchy, it's glossy, it's slick. It's also shallow, and with hardly any Sherlock Holmes content. There's a new Holmes story by Johnny S Geddes that suggests to me a fatal lack of familiarity with the writings of Conan Doyle, and a respectful but unnecessary article by Richard Milner about the death of Richard Lancelyn Green, which I'm sure I've read elsewhere. Here it's coupled with a crude, tacky and thoroughly offensive 'scene of crime' drawing by one Fahimeh Tari. The rest of the magazine really holds no interest for me. I wish it well, but I'm glad I'm out of it. *Sherlock* is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or $7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £25.00 from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The website's at www.sherlockholmes.com. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The Players' Theatre begins its new season of Victorian Music Hall at **The Venue** (5 Leicester Place, off Leicester Square) on Sunday 18 September. Shows will be on Sundays at 4.00 pm. The doors open at 3.30 pm, and there's no need to book. Two hours of variety, comedy and song for £15.00 — enquire about concessions and discounts (020 7839 1134; e-mail info@playerstheatre.co.uk. Check the website at www.playerstheatre.co.uk.

Periodicals received. ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection Lancelyn Green Bequest Newsletter***, Summer 2005 (Stephen Baily, Head of Culture, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth PO1 2AD). ***The Camden House Journal***, June and July 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, St Jean Baptiste Day (Summer) 2005 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***C-Extra***, 26 June and 10 July 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Communication***, July/August 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

Irregular Newsletter, July 2005 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Grimpen Mire Gazette***, September 2004 and June 2005 (**Hugo's Companions**, David C Humphrey, 1843 Winnetka Road, Northfield, IL 60093, USA).***The Illustrious Clients News***, July 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, July and August 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2005 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21230 USA) *[*note Ev Herzog's new address*]*. ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Summer 2005 — but you already knew about that, didn't you?

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 255 2 September 2005

N J Crisp, who died on 14 June aged eighty-one, was a versatile, prolific and imaginative writer of film and television scripts, plays and novels. His screenplay for the 1984 film *The Masks of Death*, from a story by Anthony Hinds (alias John Elder), provided a mellow swan-song for Peter Cushing's Sherlock Holmes, partnering him with the excellent John Mills as Dr Watson. **Alf Joint**, fencing master, occasional actor, and one of the world's great stuntmen, died on 25 July aged seventy-eight. In 1987 he and Marc Boyle plunged 430 feet into the Reichenbach Falls, doubling for Eric Porter and Jeremy Brett in Granada TV's *The Final Problem*.

The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0) has just published three stimulating and highly entertaining books by Jim Goehmann. *Watson's First Drafts and Other Sherlockian Commentary* (two volumes, $60.00) puts into practice an exceptionally clever and thoughtful plan — to account for some of the many inconsistencies and lacunae in the Canon by 'reconstructing' the original texts, which for various reasons could not be made public. Is the result pastiche? I suppose so, since Mr Goehmann attempts to write passages in the Watson/Doyle style (and does so with considerable conviction), but it is also scholarship of a high order. The uncertainties in 'the Musgrave Ritual', for example, are fully explained (at least, I think they are; I am no mathematician, and I have to take the calculations on trust), and most of the reconstructions are eminently satisfactory. Mr Goehmann is also adept at broad humour — see the reinterpretations of 'The Sussex Vampire' and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and of course the final section, headed 'Even Less Serious Commentary'. Other writers have placed Sherlock Holmes in a world of vampires, but few have had as much fun with the idea as Jim Goehmann does in 'Voyage, Victor, Venomous, Vittoria...'

Baker Street Rhymes and Riddles ($25.00) makes a trio with the two *First Drafts* collections, though the 'Volume 3' on the cover and title page lead one to expect two earlier sets of doggerel and conundrum. Sherlockian light verse is nothing new, but Jim Goehmann's is a good deal wittier than most, and he has a sure touch with rhyme and metre. This section concludes with '221B Revisited', a serious and pointed tribute to the most famous Holmesian poem of all. Then come the quizzes. I was going to say that they'd sort out the men from the boys, but they're more likely to sort out the obsessives from the mere experts. This volume is great fun. The two books of 'First Drafts' may actually change the way you think about the Canon.

For the first time our Society has published a handbook to accompany a Swiss Pilgrimage. I need hardly say that *Sherlock Holmes in Switzerland* will be of immense interest to those of us who weren't able to participate. Guy Marriott and Bob Ellis have gathered 116 pages of material from Sweden, America, Britain, Switzerland and Germany. Most is new, but Bernard Davies's 'Canonical Connections' is a classic that deserved reprinting, Vincent Delay's two essays are translated in English for the first time, the papers by Albert Kunz and Julie McKuras are revised from earlier publication — and 'The Pass of the Gemmi, and the Baths of Leuk' is extracted from *The Penny Magazine* of 9 June 1838! I especially enjoyed the pieces by Catherine Cooke, Guy Marriott, and Susan Rice, and the whimsy of Auberon Redfearn and Reggie Musgrave (though the excess of apostrophes in the latter is confusing). The illustrations, including Turner's magnificent painting 'The Great Fall of Reichenbach', the Spy caricature of Silas Hocking, and Scott Bond's charming cartoon, are beautifully reproduced. *Sherlock Holmes in Switzerland* costs £12.50 plus postage from Bob Ellis (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington BR6 8DU).

Announced by Breese Books for publication in August is (was?) *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Mission* by Eddie Maguire. There's a special offer: order the new book and get *Sherlock Holmes and the Tandridge Hall Murders* half price. A total of £11.25 (€18.75 or $27.75) including postage worldwide. (Breese Books, Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX; www.baker-street-studios.com.)

This month CRW Publishing (Clive Reynard, 6 Turville Barns, Eastleach, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 3QB; www.crw-publishing.co.uk) releases a set of the Canon in six volumes, three containing two books each, all featuring afterwords by David Stuart Davies and each priced at £5.99. The pick, though, is a handsome illustrated hardback *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* at £25.00.

Alan Lance Andersen of Andersen Desktop Publishing Inc. (Roland, Iowa 50236, USA) informs me of *The Speckled Band: Author's Expanded Edition* by Arthur Conan Doyle ($13.10). The aim is to 'correct some of the play's shortcomings by reintroducing material from the short story and integrating elements from other adaptations (notably the BBC radio & television series) with the original Conan Doyle stageplay'. Hm. That subtitle's a bit cheeky, but it's a sound idea. I hope to be able to review the book soon.

