The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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At our Annual Dinner the deserving recipient of the Tony Howlett Award for dedicated service to the Society was **Heather Owen**.

At the BSI's Annual Dinner, Michael Whelan announced eight new investitures: 'Thucydides' to **Mark Schwartz**, 'Birdy Edwards' to **Phil Bergem**, 'Helen Stoner' to **Helen Dorey**, 'Thorneycroft Huxtable' to **Peter Accardo**, 'Baritsu' to **Akane Higashiyama**, 'Inspector Lestrade' to **Don Hobbs**, 'John Hector McFarland' to **Donny Zaldin**, 'Mary Morstan' to **Mary Ann Bradley**. The rare Two-Shilling Award was presented to the Master of the BSI's Musick, **Henry Boote**.

Congratulations and best wishes to all!

The answers to the AudioGO *Last Bow* competition: 'sparking plugs' are **naval signals**; the **Admiralty** was 'buzzing like an overturned beehive'; and the Tregennis brothers were being taken to **Helston**. M C Black, Douglas Johnstone, Diane M Mayo, Jim Peters and Oscar Ross, whose names were picked at random from the correct entries, have each received a copy of *His Last Bow*, read unabridged by **Derek Jacobi**. Many thanks to AudioGO! (See the website at www.audiogo.co.uk.)

Derek Jacobi has now lent his superb vocal talents to *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, just released by AudioGO as an 8-CD set. This is certainly the most varied collection. Some scholars even refuse to accept the stories as authentic, but if 'The Lion's Mane' and 'The Blanched Soldier' are pretty poor, there are some real gems here. 'Thor Bridge' and 'The Retired Colourman' are at least in the second rank, and 'The Veiled Lodger', with its mixture of domestic abuse and exotic tragedy seems to me to deserve a high place. Sir Derek approaches each tale as if it were a masterpiece, and he almost convinces you that they all are.

Alistair Duncan's *Eliminate the Impossible* was a very good start, and *Close to Holmes* confirmed him as a truly important writer in our field. In *The Norwood Author* he illuminated, as no previous biographer had, an essential period in the life of Conan Doyle, when Sherlock Holmes leapt to international fame – and his creator killed him. Now *An Entirely New Country: Arthur Conan Doyle, Undershaw and the Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes* (MX Publishing; www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £12.99/ $19.95/ €14.99). throws light on the drama of the years that followed, when Conan Doyle and his family lived in Undershaw, the house he'd had built at Hindhead, where conditions were favourable for his invalid wife Louise. Hindhead was also the centre of an informal community of writers and artists. During the Undershaw years Conan Doyle wrote *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. He served as a field surgeon in the Boer War and wrote a full history of the conflict. He adopted the cause of the wrongly convicted George Edalji. He was knighted. And he fell in love with Jean Leckie, who would become his second wife. Today, Undershaw is in a sad state, empty and threatened by inappropriate 'development'. It's fitting that the foreword to this admirable book was written by Mark Gatiss, the Patron of the Undershaw Preservation Trust. See http://www.saveundershaw.com/.

Alistair Duncan will be one of the speakers at the **Arthur Conan Doyle Weekend** to be held at Haslemere, near Hindhead, from 15 to 17 June. Others include Andrew Lycett, Andrew Lane, Catherine Cooke and me, and there'll be drama from Roger Llewellyn and the Irregular Special Players. See www.haslemere.com/conandoyle for more information.

There are thirty-eight contributors to *Sherlock Holmes and Philosophy: The Footprints of a Gigantic Mind* edited by **Josef Steiff** (Open Court; www.opencourtbooks.com; $19.95, currently $13.97 from the website). I recognise just one name: Rafe McGregor, who argues that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is not a mystery but a horror story. The range of topics and approaches is very wide, and the 'philosophy' of the title often seems to be no more than a convenient tag. Besides essays on Holmes's logic, his use of drugs, and his regard for the law, there are others here on graphic novels, Mary Russell, *Sherlock* and *Star Trek*. The book is, after all, one of a series called Popular Culture and Philosophy, and what could have been academic fustian actually has a certain welcome playfulness.

Sherlock Holmes first appeared on radio eighty-one years ago, and audio dramas far outnumber television plays or films. *The Further Adventures* on BBC Radio 4 appears to have finished, but a series of the same name continues in America. Jim French's production *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* began syndication in 1998. **M J Elliott** contributed his first script in 2003 and is now one of the most prolific and intelligent writers in the field. If you've ever listened to a radio play and asked yourself, 'How did they do that?' – or even, 'Why did they do that?' – you'll love *Sherlock Holmes on the Air* (MX Publishing; £14.99/ $22.95/ €16.99), a satisfyingly chunky volume containing eight of Matthew Elliott's best scripts for *The Further Adventures* plus 'A Study in Scarlet' and 'The Empty House' from *The Classic Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, the parallel series of dramatisations from the Canon, which has been Mr Elliott's sole domain since he began it in 2005. Check the Imagination Theater recordings at www.jimfrenchproductions.com, and enjoy the book! *[*The Old Court Radio Theatre Company's production of 'The Lost Special', on the Society's website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/world/radio.php, predates the version published here.*]*

The title of *A Professor Reflects on Sherlock Holmes* by **Marino C Alvarez** (MX Publishing; £9.99/ $16.95/ €12.99) deliberately echoes that of *A Doctor Enjoys Sherlock Holmes* by Edward J Van Liere. The twelve essays make you think, but they also entertain you. Dr Alvarez compares the writing styles of Watson and Holmes, but stresses that only the reader can say which was the better storyteller. He considers Holmes's potential as a teacher and as an academic. He distinguishes between the logical and the empirical. In the second section, Dr Alvarez follows Holmes to Meiringen and the Reichenbach Falls, and then visits Trinity College, Oxford, preceding the Society's time there by a month. This professor is the sort of teacher who makes learning a pleasure. I'm sorry our visits didn't coincide!

In *The Real World of Sherlock Holmes*, the 2013 Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture, **Peter Calamai** argues convincingly that, although the London depicted by Conan Doyle is generally authentic – one reason why the stories satisfy – there are important aspects of life there that are ignored. This excellent 36-page booklet is published by the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, and copies may be available from them (Toronto Public Library Foundation, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 2G8; www.acdfriends.org).

Sam Siciliano took a new approach to Sherlock Holmes in *The Angel of the Opera*. His narrator, Holmes's cousin, Dr Vernier, claimed that he was the detective's true friend, and that Watson's accounts had falsified events and distorted Holmes's personality. It wasn't an approach that appealed to me, and it still isn't. I can't deny that Mr Siciliano's new book *The Web Weaver* (Titan Books; www.titanbooks.com; £7.99/ $9.95) is well written and exciting, but I just can't believe in it. I have my doubts about Henry Vernier's wife as a qualified physician in the 1890s, but that's really a quibble. The insurmountable problem is that the protagonist, passionately in love with another man's wife, and ever ready to denigrate John H Watson, simply is not Sherlock Holmes.

Margaret Park Bridges takes an even more revisionist approach in her novel *My Dear Watson* (MX Publishing; £9.99/ $18.95/ €12.99). The detective's secret is disclosed at the very start of the book, and it'll do no harm to reveal it here: Sherlock Holmes was a woman. It's not a new idea but it's handled here with great skill and confidence, and it has a purpose, to account for much of Holmes's personality as described by Dr Watson.

Visits to the Turkish baths must have posed problems, but there's no real contradiction here of Watson's accounts. The woman Holmes lives as a man, and Watson believes her to be a man. Am I convinced? No. Do I accept it while reading the book? Yes, and not only because it's essential to the story, which is a good one, involving the beautiful daughter of the late James Moriarty.

Mark of the Baskerville Hound by **Wilfred Huettel** (MX Publishing; £10.99/ $19.95/ €12.99) offers a parallel to Holmes's greatest case. Bill Hughes, retired NYPD officer and Sherlockian, encountered something terrible and inexplicable when he visited Dartmoor. The narrative is cleverly presented through his consultations with a psychiatrist.

Sherlock Holmes and the Lyme Regis Horror by **David Ruffle** (MX Publishing; £10.99/ $18.95/ €12.99) is an expanded edition of a book first published in 2009. The central story, in essence, relocates the plot of *Dracula* to the Dorset resort. Eleven short tales complete the book. MX has simultaneously published the sequel, *Sherlock Holmes and the Lyme Regis Legacy* (£19.99/ $16.95/ €12.99), which also contains twenty short-short pieces.

Also new from MX is *Sherlock Holmes and the Discarded Cigarette* by **Fred Thursfield** (£6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99): 'London 1895. A well known author, a theoretical invention made real, and the importance of a sometimes overlooked clue challenge Holmes and Watson to prevent the perfect crime.'

Vincent Delay has translated **Ronald Knox's** seminal essay into French as *Études sur la Litterature de Sherlock Holmes*, published as a nice 32-page booklet by the Société d'études holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande (Chaumière 1, 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland).

In the Shadow of Sherlock Holmes: Classic Detective Fiction 1862-1910 is a gratifyingly big collection edited and annotated by **Leslie S Klinger** and graced with splendid illustrations by **Michael Manomivibul** (IDW; www.idwpublishing.com; $16.99). Twenty atmospheric and ingenious tales by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, M P Shiel, George R Sims, Arnold Bennett, B Fletcher Robinson, as well as the more familiar names, show us that Holmes wasn't the only Great Detective of the period.

As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality by **Michael Saler** (Oxford University Press; www.oup.com; £60.00/ $99.00 hbk, £17.99/ $27.95 pbk) must wait until the next issue for a review.

Gasogene Books (www.WessexPress.com) have just published *The Illustrated Speckled Band: The Original 1910 Stage Production in Script and Photographs* by **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**, edited by Leslie S Klinger ($19.95), and *Starrett Speaks: The Lost Recordings*, a collection of rare, never-released recordings by the legendary Sherlockian and bookman, **Vincent Starrett** ($12.95).

At the Centre Page pub the day after the Annual Dinner, Richard Dinnick, who dramatised *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for Big Finish, interviewed Holmes and Watson – or, rather, **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl**, a formidable, intelligent duo, who make the most of their characters. Watson is especially important in the Big Finish productions, as his narration underpins the story to a greater extent than I can recall in any other such audio drama, and Richard Earl is fully equal to the task. This production of *The Hound* is nail-bitingly exciting, as it should be, and the same can be said of *The Tangled Skein*, adapted by Richard Dinnick from David Stuart Davies's sequel – which also completely rewrites the story of *Dracula*. For full-blooded gothic excitement this pair would be hard to beat. (Big Finish are offering a generous discount to members of the Society. Look out for details in the mailing for the March meeting.)

I hadn't come across *Journey Planet* before, but the Sherlock Holmes issue has lots of good articles in its eighty pages, and it's freely accessible at http://efanzines.com/JourneyPlanet/JourneyPlanet11.pdf.

From 10 February, in the Vaults Cinema at the Old Vic Tunnels, **The Flicker Club** will screen a three-week celebration of Hammer Films. This will naturally include the famous, though deeply flawed *Hound of the Baskervilles* on 12 February, which will be introduced by a special surprise guest. Details are at http://www.theflickerclub.com/. Or phone 020 3012 1232.

There are theatrical Hounds too. Global Productions present *the Hound of the Baskervilles* at **Harlow Playhouse** on 10, 11 and 12th February (www.playhouseharlow.com; phone 01279 431945). Matt Mitchell, the Press Officer, says, 'It would be nice to hear what members of the society who attend thought of the show after they've seen it.' globalproductions.publicity@googlemail.com. And at the **Lawrence Batley Theatre** in Huddersfield from 12 to 17 March, you can see Oldham Coliseum's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Clive Francis (www.thelbt.org/Hound-Baskervilles; 01484 430528).

Sarah Greenwood, production designer for Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes* films, has recreated the production studio for an exhibition at Arts Gallery, University of the Arts London, 272 High Holborn, WC1. *A Snapshot. Behind The Scenes of Sarah Greenwood's Sherlock Holmes* runs from 26 January to 9 March.

On 18 February from 3.00pm to 5.00pm, **Dr Amy H Sturgis** will host a live on-line video lecture, *Sherlock Holmes and Science Fiction*. Only twenty tickets are available. http://sherlockholmeslive.eventbrite.co.uk/.

Geraldine Bearman, who occasionally lectures there herself, tells me that on 16 July **Peter Street** will give a day course at Dillington House, a beautiful 16th century building at Ilminster in Somerset. The course is called *Not So Elementary: The Life & Times of Sherlock Holmes*, and the fee of £48.00 includes coffee, tea and lunch. Details are at www.dillington.com, or phone 01460 258648.

Gary Lovisi is looking to buy the 'Chocolate Jaime Boix' cards, originally from 1920 in Barcelona, Spain, featuring Sherlock Holmes art and info. They are post card size, and there are at least 2 sets of 40 cards each (that I know of). Gary can be reached at gryphonbooks@att.net.

The most important work of the playwright **Bill Morrison**, who died on 7 December aged seventy-one, had to do with his native Northern Ireland, but in 1978 he shared with Michael Bakewell the task of dramatising thirteen stories for a very good BBC radio series with Barry Foster and David Buck as Holmes and Watson.

Nicol Williamson, who died on 16 December aged seventy-three, was reckoned by many to be the finest actor of his generation. Some years ago he abandoned acting and moved to Amsterdam to concentrate on music. In 1976 he gave an electrifying performance as Sherlock Holmes in the film of Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven-per-Cent Solution*.

The artist and cartoonist **Ronald Searle**, who died on 30 December aged ninety-one, will always be known as the creator of the anarchic St Trinian's School, which he believed unfairly overshadowed his better, more serious work. (The drawings he did while working on the Burma Railway as a prisoner of the Japanese are immensely powerful and moving.) In 1951 his drawing of the 221B sitting-room at the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition in Baker Street was published in *Punch* and reproduced as the frontispiece for the exhibition catalogue.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Winter 2011, and the BSJ *2011 Christmas Annual: First Lady*, the story of Lenore Glen Offord, the first female Irregular, by Mary Ann Bradley (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2011 and January 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, December 2011 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, January 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, January 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Mayday Mayday,*** January 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, December 2011 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***The Passengers' Log***, Spring 2011 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Jan/Feb 2011 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***The Scion***, Autumn 2011 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2011 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2011 and January 2012 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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Details and booking form for the **Arthur Conan Doyle Weekend** at Haslemere (close to ACD's home at Hindhead) 15-17 June are accessible at www.haslemere.com/conandoyle/home.html. Highlights include **Roger Llewellyn** in *Sherlock Holmes – The Last Act!*, the Hammer *Hound* introduced by **Alistair Duncan**, a murder mystery evening with **The Irregular Special Players**, a musical matinee with **Catherine Cooke** and local musicians, and talks by **Andrew Lane**, **Andrew Lycett** and me. The organisers recommend the Georgian House Hotel (High Street, Haslemere GU27 2JY; 01428 656644; website www.georgianhousehotel.com).

Next Sunday, 18 March, the second **Great Sherlock Holmes Debate** will be held in London. Writers, editors, actors and other devotees will discuss the relative merits of *Sherlock*, the Guy Ritchie films, and the wholly traditional approach to the canon. There's a page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GreatSherlockHolmesDebate. The debate, organised by MX Publishing, supports the campaign to save Undershaw, Conan Doyle's house at Hindhead. It will be recorded and broadcast on-line.

AudioGO offers four sets of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, read unabridged by the wonderful **Derek Jacobi** and reviewed enthusiastically in the last DM. For the chance of winning a set, just tell me which stories in the book are not narrated by Dr Watson. Answers to me, please, by 31 March. And do check the AudioGO website at www.audiogo.co.uk.

A reminder that Big Finish offers a generous discount on its excellent Sherlock Holmes audio dramas, with **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl** as Holmes and Watson. Details were in the recent Society mailing.

For compiling the two magnificent volumes of *The Grand Game* **Laurie R King** & **Leslie S Klinger** surely deserve Sir James Damery's encomium: 'You have done wonders – wonders!' *Volume Two: 1960-2010* (The Baker Street Irregulars, Michael H Kean, 3040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953-2837, USA; www.bakerstreetjournal.com/; $39.95 plus postage in USA, $49.95 plus postage elsewhere) includes sixty-one essays in its 400-plus pages, all instructive, enlightening and entertaining. Among the legendary names – Poul Anderson, S Tupper Bigelow, Bernard Davies, W S Baring-Gould, Michael Harrison, et al – it's a delight to find articles by William Hyder, Grant Eustace, John Hall, Reggie Musgrave, Rosane McNamara, Nicholas Utechin and Guy Marriott. (And, believe it or not, a shock to see something of mine as well.) No such anthology can be definitive, but it's no exaggeration to call *The Grand Game* essential.

Not only are we not alone in our acceptance of a fictional creation as real, but we have an intellectually respectable pedigree. You knew that instinctively, of course, and *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* by **Michael Saler** (Oxford University Press; www.oup.com; £60.00/ $99.00 hbk, £17.99/ $27.95 pbk) charts the development of imaginative reality and explores the psychological and social reasons for its success, concentrating on the creations of Conan Doyle, H P Lovecraft and J R R Tolkien. By exercising what Professor Saler calls ironic imagination, we can live for a while in a different world, sharing it with kinsprits, but we never actually disconnect ourselves from mundane reality. It's little wonder, really, that so many writers of fantasy and science fiction – Poul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, Neil Gaiman, August Derleth, Robert Bloch and others – have been enthusiastic players of the Holmesian game.

It's a pleasure to recommend *Beaten's Christmas Annual* for 2011 (Terri Haugen, c/o The Sound of the Baskervilles, 3606 Harborcrest Court NE, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA; $18.00 postpaid to UK, $13.00 postpaid to USA – checks marked 'in US funds' should be payable to The Sound of the Baskervilles). In these 64 pages are a study of Holmes's drug use, a pastiche or two, a report on our own Society's October meeting, recipes for a Victorian Christmas dinner, a look at Denis O Smith's Sherlockian stories, an analysis of 'The Resident Patient', and much more. Capital stuff, as always from this lively, intelligent group.

It's been a while since **Anthony Read**'s last novel of the Baker Street Boys, and I'm very pleased to welcome *The Case of the Racehorse Ringer* (Walker Books Ltd; www.walker.co.uk; 5 April, £4.99). Why not 'the Baker Street irregulars'? Well, in the entire canon that phrase is used only once, and Mr Read very reasonably assumes that the youngsters are more likely to call themselves simply 'boys'. All right, two of them are girls – or rather, three. Gertie has come back to Baker Street desperate for help because her father has been wrongly arrested for murder. Holmes is abroad; Watson is sympathetic but powerless, so it's up to the Baker Street Boys to investigate. The title gives a pretty strong clue as to what they discover. I suppose these books are aimed at sub-teens, but they should appeal to intelligent readers of almost any age. I love 'em!

The Fairy Ring, or Elsie and Frances Fool the World by **Mary Losure** (Candlewick Press; www.candlewick.com; $16.99) is a remarkably good account of the Cottingley fairies. In a style that's straightforward, elegant and sympathetic, Ms Losure tells the story as each of the two girls saw it – but this exercise in imagination is based entirely on first-hand sources, and illustrated with high-definition prints of the notorious photographs.

I had my doubts about *Sherlock Holmes and the Queen of Diamonds* by **Steve Hayes** & **David Whitehead** (Robert Hale; www.halebooks.com; £18.99) as the authors are most noted for their Westerns. In fact it's a rattling good yarn, well-written and thoroughly engaging – and written in the third person, which is often a wise ploy. A baffling series of jewel robberies is somehow connected with the Music Hall, but Holmes's investigation is interrupted when the beautiful Countess Elaina Montague introduces him to Thomas Howard of Missouri, in London on a deadly mission. Those who know something of the Wild West will easily guess the true identity of 'Mr Howard'…

Forthcoming from Hale is *Sherlock Holmes at the Breakfast Table*, thirteen new stories by **Leslie F E Coombs**.

Among the rapidly growing number of e-book publishers Endeavour Press (www.endeavourpress.com) is a name to look out for. In *Dr Watson's War*, military historian **Patrick Mercer** gives us the full story of the perilous retreat from Maiwand, made more so by an encounter with Colonel George Moriarty. Watson's life, as we know, was saved by his orderly – whose name, it appears, was actually Bowler. He saved another important life as well. The style is rougher and more forceful than we're used to, being untouched by Conan Doyle's editorial hand, but it suits the subject matter admirably. You just know that this is what it was like.

Also from Endeavour come two novellas by **David Dickinson**, author of the Lord Francis Powerscourt novels, who follows Glen Petrie, Quinn Fawcett and others in devising new exploits for Sherlock's brother. *Mycroft Holmes and the Adventure of the Silver Birches* sees Inspector Lestrade faced with a plan to debase the British currency by flooding the country with forged banknotes. His old sparring-partner has retired, so he turns to the Government Auditor, Mycroft Holmes, for help. Mycroft's brain and Lestrade's practicality prove a very successful combination. In *Mycroft Holmes and the Adventure of the Naval Engineer*, a man is murdered in Mycroft's rooms and he is arrested for murder. The man behind the forged money, Graf von der Stoltenberg, is still at large. Was he responsible for this atrocity? The stories are atmospheric, fast-moving, ingenious and very enjoyable.

Sherlock Holmes also features in two entertaining novellas by **Richard Foreman** – *Raffles: The Gentleman Thief* and *Raffles: Bowled Over*. All these Endeavour Press titles are available as Kindle e-books for £1.99 each from Amazon.

Calabash Press has added to its e-books programme with *The Adventure of the Maiden Voyage* by **Alexander E Braun** (Kindle $5.99 from Amazon or from www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabashebooks.htm) – timely, as the voyage

is that of the ill-fated *Titanic*, just a century ago. Also available are **David Stuart Davies**'s excellent *Bending the Willow: Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* ($9.99), *Scream for Jeeves* by **P H Cannon** ($4.99), and *The Canonical Compendium* by **Stephen Clarkson** ($7.99, as a pdf file).

The Art of Deduction by **Taz Rai** is available as a 102-page pdf file from the author at www.artofdeduction.com/ ($17.97). Don't be put off by the fact that it's self-published. This is a very intelligent, sensible and well-argued analysis of Holmes's method of observation and deduction, presented in four chapters: 'A Study in Sherlock', 'A Case in Logic', 'The Observation Ritual', and 'The Sign of Holmesian Deduction'.

Kelvin Jones has several titles out on Kindle, all, I think, first published in hard copy: *Sherlock Holmes and Poisons* (£2.01), *Sherlock's Hound* (£2.00), *Sherlock Holmes & CSI* (£1.67), plus at least seven others, all worth your consideration.

At http://robmdavis.com/Airship27Hangar/airship27hangar.html or at www.amazon.com you can buy *Sherlock Holmes: The Baron's Revenge* – Baron Gruner, that is – by **Gary Lovisi**. Spanish speakers may be interested in *La muerte de Acuario (Sherlock Holmes a la caza de Jack El Destripador)* by **Arquímedes González**, available on Kindle for 77p.

Personally I'm more excited by the news that **June Thomson**, one of the very few writers who have truly mastered the Watson/Doyle style, has a new collection, *The Secret Archives of Sherlock Holmes*, due from Allison & Busby (www.allisonandbusby.com) at £19.99. And in July the History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk) will publish *The Sherlock Holmes Miscellany* by *[*ahem!*]* **Jean Upton** and **Roger Johnson** at £9.99.

At www.bestofsherlock.com/ref/diary-arctic-adventure.htm, on **Randall Scott**'s invaluable website you'll find information about the forthcoming publication by the British Library and Chicago University Press of '*Dangerous Work*', the diary that Arthur Conan Doyle kept of his six months as medical officer on an Arctic whaler, together with related fiction ('The Captain of the *Pole Star*' and 'Black Peter') and non-fiction. The book is edited and introduced by **Jon Lellenberg** and **Daniel Stashower**, who report that 'near the end of the diary, there is a surprising direct link to the first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, which Conan Doyle would write six years later.'

Carrie Chandler notes that **Andrew Lane**, author of the splendid Young Sherlock Holmes books, will be one of the featured writers at the Norwich Crime Festival, 21-31 March. Details at http://norwichcrimefestival.com/, where you can also download a brochure.

At www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times12-2.html is the February issue of *The Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH, 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). It's full of good things, as always.

Kevin Jacklin has alerted me to the Forgotten Futures gaming website, where you can download the 1912 edition of *The Police Code and General Manual of the Criminal* Law by **Sir Howard Vincent** – the man who founded the CID. Marcus L Rowland, who provided it, has expanded and adapted the index. www.forgottenfutures.co.uk/policecode/code0.htm.

Br Innocent Smith writes from Washington, DC: Your readers may enjoy the following post about Sherlock Holmes and Catholic Theology: http://www.dominicanablog.com/2012/02/17/sherlock-holmes-and-the-mystery-of-the-body/.

On 10 February, the internet broadcaster Radio Litopia transmitted a lively discussion about *The Man Behind Sherlock Holmes*, in which **Bert Coules** was the featured guest. You can listen to the programme or download it at http://litopia.tv/m1.

Since the last DM it's been announced that **Jonny Lee Miller** will play the twenty-first century Sherlock Holmes in *Elementary*, the CBS TV pilot set in New York, with **Lucy Liu** as Dr Joan Watson and **Aidan Quinn** as NYPD Captain Gregson. I still can't see it being a serious rival to *Sherlock*, but I'm beginning to suspect that it will at least be entertaining.