In November come *The Silly Side of Sherlock Holmes* by Philip Ardagh, who concocts an absurd new story around the *Strand* illustrations (Faber & Faber, 3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AU; £7.99), and *Sherlock Holmes: The Biography* by Nick Rennison (Atlantic Books, Ormond House, 26-27 Boswell Street, London WC1N 3JZ; £14.99).

Due on 6 December is *The Forgotten Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by H Paul Jeffers (Carroll & Graf, 245 West 17th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10011, USA; $14.95). This is actually the second book of adaptations from the classic mid-forties radio scripts by Anthony Boucher and Denis Green (the first, Ken Greenwald's *The Lost Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, was published in 1989). Mr Jeffers is a Baker Street Irregular, invested as 'Wilson Hargreave', and author of *The Adventure of the Stalwart Companions* (New York in 1880, Sherlock Holmes teams up with Teddy Roosevelt) and *Murder Most Irregular* (who is bumping off members of the BSI?). He achieves a generally acceptable likeness of the Canonical style — though there are occasional unfortunate constructions such as 'consult with' — and does well by Green's dialogue and Boucher's dazzling plots. It's a nice way of spending a couple of hours, but on the whole I'd rather listen to the original radio plays, all of which are quite easily obtainable now.

BBC Worldwide (Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) has now released on CD the entire dramatised Canon (with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams) and four plays each from the two series of Bert Coules' *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (with Merrison and Andrew Sachs). Listening again to the first set of *Further Adventures* I find some very special pleasures. Bert Coules is not the first to develop hints dropped by Dr Watson about cases that he omitted from his chronicles, but the solutions to these mysteries reveal unexpected depths to the lives and personalities of the people concerned, including Holmes and Watson. The presentation is cinematic, with cross-cuts, parallel narratives and other features that we associate with film. With excellent performances from the whole cast — including luminaries such as Timothy West, Tom Baker, Toyah Wilcox and Roy Hudd — it makes for engrossing, intelligent listening. Each four-disc set costs £17.99.

This month Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) will release *The Return of Sherlock Holmes III*, read as always by the brilliant David Timson (£16.99). I'm looking forward very keenly to this latest volume in the recorded Canon.

And David Ian Davies (One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail ddavies858@aol.com) tells me that he's currently recording Barry Day's five Holmes novellas. *Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Globe Murders* is due shortly.

Writing colleagues David Stuart Davies, M J Elliott and Matthew Booth have teamed up as a 'literary performance group' **The Mystery Men**. Their first gig is at Burngreave Library in Sheffield on 31 October, where they'll present *Art in the Blood: An Evening with Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle*. On 24 October David will give a solo turn, *Elementary, My Dear Sherlock: Everything You Wanted to Know about the Great Detective*, at the Lit & Phil Library in Newcastle during the 'Bloody Murder Crime Fiction Festival'. Learn more from David at Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER; overdale@btinternet.com.

Sherlock Holmes: The Athenaeum Ghoul by Carl Miller will tour as follows: 11-16 Sept **Theatre Royal**, Bury St Edmunds (01284 769505); 22-24 Sept **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal (01539 725133); 26-27 Sept **Opera House**, Buxton (0845 127 2190); 29 Sept - 1 Oct **Gala Theatre**, Durham (0191 332 4041); 6-8 Oct **Theatr Hafren**, Newtown (01686 625007); 13-15 Oct **Theatre Royal**, Wakefield (01924 211311); 17-22 Oct **New Wolsey Theatre**, Ipswich (01473 295900); 24-25 Oct **Swan Theatre**, Worcester (01905 611427); 27-29 Oct **Brunton Theatre**, Musselburgh (0131 655 2240); 1-5 Nov **Bloomsbury Theatre**, London (0207 388 8822); 7-9 Nov **Riverfront**, Newport (01633 656 757); 10-12 Nov **Gateway**, Chester (01244 340392); 15-16 Nov **South Holland Centre**, Spalding (01775 764777); 21-26 Nov **Northcott Theatre**, Exeter (01392 493493).

Roger Llewellyn continues to tour with David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* He'll be at **Theatr Clwyd**, Mold 8-10 Sept; **Civic**, Doncaster 17 Sept; **RADA Vanbrugh Theatre**, London 7 Nov; **Friends' Meeting House**, Pickering 18 Nov; and he has bookings lined up until April 2006.

From 24 to 29 October **Salford Playhouse** in Westerham Avenue, Pendleton will stage *Mrs H of Baker Street*, a new comedy by Peter Tong. Tickets are available from the theatre on 0161 925 0111.

Dave Elsey is a movie make-up effects artist who's worked on some impressive films. An admirer of Sherlock Holmes and Peter Cushing, he owns several of Cushing's props and now wishes to sell one of his briar pipes (guide price £200) and a calling card (£120) from the 1968 BBC TV *Sherlock Holmes* series. Also for sale is a life-size bronze resin bust of Cushing as Holmes, sculpted by Mr Elsey from a life-mask (£400). E-mail him at imagecreative@iprimus.com.au for details and photographs. He has a website at www.imagecreative.net.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has a new line: the Edinburgh Medallions — round, flat-backed, low-relief casts in ivory or brown resin. They come with a green baize backing, or you can fix a ring to hang them on the wall. Just a few: *Conan Doyle Head* large £10.00 or small £4.00; *ACD, Holmes & the Fairies* £8.00; *Sherlock Holmes* large £6.50 or small £4.00; *Holmes & Watson* £7.00; *Laurel & Hardy as Holmes & Watson* £8.00. Some are taken from Charles's classic white metal figures. Postage is £1.50. Each model is 70p less without the baize backing. Charles still offers his splendid resin head of the *Baskerville Hound* carrying a Holmes doll in its mouth (£36.00 plus £4.00 postage), and the pair of small resin caricatures of Charlie Chaplin as Holmes and Watson (£8.75 plus £1.50 postage).

Death Defying Acts is set to begin filming in Edinburgh early next year from a script by Brian Ward and Tony Grisoni. Guy Pearce will star as Harry Houdini and Rachel Weisz as the Edinburgh woman he falls in love with. Arthur Conan Doyle will be portrayed in the film.

Bob Miller, captain of the PG Wodehouse Society's cricket team, the Gold Bats, was a pupil of the great Holmesian scholar D Martin Dakin at Dagenham County High School. Alison Dakin has given Bob some of her father's Sherlock Holmes books, to be presented to the DGHS player of the match in the Old Dagonians vs May & Baker fixture and to the SHSL player of the match in the annual Victorian cricket match between the Gold Bats and the Field Bizarre.

Doug Wrigglesworth sends the good news that Toronto Public Library has appointed a successor to Victoria Gill. **Peggy Perdue** is the third Curator of the **Arthur Conan Doyle Collection** at Toronto Reference Library, 789, Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada. Her e-mail address is pperdue@torontopubliclibrary.ca.