Having rewritten Shakespeare for garden gnomes, Rocket Pictures, makers of *Gnomeo and Juliet* are preparing a sequel. Producer Steve Hamilton Shaw said: 'Action detective stories need some gnomes to liven them up, I'm sure Arthur Conan Doyle would agree.' *Gnomeo & Juliet: Sherlock Gnomes* follows the porcelain detective as he joins up with the cast of the original film to investigate a wave of gnome disappearances from England's suburbs.

Roman Stus reports: 'I have a set of Holmes and Watson posters issued on behalf I think of consumers rights. It is a caricature series of 5 posters in excellent condition. As it is a complete set in excellent condition and fairly rare I was looking for about £75 ono. If you could ask interested parties to contact me via e-mail that would be brilliant.' rom.stussy@virgin.net

I didn't know there was such a place, but for £195,000 plus VAT you can buy the freehold of the Sherlock Holmes Inn at Pembroke Dock, Dyfed: www.pembrokedockchamberoftrade.co.uk/property_available_in_pembroke_d.htm.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's annual **Victorian Cricket Match** against the P G Wodehouse Society will be held as usual at the beautiful West Wycombe ground on 24 June. Members and their guests should bring their own picnics, and costume is very much welcomed. This is an excellent social occasion and free of charge. Do please come and give our players your support. And there'll be another match this year! On 26 May our chaps will face a team from Eton College. Details will be sent out with the April mailing.

Gerald Laing, pop artist, former officer in Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, and sculptor of the superb Sherlock Holmes statue formerly to be seen in Picardy Place, Edinburgh, died on 23 November, aged seventy-five. I first met **Bruce Holmes** at the 1990 Bimetallic Colloquium in Montréal. Bruce, who died on 21 December, aged sixty-nine, was one of the few great Sherlockian philatelists and a truly nice guy. **Ian Abercrombie**, best known as Mr Pitt in *Seinfeld*, died on 26 January 2012, aged seventy-seven. His many rôles included an uncredited appearance in the 1972 TV film *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Stewart Granger, and Inspector Lestrade in *The Crucifer of Blood* in Los Angeles, 1980-81, with Charlton Heston and Jeremy Brett. **Frederick Treves** who died on 30 January, aged eighty-six, was prolific on stage, screen and radio. With Carleton Hobbs he played Hugh Boone, Arthur Holder, James M Dodd, Jephro Rucastle, Inspector Lestrade and John Mason; with Robert Powell he was Inspector Gregson; and with Clive Merrison he was Colonel Moran. His great-uncle was the surgeon Sir Frederick Treves, who discovered Joseph Merrick 'the Elephant Man'. **Lady Gore-Booth**, whose late husband Lord Gore-Booth was our Society's President 1966-78, was born in Japan and maintained her connections with the Far East, particularly through Prospect Burma. Pat Gore-Booth died on 2 February, in her ninetieth year. **Martin Breese**, who died on 23 February, was a magician and a leading publisher in the field. His Sherlock Holmes titles, which he sold some years ago to Antony Richards, were a sideline that began with his friend Val Andrews' early pastiches.

Periodicals received. ***Canadian Holmes***, Winter 2011/2012 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***The Cri Bar Crier***, February 2012 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z. Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave., Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***Elementary My Dear Victoria***, Late Summer 2012 (**The Elementary Victorians**, Steve Duke, PO Box 340, Reservoir, 3073 Victoria, Australia). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, February 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, February 2012 and March 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

More issues of the ***Ironmongers Daily News*** than I can count (**Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, 15, rue Grande 03370 Saint-Sauvier, France). ***The Magic Door***, Winter 2012 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***Mayday Mayday,*** February 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Spring 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Prescott's Press***, March 2011 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***3-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, January 2012 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, February 2012 (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

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The answer to the AudioGO *Casebook* competition: the stories not narrated by Dr Watson are, of course 'The Mazarin Stone', 'The Blanched Soldier' and 'The Lion's Mane'. M C Black, Anders Odensten, John Bergquist and Gael Stahl, whose names were picked at random from the correct entries, will each receive a copy of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, read unabridged by **Derek Jacobi**. Thanks again to AudioGO, who have generously donated these prizes! (The full catalogue is on the AudioGO website at www.audiogo.co.uk.)

The future of **Undershaw**, where Conan Doyle wrote *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, is still uncertain. Much will depend on the outcome of the judicial review at the High Court in London on 23 May – the day after Conan Doyle's 153rd birthday. To follow the progress and to support the campaign of the Undershaw Preservation Trust, check the website at www.saveundershaw.com/.

The Baker Street Babes' **Sherlock Holmes Grand Meet-Up** on 21 April will include a **Sherlock Holmes Costumed Tour** led by Rebecca (a generous benefactor will donate £100 to The Undershaw Preservation Trust for campaign expenses if at least ten people join her – http://anotherbohemiansoul.tumblr.com/post/20364390792/so-ive-been-wanting-to-host-a-costumed-walk-for) and a Flash Mob Freeze in Trafalgar Square at 2.00pm to promote the Undershaw campaign (http://bakerstreetbabes.tumblr.com/post/20593011104/rsvp-for-this-meet-up-at-http-bit-ly-shapril).

You can also support the campaign by buying from the **Save Undershaw Shop** at www.saveundershawshop.com/index.html.

Michael Procter has discovered the notes for Holmes's most controversial monograph, which he's edited and published as an attractive 48-page chapbook, *Melancholia in Music: The Posthumous Motets of Orlandus Lassus* (Edition Michael Procter, Ringstr. 11, D-76356 Weingarten, Germany; www.Edition-MP.com; EditionMP@aol.com; €8.50 plus postage, also available as a printable pdf file €3.00). Some have dismissed the monograph as fictional, claiming that the subject as named by Watson ('the Polyphonic Motets of Lassus') is tautologous, or that Holmes could never have heard the motets. Mr Procter shows these ideas to be erroneous and, no less significantly, considers just what it was about these works that commended them to Sherlock Holmes. This is an outstanding contribution to Holmesian scholarship.

Who were PC Pollack, and Dr Ferrier? Who lived in Potter's Terrace, and who went to Eton? **Molly Carr's** new book *A Sherlock Holmes Who's Who* (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £12.99 / $19.99 / €14.99) is already proving a very valuable source of information about places as well as people, though I'm not sure why some of the former, such as Oscar Meunier and Arthur H Staunton, are banished to 'Part Three (Props)', especially as Staunton also appears in 'Part One (People)'. The information provided for each entry is concise and helpful.

Sherlockian Picture Puzzles: A Monograph on Eliot Keen's 1905 Illustrations by **John Addy** (The Musgraves, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP; £7.50 UK/£10.00 Europe/$25.00 USA & Canada/ $30.00 or £15.00 elsewhere; prices include postage) will introduce you to a little-known series of splendid non-canonical drawings that appeared in various American newspapers, clearly influenced by Frederic Dorr Steele. It will also exercise your brain! After John Addy's introduction, twelve of the puzzles are reproduced, with answers and notes. The booklet brings to light a hidden treasure.

I loved **Dan Andriacco's** first novel about Sebastian McCabe and Jeff Cody**,** and I'm delighted to recommend the second , which has a curiously topical touch. *Holmes Sweet Holmes* (MX Publishing; £10.99 / $18.99 / €12.99) concerns the murder of Peter Gerard, writer, director and star of *221B Bourbon Street*, which reimagines Sherlock Holmes as a jazz-playing American in 1920s New Orleans. The film is a hit, but some Sherlockian fundamentalists have sent hate mail. Did an angry Sherlockian break in to St Benignus College and kill Gerard? And how could Gerard be murdered twice? The characters are engaging, the plot is cunning, and the writing is literate and witty. This is classy stuff!

In *The Secret Journal of Dr Watson* (MX Publishing; £10.99 / $18.95 / €12.99) **Phil Growick** tells of Holmes and Watson's most dangerous mission. In 1918, at the personal request of King George, they risk their lives to save those of the King's cousins, the deposed Tsar Nicholas II and his family. On their journey deep into a Russia torn by violent revolution, they discover that friend and foe alike have their own agendas; even their most trustworthy helper, a Colonel in the secret police, is not what he seems. More dangerous even than the Reds and the Whites are the unknowns who want the Romanovs and their rescuers dead. The drama is exotic but the characters and events exude authenticity, and despite the occasional stylistic infelicity (notably the consistent use of 'shall' for 'will'), the narrative carries you along like an express train.

Sherlock Holmes and the Dead Boer at Scotney Castle **by Tim Symonds** (MX Publishing; £11.99 / £18.95 / €13.99) also involves political conspiracy, but in quite different circumstances. In 1904 the invitation to speak to the exclusive Kipling League at a Sussex country house has unexpected consequences for Holmes and Watson. Holmes suspects that the lecture was arranged to provide an alibi for the murder at nearby Scotney Castle, but uncovering the truth stretches his powers to the limit as the killers have learned more from him than he supposed – and the Kipling League's schemes, like those of Baron Maupertuis, are colossal. It's an engrossing tale, well told.

In *Sherlock Holmes & the Mayfair Murders* by **David Britland** (Breese Books, www.breesebooks.com; £7.50 / $18.50 / €12.50) three young women have been slaughtered in a highly respectable part of London. There are fears that Jack the Ripper is back and has turned his attention to the West End, but rather than consult Sherlock Holmes the police turn to the specious Dr Karl Schermann. Holmes solves a sly theft and exposes a counterfeiting racket – and then another girl is murdered. Holmes triumphs in the end, but only after he's revealed the true nature of Dr Schermann.

The novels of **Larry Millett**, dealing with Holmes and Watson's exploits in the USA, haven't been published here despite their deserved popularity in America. Fortunately they're being reprinted by the University of Minnesota Press (www.upress.umn.edu) and are easily available from Amazon and other sources. In *Sherlock Holmes and the Rune Stone Mystery*, Holmes's investigation, on behalf of the King of Sweden, of a reported Viking inscription unearthed in rural Minnesota involves him and Watson in theft and murder. (The authenticity of the Kensington Rune Stone and other alleged Viking artefacts is still debated.) *The Disappearance of Sherlock Holmes* sees Holmes in pursuit of Abe Slaney, who has returned, apparently from the dead, to abduct Elsie Cubitt, and is masquerading as the detective. The chase takes Holmes and Watson to Chicago, Slaney's home territory. In both cases, the assistance of the saloonkeeper Shadwell Rafferty proves invaluable. Mr Millett tells a compelling tale, and his ability to convey the *genius loci* is outstanding.

Opening at random *The Iron Mausoleum: A Case of Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic* by **Stephen Lees** (no publisher named; £6.99 from Amazon) I found Holmes telling Watson that Charlie Peace was an art faker and a violin virtuoso who performed at the Wigmore Hall. Oh, dear! Peace was a cat-burglar, and though he was a talented fiddler, he certainly never played in any major concert halls. Besides, the Bechstein Hall wasn't renamed Wigmore Hall until 1917… As to the novel, it's so clumsily written and so poorly proof-read that I gave up after a few pages. Sorry.

Just received from Gasogene Books (www.wessexpress.com/) are *The Illustrated Speckled Band: The Original 1910 Stage Production in Script*

and Photographs by **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**, edited by **Leslie S Klinger** ($19.95) and the CD *Starrett Speaks: The Lost Recordings* – recordings of **Vincent Starrett** ($12.95). They'll be reviewed in the next issue, as, probably, will two new titles from MX: *Sherlock Holmes & the Whitechapel Vampire* by **Dean Turnbloom** (£10.99 / $18.95 / €12.99) and *The Detective and the Woman* by **Amy Thomas** (the first novel from the Baker Street Babes; £9.99).

An unabridged reading by the remarkably versatile **David Ian Davies** of **Daniel Ward's** thriller *Sherlock Holmes: The Way of All Flesh* is now available from www.audible.co.uk, Amazon, and other sources.

Fantagraphics Books give no date for *Of Extraordinary Interest: Sherlock Holmes' Vital Evidence*, an 'overflowing art book featuring faithful reproductions of original book illustrations, unpublished artwork from Doyle's era, theatrical and movie posters, and complete runs of Sherlock Holmes comic strip and comic book versions, and parodies'. www.fantagraphics.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4029&Itemid=94

In the Pathology Museum at St Bartholomew's Hospital on 27 June **Alistair Duncan** will give a lecture entitled 'A Study in Bart's: Sherlock Holmes, John Watson and England's Great Hospital'. Tickets are available free at http://sherlocksociety.eventbrite.co.uk/.

The Oldham Coliseum's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Clive Francis** is currently touring. It'll be at the Theatre Royal, Windsor from 30 April to 5 May (01753 853888; www.theatreroyalwindsor.co.uk). The production is highly recommended by David Jones.

The Veni Vidi Company's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Simon Williams**, presented as a 1930s radio broadcast, returns to Theatro Technis (26 Crowndale Road, London NW1 1TT) from 30 April to 12 May. Tickets from 07938 995 825 or www.venividitheatre.com. I saw this production last year and was greatly impressed.

Cardiff Players' production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Tim Kelly** will be at the Mike Barlow YMCA Theatre (The Walk, Cardiff CF24 3AG) from 9 to 11 May. Tickets are available from 01656 865989 or cardiffplayers@hotmail.com.

Sell a Door Theatre Company's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Tim Kelly** will be at the Greenwich Theatre 2 to 8 July (020 8858 7755; http://ticketing.greenwichtheatre.org.uk/Default.aspx.).

And the Peepolykus production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **John Nicholson** and **Steve Canny** has been recorded, with the original cast, before an audience and will be broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in May.

The Lenfilms production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, with **Vasily Livanov** and **Vitaly Solomin** will be released on Region 2 DVD by Mr Bongo (www.mrbongo.com). (Thanks to Robin Rowles.)

Dave Marsh is looking to raise $55,000 investment to launch the classic *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* game in a form that can be played on mobile devices. If you're interested and have money to invest, see www.kickstarter.com/projects/1920171553/sherlock-holmes-consulting-detective-adventure-mys.

Michael Cox notes that **Catherine Manoukian** has recorded a CD called *Chopin on Violin* for Marquis Classics (www.marquisclassics.com), though it doesn't include the F minor Nocturne, which was Guy Warrack's candidate for 'that little thing of Chopin's' that Norman-Neruda played.

At www.beachyhead.org.uk/latest/2012/01/did-sherlock-holmes-retire-near-beachy-head/ you'll find an article about Holmes's chosen area of retirement and a link to a map of the Sherlock Holmes Walk.

Last month it was announced that after 244 years the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* will no longer be published in print. Future editions will be available on-line only. Despite the name, the *Britannica* has been an American institution since 1901.

Interested in meeting other Sherlockians to talk Sherlock in the north of England? Come along to an informal lunchtime social gathering of **Scandalous Bohemians** in a Victorian hostelry in Leeds on Saturday 12 May. Join David Stuart Davies, Kathryn White and their Good Comrades Matthew Booth, Paul Chapman, Teresa Dudley and John Hall to help shape a Bohemian future. Fun, scholarship, and conviviality guaranteed. For more details, contact Kathryn and David at: overdale@btinternet.com or check the website at www.scandalousbohemians.co.uk..

If you search the web for **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** you're likely to find an inactive website. The up-to-date and active www.poorfolk.co.uk is the one to go to. And there's another change. After nine years, Reggie Musgrave has stepped down as Editor of *The Torr*, the post now occupied by **Stephan Arthur (**stephan.arthur@gmx.ch**)**.

The Sydney Passengers also have a new editor. **Erin O'Neill** has taken over the reins of *The Passengers' Log* from Rosane McNamara, who now supervises the layout.

Following the success of the two **Great Sherlock Holmes Debates**, the third, on 4 August, will be part of the first **Sherlock Holmes Week**, 31 July to 5 August. The Holmesian world has evolved rapidly with the emergence of virtual societies and the rise of lively, intelligent groups inspired originally by BBC TV's *Sherlock* and Guy Ritchie's films. Sherlock Holmes Week will be an opportunity for Holmesians throughout the world to boost our image and our numbers – and have fun. See the website at www.sherlockholmesweek.com/index.html.

You'll find a two-hour video recording of the second debate at http://mxpublishing.tumblr.com/post/20578813584/the-full-video-the-great-sherlock-holmes-debate-2 and the complete PowerPoint show at http://mxpublishing.tumblr.com/post/20336961470/great-sherlock-holmes-debate-2-full-slides.

Our colleague and friend **Pamela Bruxner** died on 28 March, aged seventy-seven. From 1988 to 2005, while serving as the Society's Meetings Secretary, Pam also edited nine of our Expedition Handbooks and wrote two plays for us. In 1998 she was invested into the Baker Street Irregulars as 'The British Government', in 2003 she became an Honorary Member of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, and in 2006 she was the third recipient of the Tony Howlett Award. Pam was a fixed point in a changing age.

As an actor, **Richard Carpenter** played Arthur Holder to Douglas Wilmer's Holmes in *The Beryl Coronet* on BBC TV in 1964. As a writer, he created two adventures for BBC TV's *The Baker Street Boys* in 1983. His dream of casting Bernard Archard as the elderly Holmes was not to be fulfilled. Richard Carpenter died on 26 February, aged eighty-two.

Periodicals received. ***The Camden House Journal***, February 2012 and March 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Spring 2012 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Cri Bar Crier***, April 2012 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***Elementary My Dear Victoria***, Late Summer 2012 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of Victoria**, Steve Duke, PO Box 340, Reservoir, 3073 Victoria, Australia). ***For the Sake of the Trust: The Baker Street Irregulars Trust Newsletter***, Spring 2012 (**The BSI Trust**, Marshall S Berdan, 2015 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, March 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, April 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, daily! (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, 15 rue Grande, 03370 Saint-Sauvier, France). ***Irregular Newsletter***, March 2012 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***Mayday Mayday,*** March 2012 & April 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn & Winter 2011 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, April 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***The Scion***, Spring 2012 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 2012 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***Sherlockiana***, Nr 1 2012 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Bjarne Rother Jensen, Højbovangen 24, 9200 Aalborg SV, Denmark). ***Studies of the Nippon Sherlock Holmes Club***, Vol. XVI no. 1 (**The Sherlock Holmes Research Committee**, Saburoh Hiraga, JZB04100@nifty.com). ***3-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles***, February-March 2011 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, pkblocker@comcast.net).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, March 2012 (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

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no. 322 19 May 2012

The recent sharp rise in postal prices here means that I must finally increase the subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes. For 12 issues in the UK it'll be £4.50. Overseas it will be £11.00 or US$18.00. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. (Bear in mind that I've absorbed all the increases for the past several years.) Note that an e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery. Also note my new e-mail address! (Though the old one is still valid.)

A reminder that the fate of **Undershaw**, the house at Hindhead where Conan Doyle wrote *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, may be decided by the judicial review at the High Court in London on 23 May – the day after Conan Doyle's 153rd birthday. I'm told that the review is likely to start at 10.00am, and that interested parties are welcome to attend. Since they bought the house in 2004, Fossway Ltd have allowed the house to fall into a shocking state of disrepair. In 2010 the Waverley Borough Council granted planning permission for the house to be carved up into three terraced houses divided by solid block walls, with five more homes to be built on the site. Following protests by the Undershaw Preservation Trust, development has been put on hold pending the Judicial Review. Meanwhile, Undershaw continues to deteriorate.

The aim of the **Undershaw Preservation Trust** is simply to ensure that Undershaw remains intact. Whether it then becomes a private house, a hotel or a museum is, rightly, a less urgent matter. To follow the progress and to support the Trust's campaign, see www.saveundershaw.com/.

The Undershaw Alliance (Academics for Undershaw and Crime Writers for Undershaw) wishes to relaunch the house as a Conan Doyle Museum and Centre for British and Irish Crime Writing. See the website at www.undershawalliance.com. (An admirable aim, but the first priority, surely, must be to secure the integrity of the house.)

The real importance of *The Illustrated Speckled Band: The Original 1910 Stage Production in Script and Photographs* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by **Leslie S Klinger** (Gasogene Books, www.wessexpress.com; $19.95) is in the contemporary review from *The Playgoer and Society Illustrated*, R Dixon Smith's skilful account of the curious circumstances in which the play came to be written and performed, and the thirty-six excellent production photographs, also taken from *The Playgoer*. There are two versions of the script. The earlier one, called *The Stonor Case*, can be found in Richard Lancelyn Green's *The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes* and Leslie Klinger's *The Apocrypha of Sherlock Holmes*. This one, reverting to the original title, also appears in Jack Tracy's *Sherlock Holmes: The Published Apocrypha*. In adapting his tale Conan Doyle made numerous changes: some are clearly for better dramatic effect and some are dictated by the need to flesh out a short story to the size of a three-act play, but others – the renaming of characters, for instance – may be evidence of his real lack of interest in the Holmes stories. The result was a considerable and deserved success, though!

The script of a more recent and even less faithful dramatisation has just been published, and I for one am delighted. This is that 'wonderfully barking spoof' *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, adapted by **Steven Canny** and **John Nicholson** (Nick Hern Books, www.nickhernbooks.co.uk; £9.99). If you saw the original production by the three-handed company Peepolykus you'll know how dazzlingly, crazily funny the play is. If you didn't, then keep checking the *Radio Times*, as an adaptation, with the original cast, is due this month on BBC Radio 4.

There aren't many writers who can capture the Doyle-Watson style almost to perfection (I don't suppose anyone's got it exactly right). One of the few is **June Thomson**, the distinguished creator of Detective Inspector Jack Finch, and author of the excellent *Holmes & Watson: A Study in Friendship*. Her sixth collection of short stories is *The Secret Archives of Sherlock Holmes* (Allison & Busby, www.allisonandbusby.com; £19.99), in which, besides the facts of the Conk-Singleton forgery, the arrest of Colonel Carruthers, the Abergavenny murder, and the case of Madame Montpensier, we learn how Holy Peters was finally brought to book, how the last of Moriarty's gang was captured, and how the young Sherlock Holmes, newly down from university, solved an apparently impossible case of theft. These are exactly the sort of narratives that we find in Conan Doyle. The plots are clever without being too fancy, the writing is literate and appropriate, the atmosphere is authentic, and the characters ring true – except that Lestrade very disconcertingly drops his aitches, which he never does in the true Canon. Half a mark off for that, then, but otherwise wholeheartedly recommended! (And it's nice that the book is dedicated to our Society's President.)

Also recommended is *Sherlock Holmes at the Breakfast Table* by **L F E Coombs** (Robert Hale, www.halebooks.com; 31 May; £19.99). It would be unnecessarily picky of me to find fault with Mr Coombs's style (apart from a couple of instances where 'Holmes and I' should be 'Holmes and me'). An editor himself, he writes well, and with an evident knowledge and love of the period and of Conan Doyle's stories. A quick search reveals that he is the author of half a dozen well-regarded books on rail and air transport – topics that inform several of the thirteen tales in *Sherlock Holmes at the Breakfast Table*. Another recurring theme, perhaps related to the book's title, is marmalade and the making of preserves – an activity that can, it seems, have sinister connotations. We always knew that Dr Watson was familiar with *Bradshaw*; these narratives reveal an unexpected and engaging knowledge of other aspects of the railways. Most of the tales involve Holmes and Watson in matters of national importance, including espionage and sabotage, and naturally Mycroft Holmes makes his presence felt. There's the occasional dry, subtle joke too, such as a house at Grantchester, named 'Archers'…

Sherlock Holmes & the Whitechapel Vampire by **Dean P Turnbloom** (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.com; £10.99/$18.95/€12.99) bears the seal of approval of the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd, but it's on a different plane from the books by Mrs Thomson and Mr Coombs. This is full-blooded pulp fiction, imaginatively identifying Jack the Ripper as an aristocratic Italian – well, the title is self-explanatory. (The novel has no connection with the 2002 television film *The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire*, by the way.) Mr Turnbull has some curious ideas about late Victorian England, having Watson refer to coffee as a 'new drink fad', as if there wasn't a 'well-polished silver-plated coffee-pot' on the breakfast table at 221B Baker Street every morning, and when it comes to the historical figures who must feature in such a tale – Inspector Abberline, Sir Charles Warren, James Monro – invention and well-researched fact are so mixed that it's easiest to imagine that all this happened in an alternative version of our history. The narrative rushes along, carrying you with it, in the best tradition of the thriller. And at the end (a good touch, this) Sherlock Holmes still doesn't believe in vampires!

Wessex Press is doing us a great service with its occasional release of archive material on CD. *Starrett Speaks: The Lost Recordings* (Wessex Press, www.wessexpress.com; $12.95) is a small but select collection of recordings of the great **Vincent Starrett**, whose book *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* should be on every Holmesian's shelf – even if he does pronounce it 'Hol-meesian'. After an informative introduction by Steven Doyle, we have Starrett reciting his own most famous work, the sonnet '221B', followed by a brief, mad parody called 'The Acephalous Agronomist'. Then the recorded greeting that Starrett sent to the Sherlockians assembled in New York and his even briefer 'Ave Sherlock' flank the longest piece, an off-air recording of *Book Beat*, which I think was a television programme in the Chicago area. It evidently dates from about 1962, because being interviewed with Starrett is Orlando Park, whose encyclopaedia *Sherlock Holmes, Esq, and John H Watson, MD* was

published that year. Unlike the other items, all stylish and carefully prepared, this one has the spontaneity and the natural clumsiness of unrehearsed live broadcasting. It's fresh, it's interesting, and there's an awful lot of ums and ahs and hesitations. *Starrett Speaks* is the nearest, I suppose, that most of us will come to encountering the great man in person. For that reason alone it's to be treasured.

The centenary of the *Titanic* disaster has inspired stories of wildly varying quality. *The Adventure of the Perfidious Mariner* by Jonathan Barnes, which concludes the second batch of Sherlock Holmes audio plays from Big Finish (http://bigfinish.com/ranges/sherlock-holmes) is something special. After an unrecounted failure in his career, Holmes has cut himself off from his past, but the past refuses to leave him alone. When Dr Watson arrives at his bee-farm, simmering with grief and anger at the loss of his wife on the great liner, Holmes is like a stranger to him. But with the arrival of another visitor, Watson's anger becomes almost murderous. J Bruce Ismay is the most hated man in Britain: Managing Director of the White Star Line, first-class passenger on the *Titanic* – and one of the comparative few to escape the sinking ship, leaving 1500 people behind. Ismay is haunted by the phantom of a drowned woman, and he seems to carry death with him. The mystery is tantalising, and it doesn't matter that the solution may not hold up scientifically. The magnitude of the disaster, and the sorrow and pain it caused, are treated with integrity and respect. Writer and actors expose raw depths in Watson's and Holmes's complex personalities, and it all rings true. **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl**, among the very best portrayers of the detective and the doctor, are well matched by the tortured performance of **Michael Maloney** as Ismay.

New and forthcoming books include *Sherlock and Transmedia Fandom: Essays on the BBC Series* edited by **Louisa Ellen Stein** & **Kristina Busse** (McFarland & Co, www.mcfarlandpub.com; $40.00). *Sherlock Holmes and the Murder at Lodore Falls* by **Charlotte Smith** (MX Publishing, 4 June; £7.99), *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Jacobite Rose*, a play by **Fiona-Jane Brown** (MX Publishing; £7.99), *Holmes and Watson End Peace* by **David Ruffle** (MX Publishing, 7 June; £6.99), *Steampunk Holmes: Legacy of the Nautilus* by **P C Martin**, illustrated by **Daniel Cortes** (Noble Beast/MX Publishing, June; no price yet) *[*there's more to this one than the paper edition – see www.steampunkholmes.com.*]*, and *The Sherlock Holmes Miscellany* by **Roger Johnson** & **Jean Upton** (History Press, www.thehistorypress.co.uk, 15 July; £9.99).

Forbes Gibb passes on the news that a set of previously unseen papers belonging to Conan Doyle have been donated to the **John Murray Archive** at the National Library of Scotland. They include some short stories, found after the author's death and assumed to have been rejected by him as substandard. The Library's website says, 'Another of the stories is "The memoir of Sherlock Holmes — The field bazaar" which research reveals was published in an unnamed charity magazine in 1896, but never since.' www.nls.uk/news/press/2012/04/conan-doyle-papers *[*Shome mishtake shurely?*]*

On Conan Doyle, or, The Whole Art of Storytelling (Princeton University Press; press.princeton.edu; £13.95), by **Michael Dirda** has deservedly won the Edgar for Best Non-Fiction from the Mystery Writers of America.

At www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times12-4.html is the April issue of *The Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH, 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). Lots to tempt us, as always.

Earlier this month the British Academy of Film & Television Arts (BAFTA) confirmed its decision not to make a posthumous award to **Jeremy Brett**. Disappointing news, after so many people have worked so hard organising a campaign, but, alas, not wholly surprising.

Alan Lance Andersen notes that the July and August issues of *GAMES Magazine* will feature a two-part article, 'Sherlock Holmes – Call Our Bluff'. And somewhere in the article will be an unannounced Hidden Contest, with the chance to win a copy of Mr Andersen's script *Sherlock Holmes: Author's Expanded Edition*. www.gamesmagazine-online.com/.

At 6.00pm on 6 June at the Senate House Library, University of London, **Dr Emelyne Godfrey** will give the Bestsellers Book Talk, on 'The Empty House' and 'The Speckled Band'. (Dr Godfrey recently assisted Gyles Brandreth in researching Bartitsu on *The One Show* on BBC 1.) Details are at www.shl.lon.ac.uk/friends/documents/conandoylebooktalk.pdf. All are welcome. Contact shl.officeadmin@london.ac.uk to register.

At 1.00pm on 2 July our member **Richard Burnip** will give the Gresham College lecture on Literary London Crime – *'A Stout Heart in the Great Cesspool': Arthur Conan Doyle and London*. Details are at http://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/a-stout-heart-in-the-great-cesspool-arthur-conan-doyle-and-london. Admission is free.

On 21 May the classic 1983 Russian film *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, directed by **Igor Maslennikov**, will be available – for the first time, I think – in British shops (Mr Bongo, www.mrbongo.com; £7.99). It's all done with such skill and integrity that the western viewer soon learns to accept a winding thoroughfare in Riga as Baker Street, and a dacha in the steppes as Baskerville Hall. **Vasily Livanov**, thin, hawk-faced and penetratingly perceptive, is an ideal Holmes, complemented by the courageous, active and intelligent Watson of **Vitaly Solomin**. Sir Henry comes across as larger than life, determined to show his North American background by wearing a ten-gallon hat and arriving in London with a huge western saddle. The Hound too is larger than life, and rightly so. First glimpsed as a mere luminous skull, it's eventually revealed as one of the most effective apparitions in any version of the tale. The subtitles could profitably have been revised, but all in all it's a first-rate production.

Nicholas Rowe and **Alan Cox** will resume their roles as Holmes and Watson, alongside Shane Briant, in *Sherlock Holmes vs Frankenstein*, (http://marteaufilmsproduction.com/site/pages/projets.php?varform=2) written and directed by **Gautier Cazenave**.

In Spain *Holmes, Madrid Suite 1890*, directed by **José Luis Garci**, is in post-production. Holmes, played by **Gary Piquer,** goes to Spain on the trail of Jack the Ripper. www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzcBrjtsyzM. (Thanks to Vicente Castillo.)

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows is out now on DVD and Blu-Ray. Nick Utechin suggests that if you're tempted by Amazon's Triple Play package, which claims also to include a 'digital copy', you should check the reviews on Amazon.

Karen Murdock has an interesting article, 'Recovering the Classical in the Common: Figures of Speech in "A Scandal in Bohemia", which you can read online at www.mcte.org/journal/mejV47/Murdock.pdf.

Sherlock Holmes and The Hound of The Baskervilles is Now Available on Steam! http://store.steampowered.com/news/7808/. Product Release - Valve 15:35. *[*And now you know as much as I do…*]*

Jack Bagley is a painter who has always fancied painting a portrait of Sherlock Holmes. He's looking for someone with a keen interest in the history and mythology of the character to commission such a portrait. If you're interested, contact him at jbagleyart@hotmail.co.uk. You can see some of his work at www.oilpaintingsonline.com/jackpaints/portfolio/.

Antony Richards notes that Raylo makes a beautiful O gauge model of the Metro-Vickers Bo-Bo locomotive, *Sherlock Holmes*, whose original name plate is owned by the Society. The model costs an eye-watering £455.00. www.raylo.co.uk.

The specialist dealer **Brian Grimshaw** is still in business at www.221b.co.uk. *District Messenger* subscribers will receive a further 10% discount if they mention the fact when purchasing from 221b.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2012 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2012 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, May 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, almost daily (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, 15 rue Grande, 03370 Saint-Sauvier, France). ***Mayday Mayday*,** May 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, April 2012 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***The Torr***, Spring 2012 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsburg, Switzerland).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April 2012 (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

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £4.50 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

The Judicial Review of the planning permission granted by Waverley Borough Council for **Undershaw** to be carved up into three terraced houses divided by solid block walls, with five more homes to be built on the site, was duly held at the High Court on 23 May, and the judge's decision was announced a week later. The council's action was legally flawed and therefore invalid. Waverley Borough Council did not appeal. Thanks to the dedication and persistence of John Gibson and his colleagues in the Undershaw Trust, the first battle has been won.

On the day of the hearing, MX Publishing released a book compiled by the **Sherlockology** team: *Sherlock's Home: The Empty House*, a collection of short stories and verse by Sherlockians from around the world, together with articles and statements by supporters including Mark Gatiss, Gyles Brandreth, Steven Fry, Douglas Wilmer, Michael Cox, Nicholas Briggs and Roger Llewellyn. Royalties will go to the Undershaw Preservation Trust (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99).

Shortly before leaving her post as Conan Doyle Projects Officer at Portsmouth last year, **Fiona-Jane Brown** wrote a Sherlock Holmes play, *The Prima Donna's Last Aria*, which was staged as part of the city's 'Lost Hour' celebrations, marking the start of British Summer Time. Since her return to Scotland, Dr Brown has written another play, *Sherlock Holmes & the Adventure of the Jacobite Rose*, published this month by MX at £7.99/$10.95/€8.99. It's a clever and entertaining drama, ideal for youth groups and schools. The first performances will take place later this year or early next, at Sir Christopher Hatton School in Wellingborough, Aberdeen College, and Lake View High School in Chicago. The script is available from Amazon, Waterstone's and other sources; performance rights are available from the publisher at www.mxpublishing.co.uk.

The second edition of *The Sherlock Holmes Triviography & Quiz Book* by **Kathleen Klaska** is out now from LL Publications (www.ll-publications.com; £10.99/$14.99; e-book $5.99). There's plenty here to exercise your brain and keep you amused, though it might be as well to double-check some of the facts. (Edward Hardwicke wasn't the only actor to play Dr Watson in the Granada TV series; Lily Langtry – not 'Langtree' – was born in Jersey, not New Jersey…)

In her intensively researched and lovingly written novel *The Crack in the Lens*, **Darlene Cypser** wrote of the boyhood of Sherlock Holmes. She continues the story in *The Consulting Detective Trilogy, Part I: University* (Foolscap & Quill; www.foolscap-quill.com; $14.99), which covers the years from December 1871 to January 1875. Like Dorothy L Sayers, Ms Cypser sends the young Holmes to Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, but his experiences there, apart from his unusual introduction to Victor Trevor and the tale of the *Gloria Scott*, come mostly from her own powerful imagination. We learn how he was introduced to drugs and to tobacco, how he became an expert swordsman, and how – and why – he set about becoming a detective. *Part II: On Stage* will follow in 2013, and *Part III: Montague Street* in 2014.

I've mentioned *Steampunk Holmes* before – for full information see www.steampunkholmes.com. For the less elaborately electronically enabled, such as me, the first adventure is now available in its most accessible form: i.e. a book. *Steampunk Holmes: Legacy of the Nautilus* by **P C Martin** (Noble Beast/MX Publishing; £7.99/$14.95/€8.99) places Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson in a world where electricity has yet to be developed, the internal combustion engine is irrelevant, and steam power has been developed to the highest degree. Holmes's favoured transport is a powerful motorcycle. Watson sports a mechanical right arm. And Mycroft Holmes is Sherlock's beautiful, devastatingly intelligent sister. The story, as you'd expect, involves Captain Nemo and his famous submarine, cleverly working them into a re-imagining of 'The Bruce-Partington Plans'. With character portraits by Daniel Cortes and a superb cover by John Coulthart, it's very stylish – though for the best of Mr Cortes' illustrations you'll need to check the website.

Sherlock Holmes & the Plague of Dracula by **Stephen Seitz** was first published in 2007. Now there's a new and improved edition from MX Publishing (£9.99/$18.95/€12.99). This isn't the first time that the detective and the vampire have been pitted against each other, and it won't be the last, but it has a good deal going for it. Other writers have shattered Holmes's disbelief in the supernatural, but Mr Seitz assaults the credulity of Dr Van Helsing and others of Bram Stoker's characters – without diminishing the excitement of the conflict. And (hurrah!) he doesn't try to make Count Dracula a Byronic romantic hero.

David Ruffle follows his entertaining volumes *Sherlock Holmes & the Lyme Regis Horror* and *Sherlock Holmes & the Lyme Regis Legacy* with a sweet, sad novella called *Holmes & Watson: End Peace* (MX Publishing; £6.99/$9.95/€7.99) – the punning title doesn't really do it justice. Nearly fifteen years after his 'last quiet talk' with Sherlock Holmes, Dr Watson lies motionless in a hospital bed, conversing with a visitor only he can sense. The narrative consists entirely of dialogue – a bold and remarkably successful choice.

Also new from MX Publishing are *Sherlock Holmes & the Terrible Secret* by **Fred Thursfield** (£8.99/$14.95/€11.99) and *Sherlock Holmes & the Murder at Lodore Falls* by **Charlotte Smith** (£7.99/$12.95/€9.99).

Kelvin Jones advises me that no fewer than thirteen of his works of Holmesian scholarship are now available in Kindle form from Amazon – not including the nine individual volumes of his biography, *Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective*. There's also a rare venture into fiction: *Sherlock Holmes: The Plagues of London*.

Our German member **Johanna M Rieke** has written a Sherlock Holmes novel called *Die Themsmorde* ('The River Thames Murders'). It will be published by Lord Byrons Literary Press in association with Verlag (http://lordbyronsliterarypress.co.uk) and will be launched in October at the Frankfurt Book Fair. An English language edition is planned.

Vincent Delay informs me of a new book, *inklings - Jahrbuch für Literatur und Ästhetik: Der andere Conan Doyle* ('The Other Conan Doyle') edited by **Dieter Petzold** (Peter Lang; www.peterlang.com; £46.10/$71.95/€51.20/SFR67.00). It contains papers, some apparently in German and some in English, from last year's international conference in Leipzig

All students of the Victorian era will be delighted by the new availability on-line of **Queen Victoria's Journals** – all 141 volumes, along with an interactive timeline, drawings and sketches by the Queen, and authoritative essays on aspects of her life. Thanks to the

Bodleian Libraries, the Royal Archives, and ProQuest, all this is available to search and read at www.queenvictoriasjournals.org – 'free of charge in perpetuity to all users in the United Kingdom and to the national libraries of Her Majesty's Realms'.

'Let me recommend this book – one of the most remarkable ever penned.' Well, perhaps that's an exaggeration, but I hope you'll like it anyway… It's *The Sherlock Holmes Miscellany* by **Roger Johnson** & **Jean Upton** (The History Press; www.thehistorypress.co.uk; £9.99).

Alfred Weiner wishes to sell his Sherlockian library, which appears to be 'small but select'. If you're interested, you can write to him at 4105 Marietta Drive, Vestal, NY 13850, USA; e-mail almar@stny.rr.com; or phone 607-722-6251.

On display at Portsmouth History Centre at the Central Library (Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2DX) until the end of July is an exhibition called **Catching the Unseen: Spirit Photography from the Conan Doyle Collection**, which includes photographs, archives and books from the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection – Lancelyn Green Bequest, many of which have never been shown before. The exhibition is open every day except Friday and Sunday.

At the Greenwich Theatre (http://greenwichtheatre.org.uk; 020 8858 7755) from Monday 2 July to Sunday 8 July, Tim Kelly's adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* will be performed by **Sell a Door Theatre Company**.

The live recording of the wonderfully effervescent spoof of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Peepolykus** will be broadcast at 2.30pm on Saturday 7 July on BBC Radio 4. *[*Apologies for the statement, made in good faith, that the transmission would be in May.*]* The company has further good news: 'Inspired by the fun of putting this together, we decided to work up a stage version of the radio version of *Baskervilles*, where four actors are providing all of the foley sound effects. This previewed at the Bath Fringe Festival on 4th June. The production will be available for touring (to pretty much any space) from next year. Please contact us FFI.' Phone Eleanor Lloyd on 020 7395 7523, or e-mail her at eleanor@elproductions.co.uk.

In the autumn **Ian Sharrock** and **Nicholas Briggs** will tour in a new play, *Sherlock Holmes – A Study in Fear!* by John Goodrum, based on 'The Final Problem': 11-15 September: Connaught Theatre, Worthing (01903 206 206); 19-20 September: Octagon Theatre, Yeovil (01935 422884); 2-7 October: Greenwich Theatre (020 8858 7755); 10-11 October: Civic Theatre, Chelmsford (01245 606505); 18-20 October: Key Theatre, Peterborough (01733 207239); 23-24 October: The Kings Theatre, Southsea (023 9282 8282); 26-27 October: Pomegranate Theatre, Chesterfield (01246 345222).

Leslie Coombs, whose very enjoyable book of stories *Sherlock Holmes at the Breakfast Table* I reviewed in the last DM, is a surprising ninety years old and, he says, not very mobile. He asks whether any members of the Society, preferably in north-west London, would like to contact him to discuss matters Holmesian. Please contact me in the first instance.

The first **Sherlock Holmes Week**, from 30 July to 5 August, is our chance to celebrate all things Holmesian – simultaneously with other enthusiasts world-wide. The first two Great Sherlock Holmes Debates resulted in tens of millions of fan pages across the internet. The third Debate, this time on the vexed subject of the Best Holmes Story, will once again bring together the top actors, directors, historians, bloggers and commentators in the Sherlock Holmes world. It'll be held in central London on 4 August. If you'd like to get involved in the debate, go to www.facebook.com/GreatSherlockHolmesDebate. New this year are the Sherlock Holmes Fashion Awards, sponsored by fashion MEGAzine Aigua Media, to be judged on 2 August. You can submit a design for Holmes, Watson, Lestrade, Mycroft, Irene Adler, Molly or Mrs Hudson. Aigua will prepare the shortlist for a panel of judges to pick the winner for each character. To enter simply send your design to fashioncompetition@sherlockholmesweek.com as a jpeg no larger than 1MB.

For more information about **Sherlock Holmes Week 2012**, check the website at www.sherlockholmesweek.com.

The town of Hillesheim in the picturesque Eifel region is Germany's Crime Fiction Capital. It boasts the Café Sherlock, the German Crime Archives collection, the specialist Bookmarks bookshop, and the specialist publisher KBV Verlag – all within *Das Kriminalhaus*. From 24 to 26 August, Hillesheim will host **SherloCON 2012**, a convention to mark the 125th anniversary of the first Sherlock Holmes story, during which Germany's first Sherlock Holmes museum will be officially opened. For details, check the Deutsche Sherlock Holmes Gesellschaft website at www.sherlock-holmes-gesellschaft.de.

In DM 321 I reviewed the excellent monograph *Melancholia in Music: The Posthumous Motets of Orlandus Lassus***.** Only six weeks later I was shocked and saddened to learn of the death on 3 May of its author, **Michael Procter**, at the age of sixty-one. He joined the Society about two years ago, although the distance from his home in Germany made it difficult for him to attend meetings. Several musicians have considered the controversial questions of Holmes's monograph on 'The Polyphonic Motets of Lassus'. Michael was the first to examine the subject as a recognised expert in renaissance choral music.

It's only right that we should record the death on 19 May of the blind American musician, songwriter and singer **Arthel Lane Watson**, at the age of eighty-nine – simply because he was universally known by his nickname, Doc Watson.

The cinematographer **Christopher Challis**, who died on 31 May, aged ninety-three, may be mostly associated with the films of Powell & Pressburger, but his long and distinguished career also saw him working with Billy Wilder on *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*.

Likewise **Caroline John**, who died on 5 June aged seventy-one, may be best remembered as Liz Shaw, one of the most intelligent of the Companions in *Doctor Who* (her Doctor was Jon Pertwee), but she was a notable Laura Lyons on the 1982 BBC TV serial *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, with Tom Baker.

Anthony Bate had an impressive line in politicians, spies and aristocrats. In 1994 he played Lord Cantlemere in Bert Coules's dramatisation of *The Mazarin Stone* on BBC Radio 4. He died on 19 June aged eighty-four.

Periodicals received: ***The Camden House Journal***, April 2012 and May 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Newsletter and Birthday File XIX***, 22 May 2010 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, SussexBN7 1PN). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, July 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, daily! (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, 15 rue Grande, 03370 Saint-Sauvier, France). ***Mayday Mayday*****,** June 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP).

The Medical Bulletin, Summer 2012 (**Dr Watson's Neglected Patients**, Darlene Cypser, 6529 Lakeside Circle, Littleton, CO 80125, USA). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Summer 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Prescott's Press***, March 2012 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). ***Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals***, May 2012 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). ***The Scion***, Summer 2012 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2012 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 2012 (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

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This is **Sherlock Holmes Week**, whose main aim is to raise public awareness of the Save Undershaw campaign. The first battle has been won but much remains to do. See www.saveundershaw.com/, and note the competition to choose the best contribution to the book *Sherlock's Home: The Empty House*, published by MX Publishing, (www.mxpublishing.co.uk/engine/shop/index.html - if you haven't got a copy then buy one! proceeds go to the Save Undershaw campaign). Secondary aims of Sherlock Holmes Week are to spread the word about Holmes and Conan Doyle, to increase communication between Holmesians, and to have fun. To see what's going on this week check www.sherlockholmesweek.com/index.html and http://mxpublishing.tumblr.com/post/28042646401/dozens-of-events-worldwide-for-sherlock-holmes-week. There are events in, I think, eight different countries, culminating in the third Great Sherlock Holmes Debate on Saturday 4 August.

AudioGO rounds off its complete recording of the Sherlock Holmes canon, with the four long stories, *A Study in Scarlet, The Sign of the Four, The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Valley of Fear*, all superbly read by **Derek Jacobi** (www.audiogo.com/uk, £15.00 each but reduced prices are available). It's a pleasure to be reminded just how good Conan Doyle's narrative and dialogue *sounds*. It's more formal than today's norm, but never stuffy or pretentious. Sir Derek is one of our great vocal actors. Every character is distinct, with no straining for effect, and he knows just when to let the words do the work. This complete Sherlock Holmes is a magnificent achievement, ranking with David Timson's wonderful readings for Naxos, and it confirms my opinion that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is the greatest of the long stories, but *The Valley of Fear* is inarguably the best.

The death of Jack Stapleton, alias Vandeleur, alias Baskerville, is presumed, not stated as fact. In *The Baskerville Inheritance* by **Teresa Collard** (Collard, £7.99 – available from www.lulu.com) we learn that he did not perish in the Grimpen Mire, and that he still intends to destroy his cousin Sir Henry Baskerville. But Sherlock Holmes faces another challenge: the arrest of his brother Mycroft for treason proves to be just one move in a deadly plot to overthrow the Queen and place her grandson the Kaiser on the British throne. The trail takes Holmes and Watson to the heart of Government, to the Diogenes Club, to a rather more sinister establishment, the Hanover Club, and to Dartmoor Prison, where the two investigations intersect. Not only must Holmes foil the now insane Stapleton: he has to defeat a still more dangerous foe, one Professor James Moriarty. *The Baskerville Inheritance* is a real page-turner. It grabs your interest from the first page and keeps you absorbed to the very last.

Sherlock Holmes: The Army of Dr Moreau by **Guy Adams** (Titan Books, www.titanbooks.com; £7.99) is likewise well written, with obvious knowledge and affection. Few of Conan Doyle's contemporaries are still read for pure pleasure, but among them, surely, is H G Wells. The title of this new novel tells us that its main influence is *The Island of Dr Moreau*, Wells's tale of a megalomaniac attempt by surgery to create human beings from living animals. What Wells didn't say was that Moreau was working under the auspices of the British government, and that Mycroft Holmes knew it. As in *The Breath of God*, Mr Adams draws on more than one source. Sherlock Holmes's investigation into a series of literally bestial killings is variously helped or hindered by Professor Challenger, Professor Lindenbrook (*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*), Mr Cavor (*The First Men in the Moon*) and Abner Perry (*At the Earth's Core*). The result is a rich plum-pudding of good scary fun.

Things are rather less fantastical in *Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Poisoned Lilly* by **Roger Riccard** (The Irregular Special Press, www.crime4u.com; £7.50). Lillian Fields, under the stage name of Loraine Fontaine, is a beautiful and successful actress- and she has an unknown and deadly enemy. Fortunately she also has a good friend in Mary Watson, who justifies Holmes's comment: 'I think she is one of the most charming young ladies I ever met and might have been most useful in such work as we have been doing. She had a decided genius that way' – which should please readers who regret that Mrs Watson disappears so quickly from the canon. In Mr Riccard's clever plot Holmes and Watson encounter Henry Irving and Leo Dryden backstage at the Lyceum Theatre, visit Bart's Hospital and the National Rose Society at St Albans, and meet the female detective Loveday Brooke at Scotland Yard.

The London of Sherlock Holmes by **John Christopher** (Amberley Publishing, www.amberley-books.com, £14.99) is a handsome and splendidly illustrated book. The text is pithy, if shallow and with several persistent misspellings ('Mary Morston', 'Sydney Paget', 'Cadogen West'). Still, that could be forgiven if it weren't for the numerous careless errors. Baron von Herling wasn't 'an alias for Sherlock Holmes'. Holmes did use an outdated term when he spoke of going to Doctors' Commons, but that institution was in Knightrider Street in the City, not in Lambeth. In 'Silver Blaze', Holmes and Watson don't return from Dartmoor to Victoria Station: they're coming back from Winchester races. The Sherlock Holmes Museum wasn't 'granted a change' of address 'to the out-of-sequence 221B number in 1990'. Its address is still 239 Baker Street – the '221B' on the door being the name of a company set up for the purpose. (It's a pity Mr Christopher didn't consult the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.) This is an attractive book, but *caveat lector*.