Rodger Garrick-Steele's obsessive campaign against Arthur Conan Doyle continues. He and a small group that includes a forensic scientist, Paul Spiring, hope to exhume Bertram Fletcher Robinson's body. The aim is to prove that he was poisoned by Conan Doyle in order to conceal Robinson's contribution to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and Conan Doyle's affair with Mrs Robinson! *[*It would be funny if it weren't so pathetic.*]* Rather more interesting is that an unidentified man took a box of previously unknown Conan Doyle letters, possibly written during his time in Plymouth with Dr Budd, to *The Antiques Roadshow* in Tavistock earlier this year.

Hugo's Companions of Chicago have published *Musings from the Mire*, a CD-ROM containing all the newsletters 'and other scribblings' from the Companions' first fifty-five years, 1949-2004. There was a lengthy gap from 1950 to 1964, but the disc is a fascinating archive about one of the world's senior Sherlockian societies, and one organised on very different lines from ours. It's all in clear, fully searchable PDF files, and Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.0 is included. The cost is a reasonable $25.00 plus $2.50 postage. Checks should be payable to Hugo's Companions, and orders sent to William Sawisch, 1008 Pleasant Street, Apt. 1B, Oak Park, IL 60302, USA. You can e-mail Bill at wmsawisch@sbcglobal.net.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2005 (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) *[*Al Gregory points out that Catherine Cooke has achieved a rare double: publication in the Summer BSJ and in the Summer SHJ*]*. ***Bohemia Newsletter*** nos. 54, 55 and 56 (**Ceská spolecnost Sherlocka Holmese**, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). ***The Camden House Journal***, August 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Communication***, September/ October 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). ***The Formulary***, June 2005 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB) *[*this is Brian Scrivener's last issue as Practice Manager — thanks for all the work and inspiration you've put in to the Friends, Brian!*]*. ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, June 2005 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, September 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Passengers' Log***, 20th Anniversary Issue (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Summer 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Prescott's Press***, June and September 2005 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***The Soft-nosed Bullet-in & Striking (T)rifles***, Sommer 2005 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Jan Kipping, Schürbeker Str. 2, 22087, Hamburg, Germany). ***The Whaling News***, June, July and August 2005 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, July 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 256 8 October 2005

Jan Stauber ('The Hotel du Louvre', ASH) died yesterday after a three-year battle with cancer. With her husband Al Gregory, Jan acted as secretary for **Mrs Hudson's Cliffdwellers**, and, like Al, she was a great apostle and contributor to the literature. She was also a bright, positive, and very likeable person. Friends are asked to make a donation to the National Trust or the Royal Oak foundation.

Peter Blau notes the death on 4 September of **Alan Truscott**, bridge editor of the *New York Times*, who edited and annotated Reginald L Johnson's *They Came to Baker Street* (Magico, 1992).

J E Preston Muddock (1842-1934) lived a life of travel and adventure that made Arthur Conan Doyle's seem tame. As an author he was extraordinarily prolific and versatile, yet only a few ghost stories remain in print, all credited to his best known pseudonym 'Dick Donovan'. And now we have a selection of Muddock's best crime stories in *Dick Donovan: The Glasgow Detective* (Mercat Press, 10 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH2 7AL; £9.99). *A Study in Scarlet* was published a few months before Donovan's first adventure, but at least three volumes of Donovan's exploits appeared before *The Sign of Four*. The early cases in this book, taken from the *Dundee Weekly News* of 1888 and 1889, seem to have been inspired to an extent by the memoirs of James McLevy and the fictional adventures of James McGovan. Both detective and setting are more realistic than in the later stories of Dick Donovan and Muddock's numerous other sleuths. In his day Dick Donovan was hugely popular (it's claimed that the Americans owe their word 'dick' for a detective to Dick Donovan.). Reading these tales we can see why — and we can understand why Sherlock Holmes has outlasted him. Mercat Press did us all a great favour by reprinting *McLevy: The Edinburgh Detective* and *The McGovan Casebook*. We're indebted to them again for *Dick Donovan: The Glasgow Detective*, and to Bruce Durie for his perceptive, informative and witty introduction.

Due next month from WW Norton (Castle House, 75/5 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT) is the third and final volume, containing the four long stories, of Leslie S Klinger's great work, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. There's not really much I can say that I haven't already said about the first two volumes: Mr Klinger concentrates on sound research and applies admirable judgement in selecting and presenting his findings. His application and energy in tackling his monumental task are astounding. The notes, which are the *raison d'être* of the book, are exemplary in their breadth, depth and accuracy. The many illustrations, some quite unfamiliar to me, are nicely reproduced The theories of various scholars on such contentious subjects as the identity of 'Fred Porlock' are neatly and dispassionately summarised Before the bibliography there is a painstaking chronological table of the life and times of Sherlock Holmes, which admittedly, but perhaps unfortunately, includes speculations drawn from William Baring-Gould's imaginative 'biography' *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*. No matter! As *The Baker Street Journal* said: 'There is no doubt that Klinger's work will become the standard text of reference for all serious Sherlockians.' Highest recommendation! There's a website at www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com.

Cenarth Fox's *Nicholas Twit. The Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes* no. 5 (Fox Plays, PO Box 2078, Richmond South, 3121, Victoria, Australia) is the last instalment in the adventures of Basket Case Investigations. Along with three amusing and exciting new cases for the young sleuths, there's one for Sherlock Holmes himself. Nick and his colleague, Felicity Heywood Jones, apply Holmes's techniques very successfully in 21st century Melbourne. And there are word games and Sherlockian Snippets to keep the reader, young or old, engaged. But is this really the end? The conclusion is far from conclusive! This nice 32-page A4 booklet costs Aus$9.00, NZ$10.50, £4.50 or US7.00. It's available in the UK from Fox Plays UK, Gareth Bannister, 158 Blagdon Road, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4AL. The website is at www.twit.biz.

4 October was the 145th birthday of Sidney Paget, and Goode Press has published an attractive 32-page booklet: *A Scandal in Bohemia*, with all Paget's illustrations beautifully coloured, plus recently discovered biographical information about the artist, a previously unpublished photograph, and a portrait by the internationally acclaimed Philip Cornell. *A Scandal in Bohemia* is available in an edition of 222 copies from the publisher's eBay shop (go to www.ebay.com and search for Sherlock Holmes + Paget) for $14.98 plus postage. If you're not electronically enabled, I can help.