How Sherlock Holmes Deduced 'Break the Case Clues' on the BTK Killer, the Son of Sam, Unabomber and Anthrax Cases: With Analysis on the Mad Bomber and the Unsolved LI Gilgo Beach Murders (iUniverse, www.iuniverse.com, $13.95)– it's a very long title for a book that isn't very long but is quite fascinating. The author, **Tom Walker**, is both a retired NYPD Captain of Detectives and a long-time Sherlockian who won $32,000 answering questions on Holmes on a TV quiz show. The cases covered here – not in gruesome medical detail – are not, with the exception of 'Son of Sam', ones that he was directly involved in during his police career. Mr Walker says: 'Let me study the clues on paper – the letters sent, the information on the bomb, the return addresses on the envelopes, the telephone conversations that might have been taped, the clues found at the scene by the assigned detectives, etc.' If that makes him a Mycroft, remember that Mycroft was even more brilliant than Sherlock. These accounts demonstrate the value of what you might call armchair detection – and who'd have suspected a connection between *Portrait of Jennie* and the 'Anthrax Killer'?

Raffles: The Complete Innings collects into one e-book the several stories written by **Richard Foreman** and continuing the exploits of the 'gentleman thief'. If you enjoy E W Hornung's original tales then

you'll probably like these, especially as Holmes and Watson play a significant part. (Endeavour Press, www.endeavourpress.com, £5.99).

Sherlock Holmes and the Giessbach Fall by **Helmi Sigg** is available in both German and English in one volume from Agentur Helmi Sigg at http://agentur.helmisigg.ch/node/22 (sfr22 plus postage).

In the next issue I'll review *Doctoring the Novel: Medicine and Quackery from Shelley to Doyle* by **Sylvia A Pamboukian** (Ohio University Press, www.ohioswallow.com, $39.96) and *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes* edited by **Don Libey** (Campbell & Lewis, www.libeybooks.com, $15.00). A few others too, probably.

But I don't expect to review *Hemlock Bones: A Stud in Scarlet* by **Sarah Masters**, one of the Clandestine Classics e-books from Total-e-Bound (www.total-e-bound.com). Yes, this is basically *A Study in Scarlet* with added gay sex, and it was originally announced under that title.

Also new or forthcoming:

The Real Sherlock Holmes: The mysterious methods and curious history of a true mental specialist by **Joe Riggs** (MX Publishing).

Mycroft Holmes and Murder at the Diogenes Club by **David Dickinson** (Endeavour Press).

Holmes and Watson by **June Thomson** (Allison & Busby) *[*a welcome reprint of a classic study*]*.

Anomalous: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes featuring Jack Johnson and Alphonse Capone by **Samuel Williams Jr** (MX Publishing, 1 August).

The Lost Casebooks of Sherlock Holmes: Three Volumes of Detection and Suspense by **Donald Thomas** (Pegasus Books, 1 August).

The Untold Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** (MX, 2 August).

Sherlock Holmes: Tales From The Stranger's Room - Volume 2 edited by **David Ruffle** (MX, 2 August).

56 Sherlock Holmes Stories in 56 Days by **Charlotte Anne Walters** (MX, 3 August).

Sherlock Holmes and The Element of Surprise: The Wormwood Scrubs Enigma by **J. Andrew Taylor** (MX, 4 August).

The Philosophy of Sherlock Holmes by **Philip Tallon** and **David Baggett (**University Press of Kentucky, 21 August).

Official Sherlock 2013 Calendar (Danilo Promotions Limited, 31 August).

Solve the Famous Hound of the Baskervilles Mystery - Sherlock Holmes by **Arthur Conan Doyle** and **Deborah Kespert** (Carlton Publishing Group, 4 September).

Sherlock: The Hounds of Baskerville (Scholastic Readers) by **Paul Shipton** (Mary Glasgow Magazines, 6 September).

The Hound of The Baskervilles: A Sherlock Holmes Play by **Simon Corble** (MX, 12 September).

Sherlock Holmes & Frankenstein's Diary by **Barry Grant** (Severn House, 27 September).

Sherlock Holmes and the Swedish Enigma by **Barry Grant** (Severn House, 27 September).

Young Sherlock Holmes 5: Snake Bite by **Andrew Lane** (Macmillan Children's Books, 27 September).

Dotted around London are eighty-three large figures of the bizarre monocular Olympic mascots, Wenlock and Mandeville. Just inside Regents Park, at the top of Baker Street, is **Sherlock Wenlock** – weirder even than the Sherlock Holmes elephant of a few years ago.

At Gillette Castle State Park, East Haddam, Connecticut, on Saturday and Sunday afternoons at 1.30pm and 3.00pm until 12 August, the **East Haddam Stage Company**, directed by Kandie Carle, perform *The Speckled Band*, using Edith Meiser's 1930 radio script. William Gillette himself played Holmes in the original production – the first Sherlock Holmes drama ever broadcast. Entrance is free. For more details check www.ehsco.org.

At the auction of **Mary Jakeman's** collection on 10 July, her first US edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, signed by Arthur Conan Doyle, sold for £8,900 – nearly ten times the guide price. Mary Jakeman worked as a maid for the Conan Doyles at Windlesham. The remaining lots fetched a total of over £8,600.

Sally Thomas reports that on 9 July **Jeremy Brett's** name was entered in the Book of Remembrance at the Actors' Church – St Paul's, Covent Garden. She adds: 'He is where he would want to be, surrounded by those with whom he shared so much.'

Maxwell Stewart of London, Ontario seeks additional finance for his film *Sherlock Holmes and the Consulting Detective*. See the fund-raising page at www.indiegogo.com/sherlockholmescd.

The summer issue of *Festival Times*, newsletter of the **Festival of Britain Society** (www.festivalofbritain.org), features an article about the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition of 1951.

Gary Lovisi reminds me that we haven't recently mentioned *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*, edited by Marvin Kaye. As he says, it's 'a nice magazine with good articles, fine crime stories and enjoyable Holmes pastiches'. You can buy individual issues on the website at www.wildsidemagazines.com - and US readers can take out a subscription

www.kentnews.co.uk/home/the_changing_face_of_sherlock_holmes_and_dr_watson_1_1411686# is where you can read an interview with **David Burke** on 'The Changing Face of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson', published in *Kent News* on 18 June.

Yuri Rasovsky, who died on 18 January aged sixty-seven, was a giant in American radio and audio drama, as writer, director, producer and actor. He twice directed William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes*, in 1977 for National Radio Theater and in 2004 for Hollywood Theater of the Ear. The latter, starring Martin Jarvis, is available, along with *The Speckled Band*, on CD from www.amazon.com. It's brilliant.

James Grout, who died on 24 June aged eighty-four, will be remembered as Chief Superintendent Strange in *Inspector Morse*, but his long career on stage, screen and radio encompassed many rôles, including Dr Watson to Geoffrey Palmer's Holmes in *The Mask of Moriarty* at the Haymarket Theatre, Leicester in 1987.

Eric Sykes was loved and respected as a writer and – despite almost total deafness for several decades and increasing blindness – performer of comedy. He also appeared to good effect in dramatic productions such as the creepy 2001 film *The Others*, and, as Horace Harker, in Granada TV's 1986 *The Six Napoleons*. Eric Sykes died on 4 July aged eighty-nine,

Periodical received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2012 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, June 2012 and July 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Summer 2012 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, June 2012 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, July 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, daily! (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***The Magic Door***, Summer 2012 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2012 (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

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

Sherlock Holmes told the insistently assertive J Neil Gibson, 'I do not think that I am in need of booming.' Today we're likely to encounter the name and the image of Holmes almost anywhere we turn.

AudioGO offers a set of all four of the Long Stories, read unabridged by the wonderful **Derek Jacobi** and reviewed enthusiastically in the last DM. For the chance of winning, just tell me who illustrated *The Valley of Fear* for *The Strand Magazine*. Answers to me, please, by 30 September. And do check the AudioGO website at www.audiogo.co.uk.

The most important of the many books recently sent me for review is certainly the long-awaited *'Dangerous Work': Diary of an Arctic Adventure* by **Arthur Conan Doyle**, (British Library; http://publishing.bl.uk/book/dangerous-work; £25). The 'adventure', of course, is Conan Doyle's six-month voyage as ship's surgeon on the Peterhead whaling ship *Hope*, and the contrast with *The Narrative of John Smith*, also edited by Jon Lellenberg & Daniel Stashower, could hardly be greater. *'Dangerous Work'* is a quite magnificent production, with the young medical student's journal reproduced page by page in full colour, the handwriting assured and clear throughout, and the drawings indicating that he might, had he dedicated himself to it, have made a name for himself as an illustrator, like his uncle and his grandfather. Following the facsimile is a transcript of the text, with annotations that genuinely enhance our appreciation of Conan Doyle's fascinating first-hand account of a dangerous, courageous and by then dying trade. This big beautiful volume concludes with four later works that were inspired by the author's experiences in the frozen ocean: two articles, 'The Glamour of the Arctic' and 'Life on a Greenland Whaler', an outstanding ghost story, 'The Captain of the *Pole Star*', and a tale that needs no introduction, 'The Adventure of Black Peter'. I really can't recommend '*Dangerous Work*' too highly.

The Hound of the Baskervilles doesn't easily lend itself to the theatre, but dramatists seem unable to resist the challenge. I've not had the chance to see it, but the script by **Simon Corble** (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £7.99/$10.95/€8.99) is pretty close to the top of my list of favourites. It was written to be performed out of doors, with the audience following the actors from place to place. Mr Corble boldly adapts the story rather than simply dramatising, and the result is clever, witty, exciting – and refreshingly intelligent. David Stuart Davies contributes an appreciative foreword, and the text is enhanced by a dozen photographs and a superb atmospheric cover, using photos taken during a production at Brimham Rocks in North Yorkshire.

From McFarland & Co (www.mcfarlandbooks.com), the American academic publishers, come two timely volumes of essays. *'Sherlock' and Transmedia Fandom: Essays on the BBC Series* edited by **Louisa Ellen Stein** and **Kristina Busse** isn't exactly a snip at $40.00, but there's lots of interest here. The contributors, mostly but not all female, compare the characters and milieu of *Sherlock* with those created by Conan Doyle, and examine the relationship between what you might call the Holmesian or Sherlockian establishment and the suddenly very significant devotees who happily call themselves *fans* – a term that doesn't spring naturally to the lips of many older admirers of the great detective. (It's firmly established among science fiction enthusiasts, though, and there's a long history of shared interest there.) Other essays cover *Sherlock*'s place in the tradition of television adaptations, international interpretation of the series, and a good deal more.

Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations edited by **Lynnette Porter,** also priced at $40.00, puts Guy Ritchie's phenomenally successful cinema films under the microscope as well, but the papers are not limited to screen adaptations of Holmes. One considers his influence on the image of the scientific detective (in the series *Bones*, not shown on a major UK channel), and others look at recent attempts to write new stories, by Laurie King, Anthony Horowitz and others – but not, oddly, Andrew Lane – and, perhaps more interesting, new fiction inspired by Holmes but not actually about him, such as Steve Hockensmith's tales of Big Red and Old Red. Essays that particularly appeal to me are those dealing with 'cinematic tourism' in London, and the sometimes curious editing that *Sherlock* undergoes to render it acceptable to American viewers.

Joe Riggs is a mentalist, like Derren Brown and the Amazing Kreskin. In *The Real Sherlock Holmes: The Mysterious Methods and Curious History of a True Mental Specialist* (MX Publishing; £6.99/$9.95/€7.99) he packs a surprising amount of information into 60 pages. The connection with Sherlock Holmes is actually rather tenuous, but Mr Riggs's exposure of methods used by con artists is valuable, and I suspect that if we could follow his own methods for training ourselves to observe, to reason and to remember we'd achieve some of the qualities that we admire so much in the great detective.

After submitting her novel *Barefoot on Baker Street*, **Charlotte Anne Walters** set herself the task of re-reading all the short stories in the Canon, one a day, and writing about each of them on the same day for her blog at http://barefootonbakerstreet.wordpress.com/. For the book publication as *56 Sherlock Holmes Stories in 56 Days* (MX Publishing; £9.99/$16.95/€12.99) she has added her observations on the four long stories. Her remarks are often amusing, occasionally thought-provoking (why so little protest about the uncanonical back-story for Mary Morstan in Guy Ritchie's *Sherlock Holmes*? I suspect it's because so much else in the film is defiantly uncanonical), and always personal and entertaining. She seems unaware that the text in the *Penguin Complete Sherlock Holmes* is American, and differs in several instances from what was (and ought still to be) the standard British text. And I can assure her that marriage between first cousins was and is perfectly acceptable in British law – and church law, if it comes to that. Royalties from the book go to the Undershaw Preservation Trust.

In *Doctoring the Novel: Medicine and Quackery from Shelley to Doyle* (Ohio University Press; www.ohioswallow.com; $39.96) **Sylvia A Pamboukian** examines 19th century literature, from *Frankenstein* to the anonymous novel *Vernon Galbray, or, The Empiric: The History of a Quack Dentist* to reveal what she calls "the gray area" between legitimate medicine and quackery that exists even today but was perhaps more obvious then. The chapter on Conan Doyle is in two parts. The second contrasts the evil Dr Grimesby Roylott in 'The Speckled Band' with the good Dr Watson and almost-doctor Sherlock Holmes. The preceding part looks at the novel *The Stark Munro Letters*, which recounts in fictional form the newly qualified Conan Doyle's misadventures with that complex fraud Dr George Turnavine Budd. Professor Pamboukian's book throws light on a strangely neglected aspect of Victorian society.

Candace J Lewis & **Roger Donway** have edited *Saratoga Studies: Unraveling Threads from 'Silver Blaze' and 'The Greek Interpreter'* (Baker Street Irregulars; www.bakerstreetjournal.com/; $14.95) for the Sixtieth Anniversary running at Saratoga Springs of the BSI's 'Silver Blaze' race. The stimulating essays in this very nice 76-page volume, illustrated in full colour, cover the link between *A Study in Scarlet* and Epsom racecourse, that 'simple' calculation about the speed of a train, the delay that led to the death of Paul Kratides, the art in the Holmes

family's blood, and. the identification of Holmes's grandmother – the last by Roger Donway, who understandably, but to my mind mistakenly, believes that Sherlock's father was raised in the United States.

Don Libey in *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes* 'by Sherlock Holmes' (Campbell & Lewis, www.libeybooks.com, $15.00) avers that the Holmeses had lived for centuries on their estate in Kent. He also tells us that Sherlock and Mycroft had another brother, Wittrell, and a sister, Juliette (who, improbably, got an 'Upper First in chemistry at St Andrew's'). We learn that almost everything Dr Watson wrote was in some way disguised. Holmes never moved from Montague Street to Baker Street. Mrs Hudson was actually Mrs Hunter, the housekeeper employed by Holmes's landlord Mr Arbuthnot. Watson's only wife was Tegan Astley, a cytologist whom he met at Bart's. The Diogenes Club existed before Mycroft was born… Mr Libey gets away with this revisionist stuff – most of it – because there is serious thought behind it. It's well written and it's not just whimsy. The book is apparently only the first part of what Holmes intended to write, and it's short enough to leave us wondering what happened next.

Pilgrims to Switzerland may already have come across *Sherlock Holmes and The Giessbach Fall* by **Helmi Sigg** (Verlag Agentur Sigg; http://agentur.helmisigg.ch/node/23; SFR22.00 + postage – PayPal accepted). The novella, presented in both English and German, brings back happy memories of the Society's visit to the Grandhotel Giessbach in 1987. I can't do better than to quote Jonathan McCafferty: 'Congratulations are due to Helmi Sigg for a thoroughly entertaining Sherlock Holmes pastiche. In *Sherlock Holmes and the Giessbach Fall* Helmi Sigg has achieved the difficult task of recreating the language and style of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Even more, he has given the Holmesian world a great story in a wonderful setting of the grandest hotel in Switzerland at the height of its Victorian magnificence. There is much for both the general reader and the Sherlock Holmes enthusiast to enjoy in this rich and complex yarn.'

Very few writers have tried to imagine what sort of things Holmes got up to, and what sort of people he met during his years living as the disaffected Irish-American, Altamont. He began his 'pilgrimage' in Chicago, so it's natural that he would run into Diamond Jim Colosimo's criminal organisation and encounter one of its youngest members, Al Capone. Natural too that he would visit the Café de Champion on West 31st Street, to meet its famous owner, Jack Johnson, the first black world heavyweight champion. The great boxer is actually the central character in a powerful novel, *Anomalous: The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes featuring Jack Johnson and Alphonse Capone* by **Samuel Williams Jr** (MX Publishing, £9.99/$16.95/€12.99). Johnson's turbulent fortunes bring him to London, where two very different people, both black, have important rôles to play in a struggle to save both Johnson's life and the security of the realm. You'll recognise their names, I'm sure: Lucy Hebron and Steve Dixie…

Also new from MX is a clever tale, though told with many Americanisms, *Sherlock Holmes and the Element of Surprise: The Wormwood Scrubs Enigma* by **J Andrew Taylor** (£6.99/$9.95/€7.99).

Next time I'll review *The Adventures of Miss Boston: The First Female Detective* by **Antonin Reschal**, translated and introduced by Nina Cooper (Black Coat Press; www.blackcoatpress.com; $22.95/£14.99).

On 20 September, the sale at Freemans Auctioneers of Philadelphia will include a collection of Sherlock Holmes books, a letter from Joseph Bell, and the manuscript of 'Mr Sherlock Holmes to His Friends', published as the foreword to *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* (estimate $5,000-$8,000). The catalogue is on-line at www.freemansauction.com/asp/searchresults.asp?pg=1&ps=25, and the Holmes lots start at Lot 214.

It's good to report that Gerald Laing's magnificent statue of the detective, in storage since 2009, has been reinstated in Picardy Place, Edinburgh near Conan Doyle's birthplace.

The author lived in South Norwood from 1891 to 1894. The South Norwood Tourist Board is now offering **Conan Doyle Walks** – details are at www.southnorwoodtouristboard.wordpress.com.

Ian Payne notes that Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust (The Shakespeare Centre, Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6QW; www.shakespeare.org.uk/home.html) holds a collection of correspondence between Arthur Conan Doyle and **Bram Stoker**.

At the recent **TV Choice Awards**, *Sherlock* won Best Drama Series, and Benedict Cumberbatch was voted Best Actor.

At 8.45pm on 6 October at **The Times Cheltenham Festival**, Benedict Cumberbatch and Louise Brealey will discuss *Sherlock – A Thoroughly Modern Victorian*. Tickets are available from the Festival website at www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/find-events/literature/l053-benedict-cumberbatch-sherlock-a-thoroughly-modern-victorian.

And the 'teaser words' for Series Three of *Sherlock* are 'Rat', 'Wedding' and 'Bow'.

What may be the first UK production of **Kate Forgette's** play *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily* will be staged by Rochford District Players at the Palace Theatre, Westcliff-on-Sea from 3 to 6 October (01702 351135 or book at https://southendtheatres.org.uk).

Sherlock Wenlock has been bought for £6,500 by an anonymous businessman in Malvern, Worcestershire. The money raised by selling the eighty-four statues of the Olympic and Paralympic mascots goes to the Mayor's Fund for London, to help disadvantaged children.

Anne Baker of 9 Tudor Close, Penkhull, Stoke on Trent, Staffs ST4 5ER (01782 847284) has a run of back issues of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal* for sale, from 1964 to date, all in very good condition. She asks £3.00 - £5.00 for each, plus postage, depending on the age. Some have already been sold, but this could be your chance to fill the gaps in your collection, at a bargain price. The money goes to the Donkey Sanctuary.

The *Arthur Conan Doyle/Sherlock Holmes Symposium* at the **Newberry Library** in Chicago on 29 September will feature Messrs Lellenberg and Stashower talking about *'Dangerous Work'*, Carter Lupton on Professor Challenger, and Todd Rosenthal on 'Recreating Sherlock Holmes's Baker Street'. Admission is free and no reservations are required. Details are at www.newberry.org/09292012-arthur-conan-doyle-sherlock-holmes-symposium.

W R (Bill) Wagner, who died on 8 August, was the amiable and ever-supportive husband of the crime historian E J Wagner, author of *The Science of Sherlock Holmes*. Bill Wagner was a Sherlockian, a musician, and a nice guy. Our thoughts are with E J.

The actor **William Windom** died on 16 August, aged eighty-eight. In 2003 he played Dr Watson to David Warner's Holmes in the California Artists Radio Theatre production of Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes*.

Periodicals received. ***Baker Street Times***, September 2012 (**British Mensa's Sherlock Holmes Special Interest Group**, Neil Matthews, SIGSec & Editor, sigsofficer@btopenworld.com). ***The Camden House Journal***, August 2012 and September 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***The Gaslight Gazette***, August 2012 and September 2012 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, August 2012 and September 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***The Irregular Newsletter***, August 2012 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, SussexBN7 1PN). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, August 2012 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn & Winter 2012 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals***, August 2012 plus supplement ***Sherlock Holmes and Tattoos*** (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 2012 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, July 2012 and August 2012 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

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The lucky winner of the four Long Stories, unabridged on CD, read superbly by **Derek Jacobi**, is Ashley Mayo, who, like all the other entrants, knew that *The Valley of Fear* was illustrated in *The Strand Magazine* by **Frank Wiles**. Our thanks to AudioGO for kindly providing the prize. Please check the website at www.audiogo.co.uk..

This issue's capsule reviews are likely to be more capsule than usual, because so much is being published and so much is happening.

At about the same time as Jean and I were commissioned to write *The Sherlock Holmes Miscellany*, **Nick Utechin** was signing a contract for *Amazing & Extraordinary Facts: Sherlock Holmes* (David & Charles; www.davidandcharles.co.uk; 30 November; £9.99). Inevitably the two books cover a lot of the same ground, but in each case the treatment and the emphasis are individual. Nick's approach is broadly chronological, beginning with 'The Doyle Family' and concluding with 'Holmes in the 21st Century', and no passage (they aren't called chapters) is longer than three pages – but nothing is rushed and nothing is too condensed. Among the passages are illuminating snippets about, for instance, the Langham Hotel, portrayals of Mycroft Holmes, and Basil Rathbone's frustration at being typecast. The very brief observations on each of the sixty stories are pithy, pertinent and sometimes debatable – was the theft of part of the Beryl Coronet not a real crime? And how about the forced marriage in 'The Solitary Cyclist'? The writing throughout is, of course, exemplary. I'd never really thought deeply about the effect that the first short story must have had on its readers when it appeared in *The Strand Magazine*, but Nick Utechin has, and his assessment is masterly. (Watson tells us, though, that Irene Adler was a contralto, not a soprano. And, on a different matter, I'd love to know Nick's authority for giving Lestrade the first name George.) The illustrations, sadly, don't match the quality of the text. Otherwise this is as attractive a pocket volume as you could wish – an excellent introduction for the novice with plenty to engage and inform the experienced aficionado.

With *Sherlock: The Casebook* **Guy Adams** really comes into his own (BBC Books, www.eburypublishing.co.uk/bbcbooks.asp; 25 October; £14.99), though I suspect there's input from Messrs Moffat and Gatiss. Material from the six cases to date is presented in the form of John Watson's written notes, with photographs and other documents in full colour throughout – Mr Adams attempted something similar some years ago in *The Case Notes of Sherlock Holmes*, but this time it works. One reason is the sarcastic notes from Sherlock ('Only old ladies and pre-pubescent girls keep scrapbooks.') and John's replies ('It's not a scrapbook. And it was locked away in my desk drawer.'). If that were all, the book would be nothing more than a very handsome way of novelising the television series, but there's also an account of how the series came about, how each film relates to its source in the Canon, and how other dramatic presentations have treated the material. And I love the description of Sherlock as 'the Mozart of criminal investigation'.

In January I reviewed *Sherlock Holmes and Philosophy*. Now comes *The Philosophy of Sherlock Holmes* edited by **Philip Tallon** and **David Baggett** (University Press of Kentucky, www.kentuckypress.com; £35.50). Among the fifteen contributors I recognise just one, Dorothy L Sayers. The others are all a) American and b) alive. Sayers included her paper 'Aristotle on Detective Fiction' among the 'Studies in Sherlock Holmes' in her 1946 book *Unpopular Opinions*, but it's been rather unfairly neglected since and its appearance here is welcome. Her light but authoritative touch is echoed and exaggerated in the book's introduction, which, except for the brief abstract of each essay, is a complete spoof. It shows that the editors can take their subject seriously without being unnecessarily solemn or elitist, and it's good to see that all the essays that follow are both intelligent and accessible. The price is high, but until the end of the year DM readers can get a 20% discount at www.eurospanbookstore.com by entering the code: 'sherlock' at the checkout.

Our Society's latest book, published in conjunction with the recent momentous pilgrimage to Switzerland is *Return to the Reichenbach*, a collection of essays edited by **Carrie Chandler**, **Bob Ellis** and **Guy Marriott** (www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk; £17.50 UK/£20.00 or €50.00 Europe/$25.00 elsewhere – prices include postage). This splendid volume, handsomely illustrated in colour and black & white, opens with Tony Howlett's 1948 account, reprinted from the SHJ, of how he found the true site of the fatal duel at Reichenbach, and Ronald De Waal's memories of a 1974 trip to Europe, reprinted from the BSJ. John Doubleday creates a statue of Holmes in ice. There are pieces on Alpine transport, Corporal Schiess VC, possible originals for Moriarty and Gruner, spies at Interlaken, 'The Final Problem' on the screen, and much more, concluding with a tale by Auberon Redfearn in which Holmes tells Watson what really happened at the Falls. *Return to the Reichenbach* maintains and enhances the tradition of excellence for which our handbooks are rightly loved and respected.