Available from www.lulu.com at $25.00 is *The Bartitsu Compendium, volume 1: History and the Canonical Syllabus* by Tony Wolf. This 'eclectic martial art founded by E W Barton-Wright in the year 1899' is what Conan Doyle had in mind when he had Holmes use 'baritsu', anachronistically, against Professor Moriarty in 1891. The book is 'the result of five years of research by members of the international Bartitsu Society' and proceeds from sales will go towards a London memorial for Barton-Wright.

Appetite for Murder: A Mystery Lover's Cookbook by Kathy Borich (Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., PO Box 9949, College Station, TX 77842, USA; $14.95) looks like fun.

Our Society's latest publication is *Colour It Prussian Blue*, edited by Pamela Bruxner and Bob Ellis for last month's day trip to 'Retired Colourman' and 'His Last Bow' country. There are illuminating essays by Guy Marriott, Catherine Cooke, John Hall and (in a supplement) Robert Peckitt, but Bernard Davies once again takes the cake — not for his definitive identification of Von Bork's house, which is reprinted from *An East Wind* (1997), but for his new and equally definitive identification of Josiah Amberley's house in Lewisham and of Mossmoor-cum-Little Purlington. Essential stuff, and available from our new Merchandising Officer, Judi Ellis, at 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

In March 2006 John Wiley & Sons (The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester PO19 8SQ) will publish *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* by E J Wagner, priced at £13.95. Check the author's website at http://home.att.net/~ejwagner/~SSH%20book% completed. I have a good feeling about this book, but I'm not so sure about *Holmes on the Range* by Steve Hockensmith, due in February from Minotaur: St Martin's (16365 James Madison Highway, Gordonville, VA 22942-8501, USA; $22.95) — 'A pair of cowboys with a Sherlock Holmes fetish kick up some dust and solve some murders in 1893 Montana.'

Nigel Williams Rare Books has issued two new catalogues since the last DM (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Bradley Hodge (PO Box 8007, Huntsville, TX 77340, USA; e-mail bradleysbk@gct21.net) offers the first twenty-eight volumes of *The Strand Magazine* (to December 1904) in VG condition, quarter leather bound, for $2,400 plus shipping & handling.

The November issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* (Room 101, 140 Wales Farm Road, London W3 6UG; £3.30) has a good article and price guide to *The Strand Magazine* by Mike Ashley, plus

David Blake on Miss Marple and the Collins Crime Club, both 75 this year.

The Return of Sherlock Holmes III read by David Timson (Naxos AudioBooks, 18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) maintains the standard of a series that in scale and consistent quality looks set to outclass all its rivals. Mr Timson has completed two thirds of the Canon, and has just three books to go now. This set contains 'Black Peter', 'The Golden Pince-Nez', 'The Missing Three-Quarter', 'The Abbey Grange', and 'The Second Stain', all unabridged. As always, David Timson's characterisations are spot-on, his pacing is immaculate, his liner notes are thoughtful and perceptive, and the music (by Dvořák this time) enhances the atmosphere splendidly. Look, just buy *The Return of Sherlock Holmes III*, settle down in an armchair, and listen. You won't be disappointed!

Cenarth Fox's play *The Real Sherlock Holmes* begins touring Australia again next month — check www.foxplays.com. Meanwhile you can enjoy the author's excellent radio adaptation on CD. Arthur Conan Doyle, his mother, and Sherlock Holmes are unseen presences at the unveiling in 1999 of the London statue of Holmes, an event that prompts reminiscence, conversation and argument between them. The play has had enthusiastic reviews, and I can see why. The CD is available from Fox Plays UK (address above) at £11.00, as is the playscript, at £7.25. Prices include postage.

On 26 October the British Library (96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB; www.bl.uk/bookshop) issues *Voices of History 2*, a double CD with booklet, featuring the voices of HM Stanley, Arthur Sullivan, PT Barnum, and Arthur Conan Doyle among others (£15.95).

The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes by David Belke is at the **Mayfield Dinner Theatre** in Edmonton, Alberta until 30 October (phone 800-661-9804; www.mayfielddinnedmonton.com). From 24 to 29 October **Salford Playhouse** in Pendleton has *Mrs H of Baker Street* by Peter Tong (0161 925 0111). Thursday to Sunday, from 10 to 26 November, Tim Evers presents his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* at **The Bayou Theatre** at the University of Houston/Clear Lake (281-283-2560). On 18 November, Roger Llewellyn brings *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to the **Friends' Meeting House** in Pickering (01751 472827), and on 30 November he's at the **Lakeside Theatre** at the University of Essex at Colchester (01206 873261; arts@essex.ac.uk).

The Players' Theatre season of Victorian Music Hall is running at **The Venue** in Leicester Place, off Leicester Square on Sundays at 4.00 pm. Doors open at 3.30 pm, and there's no need to book. Two hours of variety, comedy and song for £15.00. Phone 020 7839 1134 or check the website at www.playerstheatre.co.uk.

TMC Monte Carlo has released a French DVD set of the complete season *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, with Jeremy Brett and David Burke. These are evidently remastered prints, clear and crisp, and you can choose to watch in English, with or without French subtitles, or in well dubbed French. Besides the thirteen films, the five discs include some nice bonus material provided by the **Jeremy Brett Society of France** and **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, with contributions by notable French, British and American Holmesians. It's an excellent set, and a very welcome replacement on my shelf for the earlier, rather lacklustre DVDs and videos.

Julia Huggins aims to persuade Granada TV to release on DVD or video deleted scenes, promotional materials and out-takes from the *Sherlock Holmes* series. The American and French distributors are keen on the idea, and **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** are strong supporters. There's an on-line petition, which you can sign at www.petitiononline.com/gtiitv/petition.html. You can e-mail Ms Huggins — who is not related to Jeremy Brett — at julialhuggins@netscape.net. *[*This is a serious and worthwhile proposal. Ms Huggins has, by invitation, addressed a meeting of* ***The Red Circle*** *of Washington, DC about the project.*]*

In a couple of days we'll find out who has won this year's Man Booker Prize for fiction. Julian Barnes's *Arthur & George* (reviewed in DM 254) is a favourite. *[*One or two Sherlockians seem surprised that the book should be eligible for a fiction prize, but fiction is what it is, even though it's based on fact. Not exactly a new idea.*]*

Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, will hold a Literary Festival next May, with one of the afternoons having an Edwardian slant — and naturally featuring Sherlock Holmes. For more information contact Neil Scott at scott.media@hotmail.co.uk.

High Moorland Community Action trust is developing a community centre in Princetown, a short walk from the old Duchy Hotel (now the High Moorland Visitor Centre). Although it's a rural settlement, Princetown is in many ways more like a deprived urban area, the problems being exacerbated by its isolated position on Dartmoor and the extreme climate. The trust is keen to attract sponsorship from companies and individuals. If you'd like to be a part of an important project in Baskerville country, contact Jenny Coleman, Community Development Manager, High Moorland Community Action Ltd, Wesley House, Two Bridges Road, Princetown, Devon County Council PL20 6QS (jenny@hmca.org.uk).