At the end of the fourth novel, *Fire Storm*, Sherlock woke from a drugged sleep to find himself on board a ship bound for China. *Young Sherlock Holmes: Snake Bite* by **Andrew Lane** (Macmillan Children's Books, www.panmacmillan.com; £10.99) sees him separated from his friends and family, a stranger in a strange land, facing baffling mystery and deadly danger. Mr Lane somehow devises adventures for the youngster that sit comfortably within the precise period setting, that are suspenseful, thrilling and intelligent, and that credibly contribute towards the development of his character. It's no mean feat to write so convincingly of young Holmes in Shanghai, solving the problem of apparently impossible murders by snake venom, foiling a plot to destroy an American warship, learning oriental martial arts the hard way, and confronting one of the vilest criminals imaginable – and we can believe that all this contributes towards his becoming the man Dr Watson will later meet at Bart's Hospital. A cracking good read, as ever.

Back in 2001 the Guest of Honour at our Annual Dinner was the brilliant writer and comedian **Barry Cryer**, who proved to be a real devotee of the great detective. He's proved it again with *Mrs Hudson's Diaries: A View from the Landing at 221B*, written with his son, actor and writer **Bob Cryer** (The Robson Press, www.therobsonpress.com; £12.99). Given Cryer senior's record, you might expect a farcical pun-fest, but that's not what this nice little book is about. (And it's not one of those that have Mrs H as the true Baker Street detective, either.) There's plenty of humour here, but it arises partly from the contrast between Mrs H's sometimes uncomprehending but always down-to-earth reports and our knowledge of events as recorded by Dr Watson, and partly from the self-important annotations by one 'Oliver Philpott' – who may be related to Charles Pooter. Sarah Hudson herself is not a comic character: she's a real and very likable personality, whose life extends beyond the pages of the Canon into the world outside. Her story is sensational only in passing and it's told with charm and affection.

The title of *The 1895 Murder* by **Dan Andriacco** (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99/$16.95/€12.99) refers neatly to a play based on 'The Bruce-Partington Plans', written by Professor Sebastian McCabe of St Benignus College, Erin, Ohio. As he proved in *No Police Like Holmes* and *Holmes Sweet Holmes*, Mac is a devoted Sherlockian and a highly skilled detective, so when a man is shot dead outside the theatre where he's playing Mycroft Holmes, he and his brother-in-law

Jeff Cody are pleased to help find the killer. Well, mostly. Jeff's mind, naturally, is on his impending wedding and the need for diplomacy with his fiancée's rather unpredictable parents. It's a pleasure to visit Erin again and to watch the solving of a particularly baffling mystery.

Also new from MX are *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Edinburgh Haunting* by **David Wilson** (£9.99/$16.95/€12.99), in which Holmes and Watson visit the latter's cousin, the distinguished Edinburgh surgeon Dr Patrick Watson, and encounter corruption, murder, and Dr Joseph Bell, and *The Untold Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** (£9.99/$16.95/€12.99), seven cleverly plotted, engagingly sensational tales that would benefit from careful editing. There's also a new edition of *Barefoot on Baker Street* by **Charlotte Anne Walters**, which was enthusiastically reviewed by Alistair Duncan in the SHJ (£10.99/$18.95/€12.99).

Miss Boston: La Seule Détective-femme du Monde Entier was not among the great creations of the *fin de siècle* French pulps – and she certainly wasn't the only female sleuth in detective fiction. The people at Black Coat Press have done their usual nice job with *The Adventures of Miss Boston: The First Female Detective* by **Antonin Reschal**, translated and introduced by **Nina Cooper** (www.blackcoatpress.com; $22.95/£14.99), but whereas the exploits of, say, Fantômas, Judex and even Arsène Lupin may be deliberately fantastic, those of Ethel Boston, which take place in a New York that never existed, are unintentionally so, and they're important mainly as curios. Twenty were published in 1908 and 1909, of which eleven are translated here, including the first, 'The Murder of the World's Most Famous Detective'. Sherlock Holmes has been killed while investigating a kidnapping, and Miss B takes it upon herself to find his murderer.

Duckworth Overlook has issued a nice paperback edition of *Houdini and Conan Doyle* by **Christopher Sandford**, which I reviewed positively in DM 315 (www.ducknet.co.uk; £9.99). Next time I'll review *The Detective and The Woman: A Novel of Sherlock Holmes* by **Amy Thomas** (MX Publishing; £9.99/$16.95/€12.99).

My Dear Watson by **Margaret Park Bridges**, reviewed positively in DM 319, has been recorded unabridged by Blackstone Audio, read by **Rosalyn Landor** – Helen Stoner to Jeremy Brett's Holmes in Granada TV's *The Speckled Band* (www.blackstoneaudio.com; $17.47).

Doug Wrigglesworth recommends *Up and Down* by **Terry Fallis**, a novel of international PR whose protagonist is 'a *serious* Sherlockian and bibliophile' (Douglas Gibson, www.mcclelland.com; Cdn$22.99).

Steve Emecz notes that *Sherlock's Home: The Empty House* (MX; £9.99), royalties from which go to the **Undershaw Preservation Trust**, is to be released in Russia by Amphora (www.amphora.ru/).

The September *Sherlockian E-Times*, the on-line catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties**, is at www.sherlockholmes.com/e_times12-9.html.

Kevin Meade at meadekevin@eircom.net invites offers for a copy, 'in very good condition considering its age', of *The Strand Magazine*, January-June 1893, containing 'The Cardboard Box, 'The Yellow Face', The Stock-broker's Clerk', 'The Gloria Scott', 'The Musgrave Ritual' and 'The Reigate Squire'.

Douglas Johnstone notes that the classic 1937 German comedy *Der Mann der Sherlock Holmes War* will be released on DVD by Cornerstone Media on 29 October under the English title *The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes*. There's no indication of subtitles.

At the Devil's Punchbowl Hotel at Hindhead on 23 December, the company called **Don't Go Into the Cellar** will present *Ho Ho Holmes*, a new story of Sherlock Holmes with a seasonal touch. This free show will be in support of the Undershaw Preservation Trust. Donations to help the Trust's operating expenses will be gratefully accepted on the evening. In addition, The Devil's Punchbowl Hotel will generously donate a portion of proceeds from food and drink sales during the evening, as well as from the lodging reserved by attendees (be sure to mention *Ho Ho Holmes* when making the reservation). Auctions to benefit the campaign are also planned. See www.saveundershaw.com/.

In case you're not already aware, the **Baker Street Babes** have organised what should be a rather wonderful event for 17 November at the Prince Charles Cinema in London. **Sherlopalooza**, from 10.00am to 8.00pm, will include a screening of the entire *Sherlock* series II, with the chance to question the composer **Michael Price** and the writer of Sherlock's, John's and Molly's blogs, **Joe Lidster**, plus a cosplay competition and a raffle, both with some very desirable prizes. Information is at http://sherlopalooza.tumblr.com/, or for help please contact events@bakerstreetbabes..com.

Adrian Cowdry (jbohmss@aol.com) has some rare Sherlock Holmes film posters and lobby cards for sale, including two Rathbone one-sheet posters, *Pursuit to Algiers* and *The Pearl of Death*, and the only known copy of the one-sheet for the 1932 *Sign of Four*, with Arthur Wontner.

A *Sherlock* version of the classic board game **Cluedo** is available for pre-order on www.amazon.co.uk and www.bbcshop.com. Release date should be 21 October.

The website of the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd has been entirely overhauled. It's at /www.conandoyleestate.co.uk/.

Elementary, starring **Jonny Lee Miller** & **Lucy Liu** as Holmes and Watson, will premiere in the UK on 23 October at 9pm on Sky Living.

We've recently learned of the death our member **Dr Steven Jackson**, former senior lecturer at the University of Natal. Living in South Africa, he rarely attended meetings, but he contributed articles on Holy Peters and on Bertillonage to *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*. Dr Jackson died on 26 May, at the age of sixty-five.

Jerry Nelson, one of Jim Henson's Muppeteers, died on 23 August aged seventy-eight. Among the characters he created for *The Muppet Show* and *Sesame Street* is the Holmes spoof 'Sherlock Hemlock'.

Before marrying the Duke, **Nicole, Duchess of Bedford** had been a member of the French Resistance and a television producer. In 1954/55 she was, as Nicole Milinaire, Sheldon Reynolds' associate producer on the *Sherlock Holmes* series, with Ronald Howard and Howard Marion-Crawford. She died on 7 September aged ninety-two.

That fine actor **John Moffatt** died on 10 September, two weeks before his ninetieth birthday. With his mellifluous voice, he seemed a natural successor to John Gielgud when he played the detective on Radio 4 in *Sherlock Holmes vs Dracula*, but his major contribution was to be in a series by Grant Eustace, as Dr Watson to Roy Marsden's Holmes – a part he also played opposite Dinsdale Landen in *Sherlock's Last Case*. His other rôles included Thaddeus Sholto to Richard Hurndall's Holmes and Lysander Stark with Clive Merrison. In 1982 he directed Shaughan Seymour as Holmes in John Kane's play *Murder, Dear Watson*.

Michael Doyle, MBt, who died on 25 September aged eighty-two, was a stalwart of the Stormy Petrels of British Columbia and a member of our own Society, though I think he was only once able to attend a meeting. He was also a generous, intelligent and charming gentleman.

Periodicals received. ***Cri Bar Crier***, October 2012 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***The Baker Street Bugle***, September 2012 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Joan & Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7BA). ***The Formulary***, September 2012 and ***Book Reviews*** supplement (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Highcroft Cottage, 14 Totteridge Common, London N10 2EB). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, September 2012 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***The Gaslight Gazette***, October 2012 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, September 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, October 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, irregularly (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***Mayday Mayday,*** September 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Late Summer 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, September 2012 (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

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As Randall Stock notes in his foreword, a chronology is not a biography, but *A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, May 22nd 1859 to July 7th 1930*, the *magnum opus* of **Brian W Pugh**, is more valuable than most of the published lives of Conan Doyle. The new edition adds about fifty pages, seven of them containing a chronological summary of the journal recently published as *'Dangerous Work': Diary of an Arctic Adventure* (enthusiastically reviewed in DM 325). Here are lists of ACD's various homes, his sporting career, the burial places of the Doyles, statues and plaques, and more, including some fascinating photographs. But the essence of the book is in the orderly calendar of Sir Arthur's life, in which innumerable ambiguities and uncertainties are authoritatively resolved. Brian Pugh has created that rare thing, a genuinely essential work of reference (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £14.99/ $22.95/ €16.99).

Oscar Wilde and the Murders at Reading Gaol by **Gyles Brandreth** (John Murray, 338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH; £18.99) was launched at the Cadogan Hotel, where Wilde was arrested on 6 April 1895. His favourite champagne, Perrier-Jouët, was served, his grandson Merlin Holland read John Betjeman's famous poem, and Michael Seeney of the Oscar Wilde Society observed that for almost the first time all three of the society's Patrons were in the same room – Merlin Holland, Stephen Fry and Gyles Brandreth! And what of the book? The Oscar Wilde Murder Mysteries started superbly and, amazingly, get better and better. The first four were narrated by Robert Sherard, and the fifth by Arthur Conan Doyle, but only Wilde himself could tell of the two years in which he endured penal servitude with hard labour, of the deprivations, the temptations, the small kindnesses, the conspiracies and the cruelties. When an unpopular warder is killed the prison governor reluctantly requests Wilde's help, only to reject his suggestions. But when the chaplain is murdered, the new governor turns for help to Reading Gaol's most notorious inmate. The fictional crime and detection fit seamlessly alongside the squalid reality of prison life and the complex genius that was Oscar Wilde. The result is both a dazzling detective story and an excellent historical novel.

We encounter Wilde again in *The Singular Exploits of Sherlock Holmes* by **Alan Stockwell** (Vesper Hawk Publishing, www.vesperhawk.com ; £7.95, $12.95 or €9.95). Like Mr Stockwell's earlier collection *The Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes*, these stories are firmly 'in the traditional manner', apart from the occasional introduction of 'certain characters and events of the time' – and the fact that one story, 'A Christmas Interlude', omits Holmes altogether. But the voice throughout is that of John H Watson (or an acceptable imitation), the setting is true to the period, and the plots are inventive. I particularly like 'The Ancient Ring of the Prophet', which tells the tale of the politician, the lighthouse and the trained cormorant.

Our sort of scholarship is, I maintain, entirely valid, but it isn't the only way to approach the chronicles of Sherlock Holmes. *Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle: Multi-Media Afterlives*, twelve essays presented at a conference at Hull in 2009, edited by **Sabine Vanacker** and **Catherine Wynne** (Palgrave Macmillan, www.palgrave.com; £50.00) is the fifth recent collection of academic papers to come my way. Conan Doyle would be bewildered by the serious attention now paid to what he saw as some of his least important work. This book opens, pleasingly, with a piece on Holmes in advertising by Amanda J Field, winner of the Tony & Freda Howlett Literary Award for *England's Secret Weapon: The Wartime Films of Sherlock Holmes*. Clive Bloom and Andrew Lycett consider Conan Doyle's spiritualism and his belief in fairies, which say more about him than we may think. Neil McCaw, Academic Director of the Conan Doyle Collection at Portsmouth, looks at the Granada TV series from a political standpoint… Most of the papers are intellectually stimulating, some are challenging – all are interesting.

Since *Sherlock Holmes vs Dracula: The Adventure of the Sanguinary Count* was first published in 1978, **Loren D Estleman** has become a highly respected crime writer. Others have matched the Master Detective with the King Vampire – Fred Saberhagen, David Stuart Davies, Stephen Seitz, Gerry O'Hara – but Mr Estleman was there first. And now his novel is reprinted by Titan Books (www.titanbooks.com; £7.99). As on my first reading, the opening paragraphs strike me as unnecessarily insulting to Bram Stoker. Dr Watson complains that *Dracula* is a 'spurious monograph' and that 'Professor Van Helsing induced Stoker to deliberately falsify the facts'. Once past that, though, it's clear that Mr Estleman holds Stoker in high esteem and is thoroughly familiar with his great work. Unlike some, he takes surprisingly few liberties with Stoker's plot, slotting Holmes, Dr & Mrs Watson, and Lestrade into place so deftly that we can cheerfully ignore the detective's well-known outburst: 'Rubbish, Watson, rubbish! What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts? It's pure lunacy.'

In *The Many Watsons* (MX Publishing; £7.99/ $11.95/ €9.99) **Kieran McMullen** takes a look at fifty-four actors, male and female, who have played Dr Watson or a Watson character on screen. It's good to see the Watsons getting their share of attention, though the text needs proofreading, and I could wish that the actors had been dealt with in alphabetical or chronological order. Should there be a second edition, I hope Mr McMullen will include some at least of the radio Watsons – Leigh Lovell, Alfred Shirley, Norman Shelley, Michael Williams, Andrew Sachs, Larry Albert… Royalties from this light, lively collection of essays will go to the **Undershaw Preservation Trust**.

Also new from MX Publishing, and definitely worth a look: *Sherlock Holmes: Have Yourself a Chaotic Little Christmas* by **Gwendolyn Frame** – thirty-one tales, charming, poignant, thrilling and funny (£6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99). *Sherlock Holmes and the case of the Bulgarian Codex* by **Tim Symonds** – a literate and exciting short novel of intrigue in the Balkans (£7.99/ $12.95/ €8.99). *Sherlock Holmes and the Missing Snowman* by **David Ruffle** and **Rikey Austin** – the author of the Lyme Regis pastiches and the creator of *Alice's Bear Shop* collaborate on a delightful illustrated children's story (£6.99). *Sherlock Holmes and the Lyme Regis Trials* is due on 10 December (£6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99).

The Baskerville Inheritance by **Teresa Collard** (favourably reviewed in DM 324) is now available as an eBook (PDF for Adobe Digital Editions) for £2.99 from www.lulu.com/shop/teresa-collard/the-baskerville-inheritance/ebook/product-20325219.html.

AudioGO, 'The home of BBC Audiobooks', whose releases include the epic Radio 4 complete dramatisation of the Canon, is now on-line at www.audiogo.com/uk.

A wonderfully encouraging sign of the way that our Great Game is expanding and developing is *The One Fixed Point in a Changing Age: Essays on Sherlockiana by Online Fandom*, written exclusively by members of the tumblr and internet fandom of Sherlock Holmes. The idea was conceived by **The Baker Street Babes** to give a voice and the beginnings of a body of work for the younger generation of Holmes fans. It will be published by Wessex Press. There's a call for entries at http://bakerstreetbabes.com/call-for-entries-the-one-fixed-point-in-a-changing-age-essays-on-sherlockiana-by-online-fandom/.

The current *Sherlockian E-times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties**, online at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times12-10.html, is full of interest and temptation.

In December *The District Messenger* will be thirty years old. Thanks to the publishers Simon & Schuster, there'll be an anniversary competition to win signed copies of **Robert Ryan**'s novel *Dead Man's Land*, in which Dr Watson proves his worth as a detective on the Western Front.

The resurgence of Holmesian drama in the UK continues. At **St Ambrose Church Hall** in Leyland, Lancashire from 4 to 8 December, St Ambrose Players will stage *Sherlock Holmes: The Panto-Crime*. Tickets from Sheila Kenny on 01772 452296. Details are at www.stambroseplayers.co.uk/St_Ambrose_Players/Home.html. On the same dates at The Place in Bedford, the **Swan Theatre Company** present that lovely spoof *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Steven Canny** & **John Nicholson** (www.theplacebedford,org.uk; phone 01234 354321).

A reminder that at the Devil's Punchbowl Hotel, Hindhead on 23 December, **Don't Go Into the Cellar** will present *Ho Ho Holmes*, a new story of Sherlock Holmes with a seasonal touch. This free show will be in support of the **Undershaw Preservation Trust**, and donations will be gratefully accepted. The Devil's Punchbowl Hotel will donate a portion of proceeds from the evening's food and drink sales. Fund-raising auctions are also planned. See www.saveundershaw.com/.

Ben Eagle is currently training at the Central School of Speech & Drama. To help with his fees, **Benedict Cumberbatch** has kindly donated a deerstalker hat, signed in silver ink, which will be auctioned on 12 December at Bonham's in Knightsbridge. The hat is Lot 140 in the Entertainment Memorabilia sale, with an estimate of £300-£600. www.bonhams.com/auctions/19801/lot/140/?list_search_query=1&lang=en_gb&back_to_year=2003&sale_no=19801&limit=9999&query=benedict&create_facets=False&page_anchor=q1_1%3Dbenedict%26m1%3D1%26b1%3Dlist.

Gautier Cazenave, writer-director of the projected *Sherlock Holmes vs Frtankenstein*, which will reunite **Nicholas Rowe** and **Alan Cox** as Holmes and Watson, notes that the film needs backers. See http://marteaufilmsproduction.com/site/pages/projets.php?varPage=2&varform=2&varlang=eng if you're interested in investing.

Paramount plans to remake *Young Sherlock Holmes*, with the original writer, **Chris Columbus**, producing. **Evan Spiliotopoulos** is a likely choice to write the screenplay.

Word is that production of the third series of *Sherlock* will begin in March, with transmission possibly not until 2014. Meanwhile two more episodes are planned for the first series of *Elementary*, bringing it up to twenty-four.

Suzanne Adams has created a collection of handmade and handpainted Christmas ornaments relating to Traditional Holmes, and another collection relating to BBC TV's *Sherlock*, all available from her Etsy Shop at www.etsy.com/shop/VibrantAdventure. Some items are also available individually as either ornaments or magnets. *[*There's other Holmes material offered by craftworkers on Etsy at www.etsy.com.*]*

This was received today from PR Linija, a marketing agency in Latvia. The website at www.holmes.lv is impressive. *'On January 5th, 2012 it will already be the second time, that Riga will celebrate **Sherlock Holmes Birthday.** The project, created in 2012 by Riga marketing agency PR LINIJA and supported by many enthusiasts and fans of the literature character is aimed to bring to our city a colourful and unforgettable atmosphere, to create many interactive events, attract tourists from all over the world and, of course, to celebrate the Birthday of best known and beloved investigator on the planet – Sherlock Holmes.'* Baker Street and some other exteriors for the classic Lenfilms series with Vasily Livanov and Vitaly Solomin were shot in Riga.

In the BBC2 series *Great Continental Railway Journeys*, **Michael Portillo** follows routes in *Bradshaw's 1913 Continental Railway Guide*. On Thursday 29 November he's in Switzerland, ascending the Jungfrau, visiting Meiringen, and paying homage to Sherlock Holmes at the Reichenbach Falls.

The Bartitsu Society has a link to the BBC Online video clip of our Swiss Pilgrimage at www.bartitsu.org/index.php/tag/sherlock-holmes-society/, and coverage of the Bartitsu/Baritsu display at **Marylebone Library** and the demonstration by James Marwood and George Stokoe.

Prospect magazine has posted a good long report on the Swiss trip by **Ed Docx** at www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/sherlock-holmes-pilgrims-conan-doyle/.

The Spanish paper *El Mundo* celebrates Holmes's 125th anniversary at www.elmundo.es/especiales/2012/cultura/sherlock-holmes/los-hechos.html. There are essays, artwork, photos, interactive material, video clips and a great deal of input from our Society.

On Saturday 24 November, the **Arthur Conan Doyle Collection (Lancelyn Green Bequest)** at Portsmouth held an event at the Central Library to celebrate 125 years of *A Study in Scarlet*. Richard Green's copy of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887 will remain on display throughout December and January. Randall Stock's annotated checklist and census of *Beeton's* is at www.bestofsherlock.com/beetons-christmas-annual.htm.

The Deerstalkers of Welshpool, headed by Roy Upton-Holder, are determined to increase the number of languages in which the Holmes stories are published by having them translated into Welsh. The society's website is at www.sherlockholmeswelshpool.com.

Ron Tiner, who created the splendid painting for last year's 'Blue Carbuncle' Christmas card, needs a photo of the long-demolished houses originally numbered 69-82 Baker Street, between George Street and King Street on the west side of Baker Street. So far all sources have failed. If you can help, please contact me in the first instance.

Terri and David Haugen of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** report on the first *Sherlock Seattle Convention* on the SOBs' excellent website at www.bestofsherlock.com/beetons-christmas-annual.htm.

The Baker Street Babes' latest podcast is a recording of the Q&A session with *Sherlock* composer **Michael Price** and blog-writer **Joe Lidster** made at the Babes' wonderful *Sherlopalooza* day. You'll find the link, and a link to wearsherlock's video recording, at http://bakerstreetbabes.com/. (Joe Lidster writes the blogs for John, Molly and Sherlock. See, e.g. www.johnwatsonblog.co.uk/.)

The Baker Street Chronicle, the very stylish journal of **Die Deutsche Sherlock Holmes Gesellschaft**, is well worth a look. The German language version of the *Sherlock* special issue is sold out, but the English edition is still available from www.baker-street-chronicle.de/.

Cyril Millot reports that **Le Cercle Holmésien de Paris** held its first meeting on 10 October. The Cercle has an internet presence at http://cercleholmesiendeparis.tumblr.com/.

I was saddened to learn that our American member **John E Weber** died on 26 October at the age of sixty-five. John crossed the pond to attend the occasional meeting, and participated in several of our excursions, but he'll probably be best known for his excellent contributions over the years to *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*. His book *Under the Darkling Sky: A Chrono-Geographic Odyssey Through the Holmesian Canon* was unanimously voted the winner of this year's Tony & Freda Howlett Literary Award, which was presented to him during the Society's visit to Switzerland. He played the Game with skill, intelligence and humour.

Larry Hagman, who died on 23 November aged eighty-one, will forever be associated with the rôle of J R Ewing in *Dallas*. In 1976, in an adequate TV movie called *The Return of the World's Greatest Detective*, he played Sherman Holmes, a policeman who suffers a blow on the head and believes himself to be Sherlock Holmes.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2012 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Camden House Journal***, October 2012 and November 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Fall 2012 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, November 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, irregularly (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***Mayday Mayday,*** November 2012 with *Elementary* supplement (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Petrel Flyer***, November 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals***, November 2012 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). ***The Scion***, Autumn 2012 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, October 2012 (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

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e-mail: shjournal@btinternet.com

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

As I mentioned in the last issue, *The District Messenger* is an almost unbelievable thirty years old as of this month. You can follow its progress, if you're interested, on the Society's website, where there's a complete archive at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/district.php.

On 3 January, Simon & Schuster will publish *Dead Man's Land*, a novel by **Robert Ryan** in which Dr Watson proves his worth as a detective on the Western Front (www.simonandschuster.co.uk/; £12.99). The noted crime writer Mark Billingham calls it a 'hugely powerful depiction of wartime horror, a cunning murder mystery and a brilliant re-invention of Dr John Watson which sees Sherlock Holmes's sidekick finally take centre stage in what I hope will be the start of a long-running series. Conan Doyle would most definitely approve!'

The publisher is kindly providing six signed copies as prizes for a Pearl Anniversary competition. To enter, just tell us what Sherlock Holmes said (in the canon) that makes it certain that Watson served as a medical officer in the Great War. Send your answer to me by 20 January. Winners will be chosen at random from the correct entries.

David Ruffle completes his 'Lyme Regis trilogy' with *Sherlock Holmes and the Lyme Regis Trials* (MX Publishing; £6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99). The title refers in part to the difficulties overcome by the pioneer palaeontologist Mary Anning, a poorly educated woman in a world dominated by men, but principally to top-secret naval trials, which lead to espionage and murder. This pleasant volume is completed by a distinctly off-beat account of the case of the Grosvenor Square furniture van.

New from the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, Toronto Public Library (c/o Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4; www.acdfriends.org/) is the text of the 2011 Cameron Hollyer Lecture, *Sherlock Holmes and Shakespeare* by **Tom Ue**. It's good to have these papers made available to those of us who haven't been able to attend the lectures.

'Some Aspects of Fuel Technology', published in the Winter 2012 issue of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, is one of forty or so pithy and pertinent essays in *The Sherlock Holmes Stories and Combustion Science* by **Clifford Jones**. Copies of the 120-page book are available at £10.00 from the author at j.c.jones@eng.abdn.ac.uk.

Don Hobbs reports a new translation of the most famous volume in the Canon: *Ky Teylu Baskerville*, published by Evertype (www.evertype.com/) and available from Amazon.co.uk at £11.95, is in the Cornish language. The translator is **Nicholas Williams**.

Due on 17 January from Canongate (www.canongate.tv; £16.99) is *Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes* by **Maria Konnikova**. 'What is it that separates Sherlock Holmes from his long-suffering friend and side-kick Dr John Watson? What makes Holmes such a superior detective, able to piece together clues and solve problems that seem elementary to Watson only in hindsight? And can we - most of us Watsons ourselves - ever harness a bit of Holmes's extraordinary powers of mind, not to solve crimes, but simply to improve our lives at work and home?... Writing for Holmes fans and casual readers alike, Konnikova has translated what so many of us love about the great detective into a remarkable guide to upgrading the mind.' Even before publication, Ms Konnikova's book has attracted enthusiasm from Holmesians and psychologists alike.

In 1976 a forensic investigator and long-time Sherlockian named **Thomas F Hanratty** produced *Crime Scene Sketches: Reproduced in Facsimile from the Pen and Ink Drawings in the Notebook of a Private Enquiry Agent*, illuminating eighteen of the chronicles in the style of the great Hans Gross. Long out of print, the contents of the book are freely available on-line at http://redbirdstudio.com/CrimeScenes/ and are highly recommended.

Mr Hanratty's latest book is *The Singular Adventure of Charles Goodfoote: A Thrilling Tale of a Perilous Escapade Set in the Old West* 'by Charles Goodfoote, edited by John H Watson MD and Thomas F Hanratty' (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform; £9.35). 'When a brutal murder brings the teenage Sherlock Holmes to America, Charles Goodfoote, the crown jewel of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, is assigned as his bodyguard. Teaming up with an Apache woman-warrior, a beautiful British spy, and a hard-nosed US Marshal, the duo fight a master-villain in the hardscrabble town of Disenchantment, Arizona Territory. Combining early forensic science with Native American skills, the two uncover a fiendish plot of global magnitude, but suffer the pain of betrayal.' The novel is available from Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com.

Other new and forthcoming titles include: *How to Think Like Sherlock* by **Daniel Smith** (Michael O'Mara Books, £9.99); *Sherlock Holmes: A Case at Christmas and Other Adventures* by **Nigel Scott** (Book Guild Ltd; £16.99); *The Scientific Sherlock Holmes: Cracking the Case with Science and Forensics* by **James O'Brien** (OUP USA, Feb 2013; £18.99); *From 221B Baker Street to Platform 9 3/4* by **Stephen Halliday** (The History Press Ltd, 1 Mar 2013; £9.99); *The Baker Street Translation: A Mystery* by **Michael Robertson** (Minotaur Books, April 2013; £15.61).

And there are new e-books from Endeavour Press (http://endeavourpress.com), available as Kindles from Amazon. The sleuth in *The Case of the Antiquarian's Study* by **G W Kolkitto** is a friendly rival of Sherlock Holmes, one Sebastian Symes. *Mycroft Holmes: The Case of the Romanov Pearls* is the latest novella about Sherlock's brother by **David Dickinson**. *Doctor Watson's Bout* by **Patrick Mercer** is by way of a sequel to Mr Mercer's well-received *Dr Watson's War*.

As always, there's lots of good stuff in the current *Sherlockian E-times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties**, online at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times12-11.html - not least a new story by **David Marcum**, 'Descent into Madness: the Truth about Mary Russell'. Mr Marcum recognises the high quality of the popular novels by **Laurie King** that began with *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*, but like many of us he rejects the notion that Miss Russell was married to Sherlock Holmes. 'Descent into Madness' offers a neat solution to our problem, and it's a good story in its own right.

Nathan Grainger has a small but select number of Holmesian items that he wishes to sell: twenty-seven in all – books, magazines, pictures, hats, games, Jeremy Brett's autograph and some others. You can get full details from Mr Grainger at nathangrainger1974@hotmail.com.

On 21 and 22 June 2013, there'll be a conference held at the University of London Senate House, under the title *Sherlock Holmes: Past and Present*. The organisers, **Jonathan Cranfield** and **Tom Ue** invite proposals for papers, which should be sent by email to both Jonathan at J.L.Cranfield@ljmu.ac.uk and Tom at ue_tom@hotmail.com by 15 January 2013. Projected abstracts of 350 words should be accompanied by biographies 150 words.

On 3 January 1953 Carleton Hobbs and ex-Detective Inspector Robert Fabian unveiled a plaque, erected by the Baritsu Chapter of the BSI, on

the exterior wall of the Criterion restaurant in Piccadilly Circus, to commemorate John Watson's chance encounter with young Stamford – a meeting that was to have such momentous consequences. Alas, the plaque was stolen some years later, though one was erected inside in 1981. Thanks to **Takeshi Shimizu**, a replacement for the original plaque, this one erected by the Japan Sherlock Holmes Club, will be unveiled at 4.00pm on 20 January 2013.

Portsmouth City Museum has received £80,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund and £10,000 from the City Council to help bring the **Arthur Conan Doyle Collection (Lancelyn Green Bequest)** to a wider public through the *Sharing Sherlock – The story of a Pompey lad* project. There'll be a new online exhibition and study packs for schools. Thirty outreach and education workshops will be held in Portsmouth and the wider area. And twenty volunteers will be recruited to lead the workshops and develop the online material.

Bert Coules, instigator and chief writer of the magnificent Radio 4 dramatisation of the complete Canon, with Clive Merrison as Holmes and Michael Williams as Watson, reports that the BBC Holmes section of his website has been undergoing 'a bit of a wash and brush-up' and is now at www.merrisonholmes.com. He says, 'Not all the pages are active yet, but the actors' biogs, full cast lists, background notes, transmission details and other basic stuff is there' – and he adds, 'If anyone takes a look and spots a mistake or several, I'd appreciate knowing about it.' You can contact him at mail@bertcoules.co.uk.

Bert was also the sole writer of the subsequent *Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, again with Clive Merrison, and with Andrew Sachs a perfect replacement for the late Michael Williams.

Carol Russell notes that a production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **F Andrew Leslie** will be staged at the Cloverdale Performing Arts Center in Cloverdale, California on the following days: 22, 23 & 24 February and 1, 2 & 3 March. Full information is at www.cloverdaleperformingarts.com.

On 15 March at the Towngate Theatre in Basildon, **Andrew Meller** will present his well-received one-man show *An Audience with Sherlock Holmes: Selected Tales from a Consulting Detective's Notebook*. The box office number is 01268 465465, and the theatre's website is at www.towngatetheatre.co.uk. Mr Meller's website is at www.andrewmeller.com.

Something less straightforward will be at the Unity Theatre in Liverpool on 20 & 21 March. 'The acclaimed National Theatre actor Robert Stephens said to the star of TV's *Sherlock Holmes* Jeremy Brett, "Do not undertake the role of Sherlock Holmes. He will be your undoing!" "You must drop it, Mr Holmes, you really must. It will be your undoing," said Professor James Moriarty upon his first encounter with Sherlock Holmes. Somewhere between the fact and the fiction Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's greatest creation stole the soul of Jeremy Brett, the actor who would become the embodiment of the Baker Street Sleuth. **The Curse of Sherlock Holmes** follows Jeremy as he fights for his sanity… his life.' You have been warned! The theatre's website is at www.unitytheatreliverpool.co.uk/.

This is from Scott Monty's admirable **Baker Street Blog** at http://www.bakerstreetblog.com/:

Sherlock Holmes occasionally enlisted the help of the Baker Street Irregulars, the 'unofficial force' that could 'go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone.' So too it would seem that the new Google+ Sherlock Holmes Community aims to have us do the very same: to share what you know and what you see about Sherlock Holmes - on the web, in books, on the screen - and create content and lively discussions. The Google+ platform is open to anyone with a Gmail account, and if you don't have one, it's free to create. You'll have the opportunity to share photos, videos and other links from the web, as well as create posts and discussions. You can create events, add them to your calendar and invite others - think of the possibilities when running Sherlock Holmes society events! The Sherlock Holmes Community is divided into categories by media type, interest, etc. and can accommodate just about anything that the average (or above-average!) Sherlockian throws at it: https://plus.google.com/communities/114565123495685504221?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzEmail&utm_content=45933&utm_campaign=0

Scott also manages, in collaboration with Burt Wolder, the Holmesian podcast **I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere**, which you'll find at www.ihearofsherlock.com/.

The other grand podcast is that of **The Baker Street Babes**, at http://bakerstreetbabes.com/. The latest is a reading of 'The Blue Carbuncle' by **Lyndsay Faye**, BSI, ASH and Babe.

We'll have to wait some months yet for the third series of *Sherlock*; meanwhile the best way to keep up with developments is via the unofficial but (rightly) approved website *Sherlockology*, at www.sherlockology.com. And **Steven Moffat** has ensured that there will be Holmesian echoes in the *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, entitled *The Snowmen*.

From Peter Blau: 'The Société Sherlock Holmes de France has found **Heroes and Villains Miniatures**, who offer a pair of attractive miniature busts of Holmes and Watson (€39.95), sculpted in resin at 1/12 scale by Raúl García Latorre; the company is in Spain, and their web-site at www.tinyurl.com/c8xcxa3 has detailed instructions for assembling and painting the busts.'

Jacques Barzun, co-author of the Edgar Award-winning critique *A Catalogue of Crime: Being a Reader's Guide to the Literature of Mystery, Detection, and Related Genres*, died on 25 October, aged a hundred and four. His wide cultural interests produced several more books and articles on detective fiction in general and Sherlock Holmes in particular.

Joe Melia, who died on 20 October aged seventy-seven, had a small but telling role as Jefferson Hope's transvestite friend in the 1968 BBC TV film of *A Study in Scarlet*, with Peter Cushing and Nigel Stock. His menacing Jonathan Small in the 1983 *Sign of Four* with Ian Richardson and David Healy was overshadowed by John Thaw's performance in the far superior Granada production of 1987.

Roger Hammond, an excellent Jabez Wilson in the 1985 film of *The Red-Headed League*, was equally impressive as Jephro Rucastle in *The Copper Beeches* for Radio 4 in 1991, with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. He died on 8 November aged seventy-six.

Periodicals received. ***The Alfalfa Gazette***, December 2012 (**Friends of the Soldier Named Murray**, Jody Baker, josiahbaker@bkhcw.com). ***Cri Bar Crier***, October 2012 & December 2012 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***For the Sake of the Trust: The Baker Street Irregulars Trust Newsletter***, Fall 2012 (**The BSI Trust**, Marshall S Berdan, 2015 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033, USA). ***The Gaslight Gazette***, November 2012 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, November 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA).

Ineffable Twaddle, December 2012 & January 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, irregularly (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***The Magic Door***, Autumn 2012 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 20 December 2012 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***The Torr***, Autumn 2012 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsburg, Switzerland).

The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Winter 2012 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, c/o Yours Truly).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2012 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

The Compliments of the Season

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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e-mail: shjournal@btinternet.com

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At our Annual Dinner at the House of Commons, the announcement that our Membership Secretary (and Holmes tribute artiste) **David Jones** was the recipient this year of the Tony Howlett Award was greeted with unanimous approbation, though circumstances unfortunately prevented David and Audrey from attending the dinner.

In New York, Wiggins announced eight investitures into the Baker Street Irregulars: **Rosane McNamara** ('Lady Mary Brackenstall'), **Tom Horrocks** ('Colonel Sebastian Moran'), **Mark Levy** ('Don Murillo'), **Daniel Moss** ('Culverton Smith'), **Stefano Guerrera** ('Count Negretto Sylvius'), **Philip Cunningham** (Abe Slaney'), **Jan Burke** ('The Most Winning Woman') and **Franklin Saksena** ('Jonathan Small'). The Two-Shilling Award was presented to **Michael H Kean**.

Many thanks to Simon & Schuster for generously sponsoring our anniversary competition by providing six signed copies of *Dead Man's Land* by **Robert Ryan** (www.simonandschuster.co.uk/; £12.99).. We know Dr Watson served as a medical officer in the Great War because towards the end of 'His Last Bow', when conflict is clearly inevitable, Holmes says, 'As to you, Watson, you are joining up with your old service, as I understand, so London won't be out of your way.' (Or as some texts have it, 'joining us with your old service'.) The names drawn from the deerstalker were: **MC Black**, **Molly Carr**, **Greg Darak**, **Susan Z Diamond**, **Oscar Ross** and **Nick Utechin**. Congrats to all!

In 'The Sign of the Broken Sword' Father Brown asked, 'Where does a wise man hide a pebble?' The answer: 'On the beach.' And where better to hide a corpse than a battlefield? When, amid the slaughter of the Western Front, Major Watson of the Army Medical Corps notices that one body bears unusual wounds, his curiosity is piqued. So is his desire to redress an evident injustice. Sherlock Holmes is far away, but Watson still has it in him to be an irregular investigator when more bodies are found with similar injuries. He has experienced warfare before, in Afghanistan, but that was more than thirty years ago, and things in Flanders are unimaginably worse, even without the prospect of a vicious killer with a personal agenda. The characterisation in *Dead Man's Land* is utterly credible, as is the description of life in the trenches – and the necessary concentration on the medical service is a fascinating bonus. This is both a first-rate crime story and a considerable novel.

Of all the BSI's publishing ventures, aside from the ever-fascinating History Project and, of course, the BSJ, the most important, it seems to me, is the Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series. Only rarely do we have the chance to study one of Conan Doyle's actual manuscripts, but the growing number of facsimile editions provides us each with a direct link to the author's original thoughts and enables us to appreciate, with the help of perceptive commentaries, how those thoughts matured and changed. The latest in the BSI series is *The Wrong Passage: A Facsimile of the Original Manuscript of 'The Golden Pince-Nez'*, edited and introduced by **Robert Katz** and **Andrew Solberg** (The Baker Street Irregulars, Michael H Kean, 3040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953-2837, USA; www.bakerstreetjournal.com/; $35.00 plus postage). The annotations by Phillip Bergem and the essays on topics including politics, religion and forensic medicine do justice to an underrated story.

Also new from the BSI is *The e-Baker Street Journal* version 2, now covering the first sixty-five years as fully-searchable pdf files ($149.95 plus postage). I'm deeply impressed by the quality of the scans and the ease of use. Even though I have quite a long run of the BSJ on my shelves, I find the electronic version invaluable for reference and research. The sheer quantity of excellent material here is amazing. Details are at www.bakerstreetjournal.com/ebooks/ebsj.html, including the fact that until 1 May 2013 owners of the original eBSJ can save $100 on the deal! www.bakerstreetjournal.com/pdf/ebsj-cd-trade-in.pdf

The Strand Magazine & Sherlock Holmes: The Two Fixed Points in a Changing Age by **Robert Veld** (Gasogene Books, www.wessexpress.com/; $24.95) is revised and expanded from a series of articles in *The Passengers' Log*, the admirable journal of the Sydney Passengers. Because he concentrates on the magazine's relationship with its single most important contributor, Mr Veld covers a shorter length of time than Reginald Pound did in *The Strand Magazine, 1891-1950*, and in greater depth. Also he's able to draw on material, such as Conan Doyle's letters, that simply wasn't available before. The result is an attractive, well illustrated book that's both enlightening and engaging. I love the cover picture, which blends G H Haite's classic drawing with a modern photograph. All the book lacks, really, is an index.

It's always a pleasure to welcome *Beaten's Christmas Annual*, the yearly collection of scholarship and whimsy from **The Sound of the Baskervilles**. The 2012 edition is available from Terri Haugen (6710-51st Street Court West, University Place, WA 98467, USA; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com) for $13.00 postpaid to US addresses or $18.00 postpaid outside the US.

In *Sherlock in the Spring Time: Some Idle Thoughts on Holmes and Watson* (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99), **Molly Carr** has gathered some forty short and short-short essays, along with a couple of quirky stories. She is, I think, the first to have noticed the curious links between the Canon and a memorial at Beverley Minster – in the part of Yorkshire called Holderness. It commemorates the men of the East Yorkshire Regiment who died while marching from Quetta to Kandahar in the immediate aftermath of the battle of Maiwand. Several of the names seem oddly familiar.

Masters of Crime: Fiction's Finest Villains and their Real-Life Inspirations, a handsome and very entertaining volume by **Adam Nightingale** (The History Press, www.thehistorypress.co.uk; £18.99), looks at people whose criminal careers contributed to the creation of Macheath, Fagin, Bill Sikes, Raffles, Oliver Haddo, Mr Mocata - and of course Professor Moriarty. Sherlock Holmes compared Moriarty to Jonathan Wild, and I'm inclined to agree with Mr Nightingale that Wild was the main inspiration for the Napoleon of Crime. Unfortunately names are misspelt throughout, there are some false assertions (Jean Baptiste Greuze did exist, and he did paint 'Jeune Fille à l'Agneau' – which does *not* mean 'young woman from Agneau'), and there are no references. Enjoy the book, but double check the facts.

Also from the History Press comes *The Dracula Secrets: Jack the Ripper and the Darkest Sources of Bram Stoker* (£20.00), whose author **Neil R Storey** is a scrupulous historian and a damn' good writer. Bram Stoker, as an author and as Henry Irving's manager at the Lyceum Theatre, knew pretty much everyone of importance in the 1890s, including Arthur Conan Doyle and Oscar Wilde – and the hugely popular novelist Hall Caine, to whom he dedicated *Dracula*. And Caine had once been close to Francis Tumblety, an Irish quack who had a record of gross indecency and who was seriously suspected of the Whitechapel murders. Mr Storey's researches uncover some very suggestive possibilities about the inspiration for Count Dracula.

Mystery at St Andrews by **W P Lawler** (Uncle Wilson's Productions, 208 Hilltop Drive, West Wyoming, PA 18644, USA; $14.95) like *Dead Man's Land* sees Watson coping without Holmes, but this exploit takes place in early 1894, when Holmes was thought to have been killed in Switzerland. At his wife's insistence, Watson takes a break at the famous home of golf, where all is not as tranquil as he might have hoped, and *the*

woman needs his help. The author's love of both the Holmes Canon and of golf ensures authenticity and appeal.

One of the most charming volumes of Holmes pastiche I've encountered is *Sherlock Holmes and the Folk Tale Mysteries* by **Gayle Lange Puhl** (The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, PO Box 50, RR #4, Eugenia, Ontario, Canada N0C 1E0; www.batteredbox.com; Cdn$20.00). It's also exceptionally clever, as Ms Puhl strips thirteen traditional stories to the core, from 'The Three Bears' to 'Little Bo Peep', and refashions each as a mystery for Holmes and Watson to investigate. Her amusing cartoon-like illustrations might suggest that this is a book of jokes; in fact it's a collection of perfectly sound detective stories.

Equally charming – and I think I've mentioned it before – is *Sherlock Holmes and the Missing Snowman* written by **David Ruffle** and illustrated by **Rikey Austin** (MX Publishing, £6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99), a sweet little story with delightful full-colour pictures.

Sherlock Holmes and the Bulgarian Codex by **Tim Symonds** (MX Publishing; £7.99/ $12.95/ €8.99), a rattling good yarn of political and personal intrigue in the Balkans. The masked visitor who calls at 221B in 1900 puts Watson in mind of the King of Bohemia. In fact he is Ferdinand, Prince Regnant of a small nation threatened by three great empires, and he begs Holmes to investigate the disappearance of an ancient and vitally sacred manuscript. During their mission to Sofia Holmes and Watson encounter murder, treason, corruption and something very like vampirism. The Prince, later Tsar of Bulgaria, was known as Foxy Ferdinand, and the epithet was well deserved.

Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Crystal Blue Bottle by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** (£6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99) is, I think, MX's first graphic novel – or, rather, novella. The three parts of this short, sad story are nicely illustrated in two contrasting styles, and as a bonus there's a dozen or so individual drawings and paintings, or 'pinups' – all in colour and the work of too many artists to list here.

Also from MX are *Sherlock Holmes and the Texas Adventure* by **Dicky Neely**, edited by **Clair Ellul** (£6.99/ $9.95/ €7.99) in which Holmes and Watson investigate the disappearance of the heir to a great estate in the Wild Horse Desert; *Sherlock Holmes & Young Winston: The Deadwood Stage* by **Mike Hogan** (£9.99/ $16.95/ €12.99), in which Holmes and Watson have to look after the twelve-year-old Winston Churchill and soon find themselves deeply involved with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show and murder; and a new edition of *The Lost Stories of Sherlock Holmes* by **Tony Reynolds**, with outstandingly good illustrations by **Chris Coady**, favourably reviewed in DM 308 (£9.99/ $16.95/ €12.99).

More new books. *The Great Detective: His Further Adventures* edited by **Gary Lovisi** (Borgo/Wildside Press, www.wildsidebooks.com; $15.00 plus postage). *Sherlock Holmes: The Plagues of London* by **Kelvin Jones**, one of twenty-five Holmes/Doyle titles now available in Kindle format from Amazon.co.uk. Also on Kindle, from Piccadilly Publishing, is *The Tangled Skein*, **David Stuart Davies's** now-classic sequel to *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, in which Holmes and Watson oppose Count Dracula (£1.95).

The latest *Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties**, is online at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-1.html, and you can read **David Marcum's** story 'Descent into Madness: the Truth about Mary Russell', mentioned in the last DM, at www.sherlock-holmes.com/Marcum_Descent.html.

Vincent Delay recently bought twelve copies in mint condition – effectively brand new – of the first edition of *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: l'Homme et 'Oeuvre* by **Pierre Nordon**, published by Didier in 1964. He has a few left which he's offering at £25.00 each, postpaid (Chaumière 1, 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland).

Amanda Randall has twenty individual issues of *The Strand Magazine* for sale, including the one for December 1893, containing 'The Final Problem'. She invites offers for the entire collection from £550. Interested parties should contact her at amandarandall99@gmail.com.

At least one Holmes story has been translated into Cornish (see DM 328). Now Roy Upton Holder tells me that **The Deerstalkers of Welshpool** are raising funds to have 'The Speckled Band' translated and published in Welsh. For details see the website at www.sherlockholmeswelshpool.com. It's worth a look in any case!

The handsome, informative and very funny calendar created by Thierry Saint-Joanis for **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** is available as a free download if you register at the website: www.sshf.com/. I'm attaching the pages for January and February as a taster.

Ken Ross has made his video recordings of our Society's outings to Cornwall in 1998 and Gloucestershire in 1999, and the 2001 Victorian Cricket Match available to watch on YouTube. Type **kennethross100** in the search bar to bring up his page. (This year's Victorian Cricket Match against the Gentlemen of the P G Wodehouse Society will be held as usual at West Wycombe, on 23 June. Our captain, **Peter Horrocks**, reports that there'll also be a match on 4 May, against Eton College. Keep an eye on the website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.)

John Addy notes that at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWMIOBj-wsM is the 1981 Williamstown Theatre Festival production of William Gillette's play *Sherlock Holmes*, with **Frank Langella** excellent as Holmes and a fine cast including Susan Clark and Christian Slater.

The latest in the splendid Canadian detective series **The Murdoch Mysteries**, set in late Victorian Toronto, begins transmission on the digital station Alibi (Sky 032, Virgin 130) at 9pm on 4 February. In previous programmes, William Murdoch (Yannick Bisson) met Arthur Conan Doyle – who turns up again in this series when it appears that Sherlock Holmes is involved in a violent robbery.

An exhibition called *Murder in the Library: An A-Z of Crime Fiction* is at **The British Library** until 12 May. The website at www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/murder/index.html has basic details but doesn't mention that the exhibition includes the original manuscript of 'The Retired Colourman'. *[*Thanks to April Carlucci.*]*

'FOCUS is a unique community for expats and international professionals living in the UK.' The current issue of *Focus: The Magazine*, at www.focus-info.org/about_us/publications/default.aspx, includes an article, 'May I Introduce You to Mr Sherlock Holmes?' by **Jean Upton.**

At the BSI Weekend last month, H George Fletcher, Jon Lellenberg, Donald Pollock and Philip A Shreffler launched a new annual with an old name, *The Saturday Review of Literature*. I think copies may still be available at $5.00 each from 521 College Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 14305, USA. It's beautifully presented, but the articles and reviews, not all by the editors, are a disconcerting mixture of deeply knowledgeable enthusiasm and something like self-destructive puritan intolerance.