Some time this month **Imagination Theatre** broadcasts its 500th radio play, jointly written by the founder, Jim French, and our own MJ Elliott. *The Third Gate* features all the company's well-known protagonists, including Sherlock Holmes and AJ Raffles. After the broadcast it will be available on CD from the Imagination Theatre website at www.harrynile.com. Matthew Elliott *[*correction: Matthew Booth*]* tells me that the company has accepted a script involving his own creation, a barrister named Anthony Rathe. A sequel and series may follow.

Autografica of 1951 City Way, Rochester ME1 2TJ is selling facsimiles of Arthur Conan Doyle's holograph will at £3.99 plus postage. Very interesting it is too.

On 29 October, **The Musgraves** will look at *a Study in Scarlet* in the media. Get details from Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP. Our Society's meeting on 19 November will be a Pub Quiz Night at the Old Dr Butler's Head (Catherine Cooke, 15 Copperfield Court, 146 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London SW20 8QA). Also on 19 November **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will hold their AGM and Festive Luncheon at the Two Bridges Hotel (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR), and **The Friends of Dr Watson** will hold their AGM over lunch at the Sherlock Holmes pub in London (Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB).

Periodicals received. ***The Camden House Journal***, September 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Michaelmas (Autumn) 2005 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, August 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, October 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Magic Door***, Fall 2005 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***Mayday Mayday***, September 2005, and ***Chronicler***, September 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Quivers on the Web***, September 2005 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***The School Report***, Autumn Term 2005 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 2005 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, July-September 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***Tonga Times***, Summer 2005 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E. 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA).

And not least ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, August 2005 and September 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 257 13 November 2005

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 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.

Bruce Stewart died recently aged eighty. His more than two hundred plays and scripts included *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* for the 1968 BBC TV series with Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock — an appropriate story for a writer who had been a radio star in Australia before coming to Britain in 1954. **Roger Brierley** (d. 23 September, aged seventy) is probably best known as Sir Roderick Glossop in the ITV series *Jeeves & Wooster*, but he also played Neville Chamberlain, Oswald Mosley, Jinnah, the head Cyberman — and Sherlock's father in *Young Sherlock Holmes*. **John McCabe** (d. 27 September, aged eighty-four) was invested into the Baker Street Irregulars in 1966 as 'Those Chaldean Roots... of the Great Celtic Speech'. A Shakespearean scholar, he became friend and biographer of Laurel & Hardy and founded the international L&H society, the Sons of the Desert, in emulation of the BSI. **Ronald Pearsall** (d. 27 September, aged seventy-seven) was an authority on the Victorian era: his books covered spiritualism, popular music, the art world, wit and humour, sexuality, pornography, crime and much else. His 1977 *Conan Doyle: A Biographical Solution* is a serviceable life, and his 1989 novel *Sherlock Holmes Investigates the Murder in Euston Square* is a serious look at a real crime.

The acting career of **Mary Wimbush**, (d. 31 October, aged eighty-one) encompassed all media — she was outstanding as Bertie's Aunt Agatha in *Jeeves & Wooster* — but she was happiest on radio and will be remembered as Julia Pargetter in *The Archers*. In 1996 she played Mary Maberly in *The Three Gables* with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams on BBC Radio 4. Her marriage in 1946 to Howard Marion-Crawford ended in divorce in 1954. **Alfred Shaughnessy** (d. 2 November, aged eighty-nine) was grandson to the first Baron Shaughnessy, great-great nephew to President James Polk of the USA, and stepson to Sir Piers Legh, Equerry to both Edward VIII and George VI. It was the ideal background for the script editor and principal writer of *Upstairs, Downstairs*. His scripts for other series included *The Crooked Man* in Granada's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, with Jeremy Brett and David Burke. **John Fowles** (d. 5 November, aged seventy-nine) is probably most famous for his novels *The Collector* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Born in Essex, he seems to have hated the eastern counties as much as he detested his middle class upbringing, but he found his home in the west country and wrote an enthusiastic foreword to the 1974 edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

CRW Publishing (69 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1 7EG; www.crw-publishing.co.uk) has published a very handsome set of the Canon in six cloth-bound volumes, three containing two books each, all featuring afterwords by David Stuart Davies. The texts appear to be good; they're certainly clear, and the presentation is excellent. At £5.99 each this is a bargain not to be missed.

Equally desirable is *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (CRW Publishing, £25.00), a splendid big cloth-bound volume containing the whole Canon, with a good selection of the *Strand Magazine* illustrations and a foreword by David Stuart Davies. My only adverse criticisms are that no artists but Sidney Paget are credited, though at least six illustrated the stories after his death in 1908 (and one of Josef Friedrich's pictures has replaced Paget's in 'A Scandal in Bohemia'), and that some illustrations are rather grey and fuzzy. Those niggles aside, this is a lovely book.

The League of Heroes by Xavier Mauméjean has been adapted into English by Manuella Chevalier and published by Black Coat Press (Hollywood Comics.com, LLC, PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; www.blackcoatpress.com) at $20.95. Since Alan Moore and Stan Lee are among those acknowledged, along with Jules Verne, HG Wells, JM Barrie, Conan Doyle and Edgar Rice Burroughs, I take it there's a very conscious influence here from *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen.* This book is certainly extraordinary. Captain Hook is one of the Heroes, and Peter Pan is the principal villain! A proper review follows in DM 258. Due next month from Black Coat is *Sherlock Holmes: The Grand Horizontals, and Other Plays* by Frank J Morlock — and there's more to come.

The Highways and Byways of Sherlock Holmes by Peter Riley (P & D Riley, 12 Bridgeway East, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 6LD; £4.99) is an attractive 40-page pictorial introduction, with lots of archive photos and good basic background, mainly topographical. There are brief sketches of Joseph Bell, Charles Peace, and ten actors, but curiously not of Arthur Conan Doyle. And it seems odd to feature Edward Woodward, Roger Moore and Robert Powell, while omitting Ian Richardson, Arthur Wontner and Eille Norwood!

Thierry Saint-Joanis sends news of a new French translation of the Canon, published in September by Omnibus. And now I'm eagerly awaiting the latest project from **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** — *Encyclopédie Sherlockiana SSHF* !

Thanks to the kindness of Hugo Koch, I have three extra copies of his new booklet, *The Adventure of the Sudden Death of Cardinal Tosca*, published for the quatercentenary of the Gunpowder Plot. They are free to the first three applicants within the UK.

There's always a Sherlockian bargain or two in the catalogues from **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN; website www.bibliophilebooks.com). There's a new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Bjarne Nielsen's publications under the Pinkerton/Sherlock Holmes Museet name (Egebjergvej 206, Strandhuse, DK-4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark) include works in both Danish and English. Check the website at www.sherlockiana.net.

A reminder that enquiries about the **Lancelyn Green Bequest** can be e-mailed to lancelyngreencollection@portsmouthcc.gov.uk. You should be able to access the current issue of the newsletter at www.portsmouthand.co.uk/history/213.htm as a PDF file.

Hakon Holm Publishing (Borgmester Nielsens Vej 24, 3700 Rønne, Denmark; e-mail mail@mr-holmes.com) offers sets of stickers depicting thirty-two of Nis Jessen's superb illustrations for Hakon Holm's magnificent edition of *A Study in Scarlet*. Find details of the stickers and the book at www.mr-holmes.com.

The excellent French DVD set of Granada TV's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, the full thirteen films plus extras, is not released by TMC, as I said in DM 256, but by **Elysées Editions** (43 bis rue

Henri Barbusse, 92000 Nanterre, France). Details on the website at www.series-tv.fr.

William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes* was broadcast by BBC radio in 1953, with Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley. If any recording exists, I should dearly love to hear it! Meanwhile we can enjoy Orson Welles's abridged version recorded in 1938 by the Mercury Theatre on the Air, and now there are two more productions from America, both featuring distinguished British actors. Oasis Audio (289 South Main Place, Carol Stream, IL 60188-2425, USA) offers an adaptation by Peggy Webber for California Artists Radio Theatre, starring David Warner and Samantha Eggar. The recording is supplemented by Conan Doyle's tale *Selecting a Ghost*, read by Ian Whitcomb and others. *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Theatre* from Blackstone Audiobooks (www.BlackstoneAudio.com) has Gillette's play and Conan Doyle's *The Speckled Band*, both unabridged, and a one-act comedy by Yuri Raskovsky, *Ghastly Double Murder in Famed Detective's Flat.* Martin Jarvis is Holmes, with Rosalind Ayres and Kristoffer Tabori. I prefer the Blackstone recording because it's complete, but both sets are highly entertaining (though the American actors' British accents are variable).

A correction: the radio play featuring the barrister detective Anthony Rathe is the work of Matthew Booth and not his 'Mystery Men' colleague Matthew Elliott! However, it was Matthew Elliott who sent me notice of **The First Annual Imagination Theatre Radio Script Competition**. Scripts can be in any genre, but must be no longer than twenty-three pages; the closing date is 19 February and there's a $10.00 entrance fee. First prize is $150.00 plus production and a year's subscription to *Scr(i)pt Magazine*. Complete information is at www.jimfrenchproductions.com.

The latest issue of *ThrillerUK* features an article by Philip Wood: 'The Myths and Realities of the Sherlock Holmes Stories'. The magazine costs £3.95 plus 55p postage from 130 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 7AA. Make cheques payable to T Fountain. There's a website at www.thrilleruk.fsnet.co.uk.

Phillip Gold of **221Books** (760 E Carlisle Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361, USA; phillipgold_221books@yahoo.com) is selling a set of four attractive Sherlockian greeting cards illustrated by Lynette Yencho, price $2.00 plus 50¢ postage (free postage on two or more sets). Check the website at www.221books.com.

Colin Mummery reports that CellSpark (Norra Ljunggatan 11B, 252-28 Helsingborg, Sweden; sales@cellspark.com) publishes e-books for mobile phones. Jamster has released *A Case of Identity*, which is proving more popular in the UK than *Crazy Frog Karaoke*.

The Times for 10 October notes that *Underground Ernie* is a forthcoming series for the BBC children's TV channel CBeebies, about animated London Underground trains and their supervisor (voiced by Gary Lineker). Each train takes its name from one of the Tube lines — and 'Bakerloo' is a Sherlock Holmes type.

The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 020 7486 1426) has lots of good Sherlockian stuff. Current special offers include: posters reduced from £4.00 each to £2.50; mugs at £2.50 each or five for £10.00; and Christmas tree decorations reduced from £9.99 to £6.99.

The Edinburgh Evening News of 24 October notes that developers are close to raising the funds needed to restore Arthur Conan Doyle's only surviving childhood home, Liberton Bank House, for use as a school for children with special needs. Plans include a literary garden, inspired by Ian Hamilton Finlay's 'Little Sparta'.

Tim Evers is currently presenting his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* at **The Bayou Theatre** at the University of Houston/Clear Lake (281-283-2560), Thursday to Sunday, until 26 November. Roger Llewellyn brings *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to the **Friends' Meeting House** in Pickering (01751 472827) on 18 November, and on 30 November he's at the **Lakeside Theatre** at the University of Essex at Colchester (01206 873261; arts@essex.ac.uk). *Sherlock Holmes: The Athenaeum Ghoul* by Carl Miller is at **South Holland Centre**, Spalding (01775 764777) on 15 & 16 November, and at **The Northcott Theatre**, Exeter (01392 493493) from 21 to 26 November.

The Christmas production of The Bovingdon Players, written and directed by John & Brenda Bugg, is *Sherlock, Follow that Sleigh!* Holmes and Watson are engaged by Marie Lloyd to track down the abductor of Father Christmas... It looks like great fun! *Sherlock, Follow that Sleigh!* is at **Bovingdon Memorial Hall** (box office 01442 831599) from 30 November to 3 December. Visiting Sherlockians are assured of a warm welcome; make yourselves known at the door. (Bovingdon is in Hertfordshire, near Hemel Hempstead, in case you were wondering.)

The Players' Theatre season of Victorian Music Hall is running at **The Venue** in Leicester Place, off Leicester Square on Sundays at 4.00 pm. Doors open at 3.30 pm, and there's no need to book. Two hours of variety, comedy and song for £15.00. Phone 020 7839 1134 or check the website at www.playerstheatre.co.uk.

Allan Devitt and Susan Diamond send notice that the 2006 annual **STUD-Watsonian Weekend** will be held from 31 March to 2 April in the Chicago area. Featured speaker at the STUD dinner at the Sheraton Four Points will be Leslie S Klinger. The weekend will also encompass the 47th annual running of the Chicago Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course, and much else beside. Get details from Allan & Susan at 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; e-mail szdiamond@comcast.net.