Hot on the Scent by Arthur M Alexander may well be the best guide yet written to the London of Sherlock Holmes. The author, whose real name was **Arthur M Axelrad**, died on 15 January. He was a highly respected English literature scholar, a cat-lover, and a nice guy.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Winter 2012 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Bohemian Newsletter No. 1*** **(České společnosti Sherlocka Holmese**, Aleš Kolodrubec, http://www.sherlockholmes.cz/). ***The Camden House Journal***, December 2012 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Winter 2012/2013 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, December 2012 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, February 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Mayday Mayday,*** January 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Passengers' Log***, Spring 2012 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 17 January 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***The Scion***, Spring 2013 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Winter 2012 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***Mémoires et Documents 2012*** **(Société d'Études Holmésiennes de la Suisse Romande**, Vincent Delay, Chaumière 1, 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland)

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, December 2012 (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

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

In 1971 our late Honorary Member **Peter Cushing** recorded an unabridged reading of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* for the Royal National Institute for the Blind. For forty years it was available only to registered blind and partially sighted people in the UK. Then in 2011 Cosmic Hobo released the first four stories on CD, with liner notes by David Stuart Davies. Cosmic Hobo is now called **Bafflegab**, and this month releases *The Return of Sherlock Holmes, Volume Two* (Bafflegab Productions, 24 Tanners Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 7JP; www.bafflegab.co.uk; £14.99). It's been said that you really need an actor who's played Dr Watson to narrate these tales – but however he may be identified in our minds with the Detective, Peter Cushing, in sound alone, is an entirely credible Doctor. And then there are the other characters, major and minor, all depicted as believable individual human beings... Cushing does full justice to the atmosphere, the excitement, the humour and the ingenuity of these tales. What a bonus for us that the recordings should at last become available to the general public! I hope we don't have to wait so long for Volume Three. (On the Bafflegab website you can buy Volumes One and Two together for £24.99 – a saving of £4.99.)

The first contribution by **Nicholas Utechin** to the Writings about the Writings was a letter to *The Sherlock Holmes Journal* in 1966. A whole succession of well-written, well-considered articles followed, in the SHJ, the BSJ, *Shades of Sherlock*, *Baker Street Miscellanea* and elsewhere – sometimes controversial, sometimes enlightening, always entertaining. He even found time to collaborate with Austen Mitchelson on two rather good Holmes novels, but his *magnum opus* is *Sherlock Holmes at Oxford*, a handsome chapbook which has run to, I think, three editions. It had its origins in 'This Charming Town', published in the BSJ in 1976, which you can read in Nick's new book, *'Occasionally to Embellish': Some Writings on Sherlock Holmes* (Gasogene Books, www.wessexpress.com/; $18.95), with twenty-two other pieces. He's been a major player of our Game for more forty years, and this collection is, if anything, overdue!

The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual is no longer available for purchase separately, so it's yet another damn' good reason to take out a subscription to the BSJ – which you can do via the website at www.bakerstreetjournal.com/. The 2012 Annual, *Barrymore in Baker Street: 'The Great Profile' Meets 'The Great Detective,' and They Both Get Their Names Up in Lights* by **Sonia Fetherston**, is absolutely my glass of tea, relating how a potentially great film ended up as just quite good with some first-rate touches. Even if you don't usually bother with silent movies, Albert Parker's 1922 *Sherlock Holmes*, with John Barrymore is worth watching and re-watching. Ms Fetherston's book tells the troubled story of its creation, why it isn't a masterpiece, how it was lost, found and restored for our pleasure.

Our member **Richard Dinnick** is one of the contributors to an enjoyable anthology, *Encounters of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by **George Mann** (Titan Books; http://titanbooks.com/brands/sherlock-holmes/; £7.99). Several leading science fiction and fantasy writers have been enthusiastic Holmes devotees, and it's good to see that tradition continuing, with stories here from the likes of James Lovegrove, Mark Hodder, Cavan Scott, Paul Magrs and Steve Lockley. As you might guess, most of these tales involve the *outré*, the *recherché*, the improbable, and the downright fantastic. Among the phenomena that Holmes and Watson encounter are a living mummy haunting the London Underground, Dr Henry Jekyll, Victor Frankenstein's creature, HG Wells's Martian invaders… Wells himself has a part to play, as do AJ Raffles and Bunny Manders, Sir Richard Burton and Algernon Swinburne (an improbable detective duo that flourishes in novels by Mark Hodder). Most of the authors achieve an acceptable likeness of the Watson/Doyle style, while some opt for a third-person narrative, and Mr Magrs tells his story through letters written to Dr Watson by Mrs Hudson. To be worth publishing, Sherlock Holmes pastiche doesn't have to be startlingly different, but it should be written with knowledge, imagination, affection and style. The fourteen tales in *Encounters of Sherlock Holmes* pass the test.

Steve Hayes and **David Whitehead**, separately and in partnership, are remarkably prolific writers. I was apprehensive when the duo's novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Queen of Diamonds* reached me a year ago. To my relief I found it a clever, exciting and well-written yarn, told with obvious respect and affection for the period and the characters. Its successor is, if anything, better. On at least two occasions, we know, Watson felt obliged to take Holmes away from London to recover from the curious excesses of his chosen way of life. In *Sherlock Holmes and the Knave of Hearts* (Robert Hale; www.halebooks.com; £19.99) we find the two in Paris, where inevitably, it seems, they encounter a vicious criminal conspiracy – 'the Knaves' – and thwart the attempted murder of Jules Verne. (If that last seems a little too rich, well, the attempt on Verne's life is historical fact, and the circumstances surrounding it were as odd as any fiction.) Grand stuff!

Our Swedish member **Peter Bevelin** has kindly sent a copy of *A Few Lessons from Sherlock Holmes*, an attractive spiral-bound 44-page volume in which Mr Bevelin has gathered pithy quotations from Holmes and others, arranged to illustrate important points. For instance, under 'The eye sees only what it is trained to see' we find observations from Jean-Martin Charcot, C Auguste Dupin, William Osler and Thomas McCrae, as well as Holmes himself. The book has been produced for the benefit of the author and a few friends, but if there's enough interest I fancy he'd like to make it more widely available. (Peter Bevelin, Gislövsgården, 231 91 Trelleborg, Sweden; pbevelin@gmail.com.)

Many scholars have applied their specialist expertise to illuminating an aspect of the chronicles of Sherlock Holmes. Bernard Davies on topography, Maurice Campbell on medicine, Madeline Stern on rare books, Patricia Guy on wine … The list seems endless. With *The Sherlock Holmes Stories and Combustion Science*, **JC Jones** has chosen what may seem the most unlikely subject area. In fact the forty or so short essays, several reprinted from the SHJ, help us to appreciate many of the more curious details of the Canon. Copies of the 120-page book are available for £10.00 each from the author at j.c.jones@eng.abdn.ac.uk. .

To complement *Sherlockian Picture Puzzles: A Monograph on Eliot Keen's 1905 Illustrations* (see DM 321), **John Addy** has devised *100 Sherlockian Word Puzzles* (John Addy, 184 Bradford Road, Otley LS21 3LT; john.addy22@btinternet.com; £6.50 including UK postage). He's taken place names, personal names and phrases from the Canon and disguised them within words, numbers and symbols.

MX Publishing and AudioGO have collaborated to record unabridged readings of several of the new Holmes books published by MX. Currently available from Amazon, Audible.com and elsewhere are *The Detective and The Woman* by **Amy Thomas**, read by **Stephanie Cannon**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Dead Boer at Scotney Castle* by **Tim Symonds**, read by **Simon Shepherd**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Murder at Lodore Falls* by **Charlotte Smith**, read by **Ric Jerrom**; *The Outstanding Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes* by **Gerard Kelly**, read by **Simon Shepherd**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Whitechapel Vampire* by **Dean P Turnbloom**, read by **Ric Jerrom**; and *The Lost Stories of Sherlock Holmes* by **Tony Reynolds**, read by **Simon Shepherd**.

Steve Merrifield writes: 'Your readers might be interested in knowing that I am releasing a Sherlock Holmes inspired series of free short stories, *The Darkwood Mysteries*, each month in 2013 and into 2014. Emily

Darkwood and her young servant companion, Jack Hobbs, investigate crime and the supernatural in Victorian England as she searches for answers to the mysterious fates of her parents. Monthly free short tales of horror and adventure at www.TheDarkwoodMysteries.co.uk – *Darkwood* can be liked on Facebook at The Darkwood Mysteries and followed on Twitter @FollowDarkwood.'

At www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-2.html is the *Sherlockian E-times*, the catalogue-newsletter of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) – interesting and entertaining, as always.

And at www.h-net.org/announce/show.cgi?ID=201352 is a call for papers for a proposed collection of essays about the Sherlock Holmes phenomenon, to be edited by **Nadine Farghaly** and published by Humanities & Social Sciences Online. You can e-mail the editor at nadine.farghaly@gmx.net. *[*Thanks to Jackie Speel.*]*

Oscar Ross notes that the **Café Royal** in Regent Street has reopened as a luxury five-star hotel. The website at www.hotelcaferoyal.com says, 'The iconic Grill Room (originally established in 1865) has been exquisitely restored to its original Louis XVI detailing and is now the place to enjoy Champagne, cocktails and a light menu of British dishes.' The Café Royal features just once in Dr Watson's narratives. After attacking Holmes in Regent Street, Baron Gruner's thugs 'escaped from the bystanders by passing through the Café Royal and out into Glasshouse Street behind it'. Conan Doyle knew it, as did all the artists, writers, musicians, actors and intelligentsia of the time, and no doubt Holmes and Watson dined there.

At 12.30pm on 11 April, the Lunchtime Lecture at the **National Army Museum** will be *Duty Before Fiction: Conan Doyle in the Boer and Great Wars*, given by our member **Richard Burnip**. Admission is free and tickets aren't required. The Museum is in Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4HT. The website is at www.nam.ac.uk/.

Hoxton Hall, built in 1863, is a remarkable survival from the early days of the Music Hall, only four years younger than the famous Wilton's. From 10 April to 10 May it will be home to Morphic Graffiti's production of *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes!* – a new version of *Sherlock Holmes: The Musical* by **Leslie Bricusse**, who 'has worked with Morphic Graffiti to present this unique 2013 production of *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes!* The show will feature brand new songs and material, never before heard.' Details are at www.hoxtonhall.co.uk/whatson/revenge-sherlock-holmes/, or phone 020 7684 0060. Hoxton Hall is at 130 Hoxton Street, London N1 6SH.

In possibly the most unlikely casting ever, the squeaky-voiced comedian **Joe Pasquale** will play Sherlock Holmes in an autumn tour of Ben Langley's well-received spoof *Ha Ha Holmes! and the Hound of the Baskervilles*. The tour dates and other details are on the website at http://hahaholmes.com/ - though I notice they've omitted the fact that it'll be at the Civic Theatre in Chelmsford from 3 to 7 September.

The house at 12 Tennison Road, Norwood, where Conan Doyle wrote *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, failed to sell at auction on Thursday. And the South Norwood Tourist Board indicates why: 'The house is an absolute horror of a tip with no traces of the Victorian house left and divided into cell-like one room bedsits in a disgusting condition. Any attempt to save it would be worthless. To be honest it had an awful feel to it … one wonders what happened to the company providing autistic care there who seem to have done a bunk a year go leaving the place empty for a year and now the sudden sale with lots of possibly interested parties not being informed.' (http://southnorwoodtouristboard.com/) The estate agents now say that the house is 'available at £750,000' (www.barnettross.co.uk/details.php?adate=201302&page=52.html&id=5049). *[*Thanks to Alistair Duncan*]*

Leslie Klinger has filed a lawsuit against the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd, asking a federal court to rule that writers, filmmakers, and others are free to create new stories about Holmes and Watson without paying licence fees to the owners of the remaining copyrights on the stories. Les has a web-site at www.free-sherlock.com with more information about the suit. *[*Thanks to Peter Blau*]*

Nearer home there's dissension at the **Sherlock Holmes Museum** at 239 Baker Street (*not* 221B!). Last Thursday, *The Times* reported, 'The family that created and ran the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Baker Street has been torn apart over who is entitled to almost £2 million of admission fees collected in the past two years. Grace Aidiniantz, with and her daughter Jennifer Decoteau, with whom she runs The Sherlock Holmes International Society, is suing her son John over revenues from the museum, including items sold at the gift shop.' And 'Mr Aidiniantz, whose company owns the freehold to the museum, argues that his sisters are responsible for the shortfall in the society's accounts. He claims that although the society is responsible for collecting the revenue, it does not have the right to keep it.' The case is due to be heard in May.

Those contemplating a visit to Meiringen and the Reichenbach Falls may like to avail themselves of the services of **Alps Travel** ('The Prep School & Corporate Ski Holiday Specialists in Switzerland'), which offers a full and comprehensive tour service including flights, transfers, hotels and tour guides. The tour of particular interest to us has its own web page at www.alpstravel.co.uk/sherlock-holmes/.

The cricket fixtures for 2013 are settled, and you'll find the details on the website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/events.php. On 4 May the Gentlemen of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London will take on a team from Eton College, and the Victorian Cricket Match against the 'Gold Bats' of the PG Wodehouse Society will be held on 23 June at West Wycombe. These events are free, and both venues are picturesque.

Pilgrims on the Society's 1988 Swiss trip will remember Ted Schulz and his loud check suit, in character as Aloysius Doran. When Luther Norris introduced me to the Sherlockian world in the mid 1960s, he also introduced me to four of his friends, who quickly became my friends too. **Lt Col Theodore G Schulz**, invested in the BSI in 1961 as 'The Amateur Mendicant Society', really was an officer and a gentleman, as well as a dedicated Sherlockian. He died on 24 January aged eighty-nine, nearly five years after the death of his charming wife Mary. I'm rather pleased that some of my photos of them both are posted at www.tedschulz.com/.

Bernard Horsfall, who died on 28 January aged eighty-two, was never a star, but his versatility and sincerity as an actor ensured that he was rarely out of work. He played Sherlock Holmes in the original production of Royce Ryton's play *To Kill a King* in 1981. In 1988 he played Frankland to Jeremy Brett's Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for Granada TV, and 1991 he was Mr Crawford in BBC TV's original *Murder Rooms*.

Richard Briers was known and loved for his comedy rôles, particularly in *The Good Life* and *Monarch of the Glen*, but his association with Kenneth Branagh's company gave him the chance to return to his roots in classic theatre. From 2007 to 2012 he and Stanley Baxter played William Parnes and Sandy Boyle, retired actors once famous as Holmes and Watson, in eleven comedy-dramas on Radio 4, starting with *A Two-Pipe Problem*. He died on 17 February, aged seventy-nine.

Periodicals received. ***The Camden House Journal***, January 2013 and February 2013 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Cri Bar Crier***, March 2013 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***For the Sake of the Trust: The Baker Street Irregulars Trust Newsletter***, Fall 2012 (**The BSI Trust**, Marshall S Berdan, 2015 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033, USA). ***The Gaslight Gazette***, January/February 2012 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, March 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, frequently (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***Irregular Newsletter***, February 2013 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn & Winter 2012 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, erin.index@gmail.com). ***The Petrel Flyer***, February 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Practice Notes,*** February 2013 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Highcroft Cottage, 14 Totteridge Common, London N20 8NL). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 21 February 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals***, February 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). ***Studies of the Nippon Sherlock Holmes Club***, volume 17 no. 1 (**The Sherlock Holmes Research Committee**, Saburoh Hiraga, 3-6-24 Uenohigashi, Toyonaka-shi, Osaka 560-0013, Japan).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, January 2013 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA). You can read it online at http://redcircledc.org/index.php?id=39.

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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One of the best books about our late honorary member is *The Peter Cushing Companion* by **David Miller**. Now there's a better one, because Titan Books has (have?) published a revised edition for the actor's centenary, retitled *Peter Cushing: A Life in Film* (www.titanbooks.com; £18.99). Because of Cushing's reputation as a master of horror his films will be enjoyed by millions for decades to come, but that reputation has tended to overshadow his subtle and meticulous acting in other fields, most of them on stage or television. The 1954 BBC TV production of *1984* is available on DVD in America; Cushing's tortured performance as Winston Smith is superb. It's also worth seeking out his pre-Hammer films, such as *Alexander the Great*, *Moulin Rouge*, and especially Olivier's *Hamlet*. He played Sherlock Holmes seventeen times, from Hammer's flawed but entertaining *Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1958 to Tyburn's excellent *The Masks of Death* in 1984. Of the 1968 BBC TV series, only six episodes survive, but they include the two-part *Hound of the Baskervilles*, which many of us rate the finest screen version of the story. David Miller's book is a worthy tribute to a great actor.

In *The Scientific Sherlock Holmes: Cracking the Case with Science and Forensics* (Oxford University Press, 198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, USA; $29.95) **James O'Brien** demonstrates how Arthur Conan Doyle's own scientific knowledge enabled him to create a detective who was both credible and memorable. He points out that most of the science is in the earlier stories, concluding that the far greater popularity of those tales is 'surely no coincidence', and he shows us that Holmes was more advanced in the field of chemistry than some have suggested, even if his knowledge was not, perhaps, as profound as Watson thought. For all its good qualities, though – which do not include constant use of abbreviations for story titles - Professor O'Brien's book is both shallower and less accessible than *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* by **E J Wagner**.

Séamus Duffy, like Arthur Conan Doyle, is a Scotsman of Irish descent, In his collection *Sherlock Holmes in Paris* (Black Coat Press, www.blackcoatpress.com/sholmesinparis.htm; £12.99/$20.95) he shows that he knows Dr Watson's chronicles, the literature that surrounds them, and the society that gave them birth. His own tales, a novella and two short stories, include all the essential elements for our pleasure: dazzling deductions, mysterious crimes, secret messages, references to untold cases, Lestrade, Mycroft, Mrs Hudson, breakfast at 221B, and the right relationship between Holmes and Watson. The long story, *The Adventure of the Nebrodi Sapphire*, takes the two to Paris to protect the famous jewel – but they find the sapphire secure and the man charged with guarding it dead in a locked room. Moriarty, François le Villard, Arsène Lupin and a Corsican secret society all play their part. The two short stories are likewise intriguing and enjoyable.

Other recent and forthcoming books. *Conan Doyle and the Crimes Club: The Creator of Sherlock Holmes and his Criminological Friends* by **Stephen Wade** (Fonthill Media, www.fonthillmedia.com; £17.29). *The Curse of Sherlock Holmes* by **Dhanil Ali** (MX Publishing, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £7.99), the script of the play recently staged at the Unity Theatre, Liverpool. *Reasoning Backward: How Sherlock Holmes Can Make You a Better Problem Solver* by **Gregg Young** (Young Associates Inc, www.youngassocinc.com/; £20.99). *East Wind Coming: A Sherlockian Study Book* by **Yuichi Hirayama & John Hall** (MX Publishing; 15 May; £9.99). *Forgotten Stars: My Father and the British Silent Film World* by **Jonathan Croall** (Fantom Films, www.fantomfilms.co.uk; June; £16.99): Mr Croall, biographer of John Gielgud and Sybil Thorndike, is the son of John Stuart, a good Sir Henry Baskerville in the first sound film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, with Robert Rendel and Frederick Lloyd.

The Reichenbach Problem by **Martin Allison Booth** (Lion Hudson, www.lionhudson.com; £7.99), the first novel in the Reichenbach Trilogy, relating the adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle after he has disposed of Sherlock Holmes. *Sherlock Holmes: The Coils of Time and Other Stories* by **Ralph E Vaughan** (Dog In The Night Books; £6.58/$9.95 pbk or £2.04/$3.04 Kindle), a collection of fantastic and very entertaining adventures involving Martians, Wells's Time Traveller, ghosts, a sea serpent, a man who comes close to being Holmes, and a most remarkable dog. *The Amateur Executioner: Enoch Hale Meets Sherlock Holmes* by **Dan Andriacco & Kieran McMullen** (MX Publishing; 8 April; £7.99). *Sherlock Holmes in Pursuit* by **Matthew J Elliott** (MX; 15 April; £7.99). *Sherlock Holmes and the Needle's Eye: The World's Greatest Detective Tackles the Bible's Ultimate Mysteries* by **Len Bailey** (Thomas Nelson, www.christianbits.co.uk; 7 May; £10.88).

Readers in America (and perhaps elsewhere) can buy MX books direct from the publisher at www.sherlockholmesbookshop.com.

It's not, I think, Holmesian, but our Swiss member **Vincent Delay** has just published a novel called *Le Vampire des Grisons* (Les Éditions-Limitées, Lausanne, c/o Atelier Typo de la Cité, Rue Curtat 9, 1005 Lausanne, Switzerland; www.ateliertypo.ch).

Copies of *To Keep the Memory Green*, the book edited by **Nicholas Utechin & Steven Rothman** and published by The Quartering Press as a tribute to our late and much-honoured member **Richard Lancelyn Green**, are still, I think, available from the Society's Merchandising Officer at SHSL221B@aol.com. And Michael Kean notes that, for a limited time, the BSI offers copies at half price ($15.00) via the *Baker Street Journal* website at www.bakerstreetjournal.com.

You'll find the current *Sherlockian E-times*, the enticing catalogue-newsletter of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-3.html.

Filming for Series 3 of *Sherlock* is well under way, and it's no secret that the first episode bears the inspired title of *The Empty Hearse*. Despite what you may have heard, it's not absolutely certain that there'll be a fourth series, though I predict a riot if there isn't. On 1 June at 1.40pm, **Crimefest: the international crime fiction convention**, held in Bristol from 30 May to 2 June, will feature *Creating Sherlock*, with panellists **Mark Gatiss**, **Steven Moffat** and **Sue Vertue**. Tickets are available via the website at www.crimefest.com/register.html.

Big Finish has recorded the audio plays for its next Holmes CDs, a four-adventure box set entitled *The Ordeals of Sherlock Holmes*, featuring the masterly team of **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl**, with guest artists including Tracey Childs, Blake Ritson and Andrew Fettes. Big Finish will also release for download some stories from the canon, performed by Nick Briggs and Richard Earl. Keep your eye on www.bigfinish.com/news/v/sherlock-holmes-series-3 - the release date is likely to be December

Andrew Fettes is one of the trio who'll be touring in the autumn in *Ha Ha Holmes! and The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the others being **Ben Langley** as Watson and **Joe Pasquale** as Holmes. It promises to be mad, silly and very funny. Full details are at http://hahaholmes.com/ – but it doesn't mention that the tour begins at Chelmsford Civic

Theatre, 3 to 7 September (phone 01245 606505; website www.chelmsford.gov.uk/ha-ha-holmes-and-hound-baskervilles).

A reminder that *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* by **Leslie Bricusse** will be at Hoxton Hall from 10 April to 10 May. Morphic Graffiti is thrilled to announce a stunning West End cast. Renowned performer **Tim Walton** will be playing the title role of Sherlock Holmes. Tim is a leading West End actor with credits that include *Matilda*, *Love Never Dies*, *Wicked* and most recently *Kiss Me Kate* at the Old Vic. Joining the Great Detective will be **John Cusworth** as his sidekick Dr. Watson, **Amanda Goldthorpe-Hall** as the villainous Mrs Moriarty, **Leonie Heath** as Bella Spellgrove, **Andrea Miller** as the ill-suffering Mrs Hudson and **Stephen Leask** as Inspector Lestrade. (130 Hoxton Street, N1 6SH; phone 020 7684 0060; website www.hoxtonhall.co.uk.)

From 18 May to 8 June, the Quarry Theatre at West Yorkshire Playhouse will be home to *Sherlock Holmes: The Best Kept Secret* by **Mark Catley** (phone 0113 213 7700; website http://wyp.org.uk/).

And **Enter Stage Right Productions** has been commissioned to perform a brand new professional production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, dramatised by Claire Malcomson. It opens at The Festival Theatre, Hever Castle, 23 – 26 May before a small tour, including The Mill Studio at Guildford's Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, 30 May – 1 June. Details at enterstageright.net/.

Robert Graham recently spent three days as a volunteer at Portsmouth City Library helping to catalogue the **Arthur Conan Doyle Collection: Lancelyn Green Bequest**. The library still needs volunteers. Even if you can't help, do take a look at the video on the local BBC news website at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-21928392. If you *can* help, the person to contact is the Senior Archivist, Michael Gunton, whose e-mail address is Michael.Gunton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk.

An interesting new venture – though rather a long way from us – is **221B Cellars** (221B Cellars, Santa Rosa, CA 95409, USA) a joint effort of Don Libey (author of *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes*), Don Yates, BSI, and Joanne Yates. The website at www.221bcellars.com is full of temptations. Mr Libey says: 'We are offering limited (200 bottles) First Edition and numbered bottles of Sonoma County wines each year named for a Holmes adventure and featuring on the label the first edition book covers. The first year is "A Study In Scarlet". These are to be purchased by Sherlockians as collectible editions and by Scion groups as items to be auctioned for fund raising.'

The ten-bedroom mansion called **Baskerville Hall** near Hay-on-Wye, originally Clyro Court, was built for the Baskerville-Mynors family, who claimed that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was based on a legend told by them to Conan Doyle, a frequent visitor. The house, currently a hotel, is for sale. The agents are Russell, Baldwin & Bright, whose website is at http://www.rbbproperty.co.uk/, and the asking price is £3,000,000, according to a report by Wales Online at www.walesonline.co.uk/multimedia/2013/03/09/baskerville-hall-has-gone-on-the-market-for-3m-91466-32955621/#2, where photographs show it to be pretty spectacular,.