Periodicals received. ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection Lancelyn Green Bequest Newsletter***, Autumn 2005 (Stephen Baily, Head of Culture, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth PO1 2AD). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2005 (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 Baker Street Picayune*** vol. I no. 3 (**Le Cercle de Sherlock Holmes**, Jens Byskov Jensen, 5316 Wingate Drive, Apt B, New Orleans, LA 70122, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, October 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, September 2005 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

The Illustrious Clients News, October 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, November 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Irregular Newsletter***, September 2005 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Mayday Mayday***, October 2005, and ***C-Extra***, 12 October 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Parallelogram***, May-July-September 2005 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). ***Quivers on the Web***, September 2005 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, October 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). ***The Torr***, Autumn 2005 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA). ***The Vermissa Herald***, April 2005 (**The Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco**, Carol Russell, 314 Laurel Court, Cloverdale, CA 95425, USA). ***The Whaling News***, September and October 2005 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, October 2005 and September 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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. 258 17 December 2005

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 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.

Actor and singer **John Gower**, fondly remembered by habitués of the Players' Theatre, died on 1 August, aged seventy-three. In 1990 he played the improbably named Count Giddings in the television movie *Sherlock Holmes and the Leading Lady* with Christopher Lee. **John Barber**, who died 2 December, aged ninety-three, was a distinguished theatre critic, who also worked as a script editor for MGM and for the BBC, including time on the 1968 *Sherlock Holmes* television series with Peter Cushing. At the age of twelve **J N ('Jerry') Williamson** founded the Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis, and in 1950 he was invested into the Baker Street Irregulars as 'The Illustrious Client'. He became a notable author of horror stories, and died earlier this month, aged seventy-three.

Al Gregory points out that **John Fowles** (see the brief obit in DM 257) included at least eight references to Sherlock Holmes in his novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman.*

Our old friend George Welch continues to take an interest in Sherlock Holmes and in the Society, though his health forbids him to travel. He welcomes letters and cards sent c/o his brother, Mr A J Welch, 48 Vaughan Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 0YL. Mail addressed to George at Warwick Court will *not* reach him.

There have been several attempts to write the life of the great detective. The first was W S Baring-Gould's *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* — still the most popular despite its romantic flights of fancy (or perhaps because of them). *Sherlock Holmes: The Unauthorized Biography* by Nick Rennison (Atlantic Books, Ormond House, 26-27 Boswell Street, London WC1N 3JZ; £14.99) is less sensational and sentimental, and a good deal cleverer. Mr Rennison clearly knows his Victorian history and his Sherlock Holmes. I've never been wholly convinced that Holmes was a Yorkshireman, but I like this sober account of a lonely childhood at Hutton-le-Moors (no, it's not listed in *Bartholomew's Gazetteer*, but it has a reality that's lacking in Baring-Gould's 'My Croft'). In fact, Mr Rennison's key note throughout is believability. Here we have a realistic explanation of the detective's continuing duel with Professor Moriarty, and of his activities during the Great Hiatus. Naturally he is shown to be involved with historical persons and events, but always in a credible way. Holmesians have often wondered why there is no record of any investigation by Holmes into the Whitechapel murders of 1888; many fanciful theories have been advanced, but Nick Rennison gives us a thoroughly acceptable reason. The conclusion of the biography is bleaker than we might like, but it emphasises how Holmes the legend had already overtaken Holmes the man. *Sherlock Holmes: The Unauthorized Biography* is both well written and well presented. Whether Mr Rennison's book is fact, fiction or speculation, it has inspired me to look freshly at the accounts in the Canon and at their central figure.

Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Mission by Eddie Maguire (Breese Books, Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX; £7.50) is an engaging tale of espionage and skulduggery, the equivalent of a serial at the Saturday Morning Pictures, where you can't wait to find out what happens next. You'll have to wait, though, because having taken Holmes and Watson to Italy on the trail of Russian revolutionaries Mr Maguire will continue the story in a second volume, *Sherlock Holmes and the Bolshevik Plot.* Till 1 January you can buy *The Secret Mission* from the publisher and get Eddie Maguire's *Sherlock Holmes and the Tandridge Hall Mystery* at half price: a total of £11.25, including postage.

Graphic Classics: Arthur Conan Doyle (Eureka Productions, 8778 Oak Grove Road, Mount Horeb, WI 53572, USA; $11.95) is a curious and fascinating collection of comic-strip adaptations, drawn from pretty much the whole range of Conan Doyle's work. There are two Sherlock Holmes stories, one each of Brigadier Gerard and Captain Sharkey, 'The Los Amigos Fiasco', 'The Great Brown-Pericord Motor', 'The Ghosts of Goresthorpe Grange' (otherwise 'Selecting a Ghost'), 'A Parable' and the poem 'Master'. The last two brief pieces are complete, but the others are adapted, using a good amount of the original text. Each is illustrated by a different artist, so the styles are as varied as the stories themselves. There's a confidence and vivacity about the book that's quite a distance from the old 'Classics Illustrated' series. The book can be bought on-line at www.graphicclassics.com.

As I mentioned in DM 257, Black Coat Press (Hollywood Comics.com, LLC, PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; www.blackcoatpress.com) has published an English translation by Manuella Chevalier of *La Ligue des Héros* by Xavier Mauméjean. The French have a remarkable tradition of what I might call literate pulp literature, which joyfully mixes fantasy, science fiction and the *roman policier*. The related tradition in America and Britain matured from the comic book to the graphic novel with the input of writers like Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman, who have drawn some inspiration from Verne, Feval, Leblanc and others. Now it seems that they have inspired Xavier Mauméjean. *The League of Heroes* ($20.95) clearly owes something to *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, though its premise is, typically, even more fantastic. The inhabitants of Neverland have come to England (now Albion) — except for Peter Pan, who declares himself the enemy of Albion. The League set up by Phileas Fogg to protect the Empire against Pan and other villains includes Sherlock Holmes, Tarzan, Professor Cavor and Captain Hook, all under the command of Lord Kraven. It's all mad, breathless excitement, and great fun.

In 1911 E V Lucas and George Morrow produced a cod-biography called *What a Life!* giving new captions to illustrations from Whiteley's catalogue to tell a deliciously funny, surreal story. Philip Ardagh used the same technique last year, to similar effect, in *The Not-So-Very-Nice Goings-On at Victoria Lodge,* with pictures from *The Girl's Own Paper* (Faber & Faber, 3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AU; £7.99). This year he's tackled a more difficult task — because it parodies a specific and much-loved original — in *The Silly Side of Sherlock Holmes* (Faber, £7.99), using illustrations from *The Strand Magazine* by Sidney Paget and others. There are some sublimely daft captions in the new book, but I found *Victoria Lodge* funnier over all. Both are eminently entertaining, though.

A plug for the best book of its kind: *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur M Alexander (Calabash Press, PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, BC, Canada V0K 1A0; ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca). Reviewing it six years ago I said, 'Others have devised admirable walking tours of London - notably Charles Merriman, Antony Richards and Bill Dorn - but Mr Alexander's thirty-five "adventures" are more comprehensive than any. He gives useful information for the American or other non-British visitor, and in a series of appendixes goes into such subjects as the Battle of Maiwand, the Festival of Britain, *The Strand Magazine*, and the Black Museum. As with David Hammer's travel guides, you feel that you're in the hands of a knowledgeable and congenial friend. *Hot on the Scent* is a thoroughly enjoyable book. The price is £17.50, US$27.50 or Cdn$37.50. Postage is Cdn$7.50 to Canada, US$7.00 to the USA, and £10.00/US$17.00 (airmail) or £4.80/US$8.00 (surface) to the rest of the world.

A reminder also of the lovely 'Goode Press Chapbook' *A Scandal in Bohemia*, published as a tribute to Sidney Paget, with Paget's illustrations beautifully coloured, recently discovered biographical information about him, a previously unpublished photograph, and a portrait by Philip Cornell. (Goode Press, PO Box 442, Greendale, WI 53129, USA; $18.98 post-paid). The next chapbook, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, will be published next year, with more art by Phil Cornell, and a tribute to Sidney Paget by expressionist artist Pablo Carreno. The website is at http://sidneypaget.com.

Rafe McGregor of Classic Mysteries is looking for contributors for an anthology of Sherlock Holmes pastiches. You can get information from him at classicmysteries@aol.com. Classic Mysteries has already published a novel, *Sherlock Holmes: The Way of All Flesh* by Daniel Ward, and a hard-boiled non-Sherlockian thriller by Mr McGregor, *The Secret Policeman. [*More about that in the next DM.*]*

Over twelve weeks from January to April, Stanford University is issuing, free of charge, facsimiles of the *Strand Magazine* publication of 'A Scandal in Bohemia', 'The Speckled Band', *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and 'The Final Problem', on paper or as PDF files. Find out more at http://sherlockholmes.stanford.edu.

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

Luigi Pachi alerts me to the Italian publication *Sherlock Magazine* issue 5: 210 pages devoted to Sherlock Holmes in the USA, with contributions (all in Italian) from Michael Whelan, Enrico Solito and others. www.delosstore.it/riviste/scheda.php?id=52 has the details.

Tony Medawar sends word of a 'burlesque farce' called *Sherlock Holmes' Christmas Turkey, or The Case of the Nebulous Nun* by Vincent Mcinerney, which is running until 7 January at the **Landor Theatre** (Landor Pub, 70 Landor Road, London SW9 9PH; 020 7737 7276; the nearest Underground station is Clapham North). 'Mrs Hudson, wanting Nigel the turkey killed, needs someone "with a handy chopper". Holmes and Dr Watson are guarding the McNish-McNosh Plans for the Navy's new secret weapon — a recoilless gun. Captain James Riddle ("Call me Jimmy") has lost the cargo of brandy he needs to sell to marry Bessie Backstay, landlady of the Bishop & Bumboatman and a connoisseur of Norwegian whalermen ("harpoons a-tremblin' in their hands")... It looks like vulgar, crazy fun. *[*Vincent Mcinerney was one of Bert Coules's fellow-writers on the monumental BBC Radio 4 series starring Clive Merrison and Michael Williams.*]*

Roger Llewellyn brings *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to **The Box Office** in South Shields (0191 454 1234) on 24 January, and to **Saville Exchange 1856** in North Shields the next day (0191 293 1956). Then he's off to Scotland: **Greenock Arts Guild Theatre** (01475 723038) on 27 January, **Victoria Halls**, Helensburgh (01700 502252) on 31 January, **The Byre Theatre**, St Andrews (01334 475000) on 1 February, **Carnegie Hall**, Dunfermline (01383 314000) on 3 February, and **Eastgate Theatre**, Peebles (01721 725777) on 4 February.

In its *Arthur Conan Doyle Season* over the Christmas period, the digital channel BBC 4 will screen a selection of Sherlock Holmes films and — more importantly — five new documentaries about Holmes and his creator. At 9.15 pm on 24 December *A Study in Sherlock* compares the various screen incarnations of Holmes. At 9.05 pm on Christmas Day *Conan Doyle for the Defence* covers the cases of George Edalji and Oscar Slater. At 9.00 pm on Boxing Day *The Man Who Loved Sherlock Holmes* examines the life and death of Richard Lancelyn Green *[*several of Richard's friends and family contributed to this film, and it promises to be at least tasteful*]*; that's followed at 10.00 by *Baker Street Babylon*, which looks at parody and pastiche. At 10.00 pm on 27 December *This Is Genius: No Place Like Holmes* tours Holmes's London. Check the BBC4 schedules, because most of these programmes are repeated.

Catherine Cooke passes on a bizarre piece of information: 'A woman named Mary Van Deusen creates videos for old pop songs by recutting footage from the old Sherlock Holmes Granada TV series starring Jeremy Brett. This is practically the definition of "magnificent obsession" and some of the cuts are nothing short of genius. www.iment.com/maida/tv/songvids/hwsong.htm.

Periodicals received. ***Antipodean Holmesian Society Newsletter***, August 2005 and September 2005 (**The Antipodean Holmesian Society**, Ted Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand; ted.nye@stonebow.otago.ac.nz). ***The Camden House Journal***, November 2005 and December 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Communication***, November/ December 2005 and Special Reality Television Double Issue 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) *[*the latter is one of the PPoF's grand parody issues*]*. ***The Confederate Chronicles***, October 2005 (**The Confederates of Wisteria Lodge**, Kent Ross, 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, November 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, December 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Mayday Mayday***, November 2005 and December 2005, ***Chronicler*** *and* ***C-Extra***, December 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

The Passengers' Log, Spring Issue (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, November 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Practice Notes***, December 2005 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Flat 2, 31 Muswell Avenue, London N10 2EB). ***The School Report***, Winter Term 2005 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). ***The Scion***, Autumn 2005 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***Sherlockiana***, nr. 2/3/4 2005 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Nivågade 3, 2 th., 2200 Köbenhavn N, Denmark). ***3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, November 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net).

And of course ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

The first hundred issues of *The District Messenger* (1 December 1982 - 23 July 1990) are available in (non-searchable) PDF format on CD-ROM, cased and labelled, for £6.00 or $15.00, including postage and packing. Please make sterling cheques payable to me and US dollar checks to Jean Upton.

Now ***The District Messenger*** and I shall take a break until around the beginning of February, so I'll wish you all

THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

Roger Johnson