A reminder that at 12.30pm on 11 April, our member **Richard Burnip** will give the Lunchtime Lecture at the National Army Museum in Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea SW3 4HT. His topic is *Duty Before Fiction: Arthur Conan Doyle and the Boer War*. Admission is free and tickets are not required.

Bob Byrne, who has been rather quiet lately, makes a very welcome return with issue 4 of his free online newsletter *Baker Street Essays*. He adds, 'I actually have Issue Five, which is about the illustrators of the Canon, just about done. I'll put it up this summer.' *Baker Street Essays* is actually much more substantial than a newsletter. Magazine or journal would be a more accurate term. Mr Byrne is a stimulating writer, and there's a good deal of satisfying material here. You'll find all four issues at www.solarpons.com/BakerStreetEssays.htm and a link to www.solarpons.com/, where Bob Byrne almost single-handedly maintains the traditions of **The Praed Street Irregulars**, celebrating Sherlock Holmes's worthy pupil.

At www.youtube.com/user/kennethross100/videos?view=0 you'll find several of the video recordings that our member **Ken Ross** has made of the Society's more extended activities. The latest is *Sherlock Holmes Society of London Russian Treaty Play, section 4* – the final part of the play performed by the Society's thespians during the Golden Anniversary cruise around the Baltic Sea in 2001. There are also recordings of the weekend visits to Cornwall in 1998 and to Gloucester in 1999, as well as highlights of the first Victorian Cricket Match in 2001.

The Society has taken on a considerable responsibility. Our entertainment after the formal business at the AGM next month will be a performance of a new radio play by **Jerome Coopersmith**, the award-winning dramatist and scriptwriter whose play *The Other Side*, about the Conan Doyles and the Houdinis, we staged a few years ago. Jerry Coopersmith is best known to Sherlockians as the author of the Broadway musical *Baker Street*. The new play, *Pipe Dream*, also features Sherlock Holmes, but another detective is the principal character. Our modest production will actually be the world premiere…

I learn from Peter Blau that the screenwriter **Jan Read** died on 29 November at the age of ninety-five. In a career that began with the famous Ealing film *The Blue Lamp*, his many scripts included two excellent ones for the BBC's 1965 *Sherlock Holmes* series with Douglas Wilmer: *The Man with the Twisted Lip* and *The Retired Colourman*.

Frank Thornton, who died on 16 March aged ninety-two, was a familiar figure in British TV and film comedies for several decades, achieving fame with *Are You Being Served?* and *Last of the Summer Wine*. In 1970 he appeared in Billy Wilder's film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* as the one-armed steward at the Diogenes Club.

Mr Patrick Leonard sends news that his father, **Patrick J Leonard Sr** of Braintree, Massachusetts, died on 19 March, aged ninety-five. Mr Leonard says, *'Please convey to all that my Father enjoyed the Sherlock Holmes stories all of his life and was always proud of his membership in the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. He delighted in receiving the bulletins and news and being a member of the Society was a very meaningful thing to him. He had one room in his home in Braintree which was his study. The walls were lined with books on all four sides and in front of the big window (with bookcases on each side) was his big oak, flat topped desk. Under the sheet of glass which covered the top of the desk he had a photo of himself, in tuxedo, speaking at a meeting of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. How he did enjoy the privilege of speaking to the group! As I recall he brought and read citations to the Society from both the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Massachusetts State Senate.'* Ave atque vale!

I've just been told, though I've yet to see an obituary, that **Basil Copper** died yesterday, aged eighty-nine. A prolific author, mainly of weird fiction, he wrote eight volumes continuing the chronicles of Solar Pons, the detective created by his friend and publisher August Derleth.

Periodicals received. ***The Gaslight Gazette***, March 2012 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, March 2013 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Alisa West, IllustClients@gmail.com). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, April 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, frequently (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***Mayday Mayday,*** March 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Passengers' Log***, 6 January 2013 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 20 March 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Spring 2013 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***The Torr***, Spring 2013 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsburg, Switzerland).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, March 2013 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA). You can read it online at http://redcircledc.org/index.php?id=39.

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to Jean Upton. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

Today is apparently *Star Wars* Day, but only if you put the month before the day ('May the Fourth be with you…'). To me, and no doubt to you, it has a greater significance as Reichenbach Day.

A facet of Arthur Conan Doyle's life that is mentioned in only a couple of the more recent biographies, and then very briefly, is his membership of Our Society, otherwise the Crimes Club, founded in 1903 by HB Irving and five friends. Like his father Sir Henry, Irving was an actor; he was also a barrister with a keen interest in criminology. Members with a professional interest in crime have included Sir Edward Marshall Hall, QC and Sir Bernard Spilsbury. Conan Doyle, who joined in 1904, was one of the club's many authors, along with, for instance, EW Hornung, PG Wodehouse, Max Pemberton and Bertram Fletcher Robinson. In February Fonthill Media Ltd published the first book about this important but little-known side of his life: *Conan Doyle and the Crimes Club: The Creator of Sherlock Holmes and his Criminological Friends* by **Stephen Wade** (www.fonthillmedia.com; £17.29). Mr Wade gives us an account of how the Crimes Club came into being and what it was like in the early days, together with pen-portraits of a dozen members of the time, illustrating the different attitudes towards their common interest, and what they put into and took from the club. Despite the book's title, Conan Doyle gets no more space than George R Sims, and little more than AEW Mason or William Le Queux. There's an extensive bibliography, but a paucity of dates and other establishing details (Arthur Lambton claimed that a conversation with Conan Doyle inspired an important feature of *A Study in Scarlet*, but when did the conversation take place?). *Conan Doyle and the Crimes Club* is a good start, but it's far from the last word on the topic.

I was sceptical when I learned of a play that would tour the north-west in March: 'Somewhere between the fact and the fiction Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's greatest creation stole the soul of Jeremy Brett, the actor who would become the embodiment of the Baker Street Sleuth. *The Curse of Sherlock Holmes* follows Jeremy as he fights for his sanity… his life.' I've not seen any reviews, so don't know how it came across in performance, but the script by **Dhanil Ali** is now available from MX Publishing (www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £7.99), and it turns out to be thought-provoking and dramatic, without being unnecessarily sensational. Since the protagonist is Jeremy Brett, however, the disclaimer: 'All characters appearing in this work are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental,' is decidedly disingenuous.

Last year MX released *Sherlock Holmes on the Air*, a selection of the best radio scripts by our own **Matthew J Elliott**. Now comes *Sherlock Holmes in Pursuit* (MX; £7.99), containing six first-rate stories in the Watson style, four originally published in the much-missed *Sherlock Magazine*. My only cavil is that it's often hard to tell where one paragraph ends and another begins, as the first lines aren't indented, nor are the paragraphs separated. The quality of the stories more than makes up for that inconvenience, though.

The second novel about Holmes and Irene Adler by **Amy Thomas**, *The Detective, the Woman and the Winking Tree* (MX; £9.99), uses the same narrative technique as the first, *The Detective and the Woman*: Miss Adler's chapters are told in the first person, and Holmes's in the third person. It works well, not least because *the* woman emerges as a strong, intelligent and entirely credible character, whom Holmes rightly comes to admire. The subject of this new joint investigation is the apparently impossible disappearance of a Mr James Phillimore – who, as we remember from Dr Watson's guarded remark, 'stepping back into his own house to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world'. Amy Thomas is a Baker Street Babe – and that is a recommendation.

Another second novel in a promising series is *Sherlock Holmes & Young Winston: The Jubilee Plot* by **Mike Hogan** (MX; £9.99). In June 1887 the prospect of publication at last for *A Study in Scarlet* is overshadowed by the imminent crowning event of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee: a service at Westminster Abbey attended by her government ministers, peers of the realm and fifty foreign monarchs. Dynamite attacks by the Fenians are a very real threat. Lestrade has been seconded to Scotland Yard's new Special Irish Branch, but Holmes, Watson and the twelve-year-old Churchill face even worse danger.

There is the possibility of a Fenian attack also in *The Amateur Executioner: Enoch Hale Meets Sherlock Holmes*, the first collaboration between **Dan Andriacco** and **Kieran McMullen** (MX; £7.99). Hale, a native Bostonian, is a reporter for London's Central News Syndicate – where, in 1920, Horace Harker is still a familiar figure, though far from revered. It becomes evident that the apparent suicide of a Music Hall artiste was only the first of a series of murders by hanging. Hale's determination to find the link between the victims is variously helped and hindered by a cast of remarkable characters that includes his friend TS Eliot, WB Yeats, Bernard Shaw, Ezra Pound, Alfred Hitchcock and Winston Churchill – not to mention Chief Inspector Wiggins and Sherlock Holmes. In contrast to most tales involving Holmes, *The Amateur Executioner* takes us into an ambiguous and murky world where right and wrong aren't always distinguishable. I look forward to reading more about Enoch Hale.

The Art of Deduction compiled by **Hannah Rogers** and edited by **Steve Emecz** (MX; £9.99) is a bewilderingly varied collection of prose, verse and pictures, most but not all inspired by *Sherlock*, and all, I think, contributed by people who usually publish their work on-line. The proof-reading, it has to be said, is shockingly poor ('I road all the way to the jail with a not in my stomach'…) but the book's heart is in the right place. It was created both to raise awareness of the Undershaw Preservation Trust and to raise funds for Help for Heroes.

A new edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* from Pulp! The Classics (http://pulptheclassics.com; £5.99) contains the complete text, nicely laid out, but presented between covers that cleverly parody those of the sort of garish American paperbacks that we loved to find at the news-stands when I was a schoolboy. I quote: 'A desolate moor, a diabolical dog in need of a muzzle, and some inbred locals… Sherlock Holmes is really UP AGAINST IT.'

Richard Kellogg may be best known in our circles for his 1986 book *Sherlock Holmes and the Origins of Psychology*, but the previous year Magico had published his charming children's story *The Little Girl and Mister Holmes*, and now, after nearly three decades, comes his second Sherlockian story for young readers, *Barry Baskerville Solves a Case*, with colourful illustrations by **Gary Kato** (An Airship 27 Production, http://Airship27Hangar.com). Young Barry's family and friends are amused by his desire to emulate the great detective, until his sharp eye and quick mind save his father from falling victim to a con man. The 28-page book is available from Amazon.co.uk for £5.92, or as a Kindle edition for £1.34.

Sherlock Holmes, as we know, was only a fraction of Conan Doyle's literary output. His weird fiction, influenced in part by his admiration for Poe, includes a dozen or more excellent stories. Now Educated English Audiobooks has released a four-CD set, *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Tales of Terror*, containing 'The Beetle-Hunter', 'The Case of

Lady Sannox', 'The New Catacomb', 'The Lift', 'The Brown Hand' and 'The Brazilian Cat', read with clarity, authority and feeling by **Peter Greenhalgh**, together with the full text in an attractive illustrated paperback book (www.speechandpronunciation.com; £19.50 + postage; digital download £14.50).

Due in June from MX Publishing is *Benedict Cumberbatch, In Transition: An Unauthorised Performance Biography* by **Lynnette Porter** (£12.99), and in September comes *A Few Lessons from Sherlock Holmes* by **Peter Bevelin** (£6.99) *[*see DM 330*]*.

Out now as e-books from Endeavour Press are *Benedict Cumberbatch: Behind the Scenes* by **Neil Simpson** (www.endeavourpress.com; Kindle edition £1.99 from Amazon.co.uk), *The Great War: 1914, The British Campaign in France and Flanders, Vol. 1* by **Arthur Conan Doyle** (Kindle 99p from Amazon) and *The Best of The Strand Magazine*, thirteen pieces from early issues, including 'The Adventure of the Silver Blaze' *[*sic*]* (Kindle £2.99 from Amazon).

Not content with the splendid *Young Sherlock Holmes* series – the sixth novel, *Knife Edge*, is due in September – **Andrew Lane** has taken inspiration from Conan Doyle's next most famous hero in *Lost Worlds: Calum Challenger, Book 1* (Macmillan Children's Books, www.panmacmillan.com; £5.99). Calum, an eighteen-year-old paraplegic genius, is the great-grandson of George Edward Challenger, but his adventures owe much to Mr Lane's memories of reading Willard Price and EC Tubb. A band of mis-matched heroes, computer hacking, a ruthless organisation called Nemor, and the search for a missing link in the Caucasus – this first adventure is deliriously exciting. There's a website at www.thelostworlds.co.uk.

Looking a long way ahead, *Sherlock Holmes FAQ: All You Need to Know about the World's Greatest Private Detective* by **Dave Thompson** is due from Applause Theatre Book Publishers in March 2014 (www.halleonardbooks.com/).

The latest *Sherlockian E-times*, the catalogue-newsletter of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) is posted at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-4.html – full of good things!

As part of this year's **Essex Book Festival**, at 7.30pm on Friday 17 May **Barry Cryer** and **Bob Cryer** will be at Lion Walk United Reformed Church in Colchester to talk about their delightful book *Mrs Hudson's Diaries: A View from the Landing at 221B [*see DM 326*]*. The box office number is 01206 573948.

Fiona-Jane Brown, former Conan Doyle Projects Officer at Portsmouth, has launched a campaign to raise money to bring the **Don't Go Into the Cellar** company to a small community centre in the old fishing district of Torry, a suburb of Aberdeen, to stage *Holmes Alone* and *Warnings to the Curious*. She hopes to put the show on in the autumn. The fundraising site is at www.indiegogo.com/projects/taking-theatre-to-torry.

Chelmsford Theatre Workshop alumnus Duncan Cramphorn will play Holmes in **Burneside Amateur Theatrical Society**'s production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **F Andrew Leslie** at the Bryce Institute in Burneside, Cumbria from 30 May to 1 June (box office 07792 777213).

On 31 May and 1 June at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds there'll be 'a new upbeat musical, presented by the award-winning Voice Squad Cadets – hilarity on a stick!' That's *The Sherlock Girls* by **Birgitta Kenyon** (01248 769505; www.theatreroyal.org).

At the amazingly Gothick Strawberry Hill House in Twickenham (www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/events.php) at 7.30pm on 4 June, you can enjoy *It's Sherlock Holmes!* – described as 'a dazzling recreation of the long-running American radio series featuring the stories of Sherlock Holmes'.

Sherlock Holmes: The Best Kept Secret by **Mark Catley** will be at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds 18 May to 8 June (phone 0113 213 7700; http://wyp.org.uk/), then at the New Victoria Theatre in Woking, 11-15 June (www.atgtickets.com/venues/new-victoria-theatre/), at the New Theatre in Cardiff 18-22 June (www.newtheatrecardiff.co.uk/), and finally, for the moment, at Manchester Opera House 25-29 June (www.manchestertheatres.com/operahouse.htm).

From 16 June to 22 August the quartet called **The Pantaloons** will take their play *Sherlock Holmes* to a score of picturesque outdoor locations around the country (www.thepantaloons.co.uk/shows/sh2013.asp). And from 23 June to 4 September **Chapterhouse Theatre Company** will tour similar venues, in Britain and Ireland, with their own version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* dramatised by **Laura Turner** (www.chapterhouse.org/sherlock_2013.htm).

At www.bigfinish.com/ranges/coming_soon_reverse/sherlock-holmes you can pre-order Big Finish's 4-CD audio drama set *The Ordeals of Sherlock Holmes*, written by **Jonathan Barnes**, starring **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl**, and due for release in December *[*see DM 331*]*.

CBS Interactive is introducing new online-only series, including an Internet show based on *Elementary*. This is *Baker Street Irregulars*, 'live-action skein' which follows crew of characters assisting the modern-day Sherlock in solving crimes. It will debut online in the fall.

At the 2013 Edgar Awards banquet on 2 May, the Mystery Writers of America chose *Sherlock: A Scandal in Belgravia*, written by **Steven Moffat**, as Best TV Episode (*Elementary: Child Predator*, written by **Peter Black**, was nominated) and *The Scientific Sherlock Holmes* by **James O'Brien** as Best Critical/ Biographical work.

Westminster City Council & **Transport for London** are upgrading all of their signposting as part of the Legible London campaign. The old signs, including four genuine (but non-Victorian) for Baker Street, will be offered at auction. Most will be sold on Tuesday 21 May at **Summers Place Auctions** in Billingshurst, West Sussex. This will be complemented by a sealed bid auction, which ends on 22 May. See www.summersplaceauctions.com or call 01403 331331.

The official **Peter Cushing** First Day Cover for last month's *Great Britons* Royal Mail stamps sold out very quickly. However, the other versions are, I think, still available from various dealers, and they all feature the full set of ten stamps. I settled for the Vivien Leigh cover.

Peter Blau reports: 'If you're planning a trip to Hungary: there's now a Sherlockian society in Budapest. Zsófia Marinczák zmarinczak@gmail.com is the contact for the **Hungarian Sherlock Holmes Club**.' And Don Libey says, 'We are pleased to announce the formation of the **John H. Watson Society** on 11 April, 2013. You will find extensive details at www.johnhwatsonsociety.com.'

Patrick Garland, director, writer and actor, died on 20 April, aged seventy-eight. The major obituaries mentioned *Forty Years On*, *Underneath the Arches*, and his masterpiece, John Aubrey's *Brief Lives*, but regrettably they ignored the original production of *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, written by Jeremy Paul for Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke, and directed by Garland. As Michael Cox sadly observed, all four are gone now.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Spring 2013 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Spring 2013 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Cri Bar Crier***, April 2013 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, March 2013 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

The Illustrious Clients News, May 2013 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Alisa West, IllustClients@gmail.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, er, frequently (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***The Magic Door***, Spring 2013 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***The Passengers' Log***, Summer 2012 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, April 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 18 April 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, April 2013 (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

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Doug Wrigglesworth of the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at Toronto (check their website at www.acdfriends.org/) has alerted me to something quite unexpected and very interesting. In the preface to *The Great Boer War*, ACD wrote: 'There are many who have helped me in my task, but I especially acknowledge the co-operation of Mr Blasson, of the Langman Hospital, now dead in the service of his country…' In 1900 **Charles Blasson** was one of five senior students from University College Hospital recruited as dressers to the medical professionals at the Langman Field Hospital in South Africa. Conan Doyle was there for just over four months, writing as well as tending the sick and wounded. Blasson, who acted as his secretary, died only three weeks later, on his twenty-third birthday, of typhoid – the enteric fever that had laid John H Watson low at Peshawur. **Ken Cooper**, married to Blasson's great-niece, has edited and published *Aide-de-Camp to Conan Doyle: The Boer War Diary of Charles Blasson* as a 64-page A4 paperback, illustrated with twenty photographs and a map. The title isn't inaccurate, though it implies a closer relationship with Conan Doyle than Blasson actually had, but it should attract people to read the book – which, short as it is, is an intelligent, honest and, in its very matter-of-factness, moving first-hand account of an extraordinary situation. *Aide-de-Camp to Conan Doyle* is available from Amazon.co.uk at £6.99 and from Amazon.com at $9.99.

Back in March I noted that our Swedish member **Peter Bevelin** had gathered pithy quotations from Holmes and others, arranged to illustrate important points, in a privately printed volume called *A Few Lessons from Sherlock Holmes*. (For instance, under 'The eye sees only what it is trained to see' we find observations from Jean-Martin Charcot, C Auguste Dupin, William Osler and Thomas McCrae, as well as Holmes himself.) Now, as it deserves, the book has been made available as an attractive slim paperback by MX Publishing (www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £6.99).

The Shoso-in Bulletin, published in English between 1991 and 2004, was the most truly international Holmesian periodical of all. It was founded by our distinguished Japanese member **Hirayama Yuichi**, whose own contributions alone justified the *Bulletin*'s existence. *East Wind Coming: A Sherlockian Study Book* by **Yuichi Hirayama** and **John Hall** (MX, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99) gathers twenty-eight of Dr Hirayama's essays, from *The Shoso-in Bulletin*, *The Baker Street Journal*, *The Ritual* and elsewhere, along with four written jointly with a leading English Holmesian, John Hall. Yuichi has discovered, in a Japanese detection manual of 1940, the simple means by which Holmes determined the direction Herr Heidegger's bicycle travelled on the moor. In Grand Duke Paul of Russia, he has identified the most credible candidate for the King of Bohemia. As a dentist, he explains, entirely convincingly (alas!), that Sherlock Holmes was toothless. The collaborations examine Holmes's sporting prowess, Watson's qualifications, and the travesty of Holmes in the Arsène Lupin canon, but most stimulating, I think, are the authors' discussions of the first nine cases in *The Adventures*. Altogether it's a grand collection!

Something entirely new and excellent from MX is *Benedict Cumberbatch, in Transition: An Unauthorised Performance Biography* by **Lynnette Porter** (www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £12.99). Dr Porter is the editor of *Sherlock Holmes for the 21st Century: Essays on New Adaptations*, so I was confident that the new book would not be simple hagiography. As title and subtitle suggest, this is a survey of Cumberbatch's career as an actor, touching on his extra-curricular life only to the extent that it influences his acting or is influenced by the transition from jobbing actor to star to celebrity. The facts are meticulously (but not tediously) referenced, and the writing, as one would expect, is both literate and engaging. *Sherlock* is the turning-point, but it's good to be reminded of the extent and importance of the actor's career, before, during and after the breakthrough to stardom – acclaimed rôles in *Rhinoceros* and *Hedda Gabler* at the Royal Court, *After the Dance* at the Old Vic, and *Frankenstein* at the National Theatre; performances as Van Gogh and Stephen Hawking on television; leading parts in *Copenhagen*, *Neverwhere* and the continuing comedy series *Cabin Pressure* on radio; *War Horse*, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* in the cinema, and his emergence as a real film star in *Star Trek: Into Darkness*. Benedict Cumberbatch is a great actor, unpretentious, honest and dedicated. He's also a genuinely nice man.

In 2010 I welcomed a new graphic novel, *Sherlock Holmes: The Painful Predicament of Alice Faulkner*, written and illustrated by **Bret M Herholz** after William Gillette's play. Mr Herholz's latest book is *A Study in Sherlock: 13 Years of Sherlock Holmes Artwork 2000-2013* (Soft Shoe Press, http://herbertzohl.blogspot.co.uk/; priced at £8.99 on Amazon.co.uk). It's interesting to see the development of his distinctive Edward Gorey-esque style through scores of mostly unpublished drawings, including a whole sequence for 'The Cardboard Box', illustrations for stories by Lyndsay Faye, Bert Coules and Lee Shackleford, and set designs for Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes* and Conan Doyle's little-known play *The Crown Diamond*. What's in the book may be only a fraction of the Holmesian artwork that he's done. Personally, I'd love to see the rest of it!

At www.nplh.co.uk/ you'll find an unexpected gem: *No Place Like Holmes*, a series of comedy-dramas written and directed by **Ross K Foad** (who also plays Sherlock Holmes), based on the premise that Holmes and Watson were frozen in a time-spell by the demonic Hugo Baskerville, emerging eventually in the year 2010. We witness them, as the website says, fighting both evil masterminds and modern appliances. The films – nine so far, plus three *Mary Morstan Mysteries*, two reminiscences from the Great Hiatus, and six miscellaneous shorts – are attracting an increasing and enthusiastic audience worldwide, people who will surely welcome Mr Foad's two (yes, two) new books. *The Story and the Scripts Behind No Place Like Holmes* (MX, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99) contains four full-length scripts plus the promos for the Great Sherlock Holmes Debate 3 and the Baker Street Babes' *Sherlopalooza*, and, as the title suggests, an account of the curious birth and development of the series. *Holmes in Time for Christmas* (MX, www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £7.99) is a novel adapted from one of the Great Hiatus mysteries, involving Mycroft Holmes, Irene Adler and death in the festive season. Like the scripts and the films themselves, it's clever, intelligent and funny.

Other new titles from MX Publishing are *Sherlock Holmes: Studies in Legacy* by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** (£9.99) – four interlinked novellas together with two unrelated short stories; *Sherlock Holmes & Young Winston: The Giant Moles*, the third in the Young Winston Churchill series by **Mike Hogan**, in which is at last revealed the truth about the Paradol Chamber; *Sherlock Holmes: The Skull of Kohada Koheiji and Other Stories* by **Mike Hogan** (£9.99) – five investigations into the apparent supernatural; *Sherlock Holmes and The Mystery Writer* by **Fred Thursfield** (£8.99) – an adventure shared with Mary Watson after the death of her husband; and volume one of a new edition of *The Papers of Sherlock Holmes* by **David Marcum** (£9.99). Volume two will be out in September. (The original edition was reviewed favourably in DM 317.)

Peter Tong has taken his own successful comedy *Mrs H of Baker Street* as the inspiration for a series of e-books, in which Mrs Hudson and her maid, Fanny-Annie Grubbins, take over the agency after Holmes's reported death. *The Detective Ladies of Baker Street*, *The Detective Ladies Meet Jack the Nipper* and *The Detective Ladies in Death Holds a Séance* are available as Kindle books from Amazon.co.uk at 99p each. There'll be a printed omnibus later in the year. The author's website is at petertong.org.

The magnificent edition of *A Study in Scarlet*, illustrated by the Danish artist **Nis Jessen** , is now available in Kindle form from Amazon.co.uk at £25.99 – not cheap, but, trust me, it really is magnificent!

There's no shortage of Holmes in the theatres. *Sherlock Holmes – The Best Kept Secret* by **Mark Catley** will be at the New Theatre, Cardiff (www.newtheatrecardiff.co.uk/) 18-22 June, and Manchester Opera House (www.manchestertheatres.com/operahouse.htm) 25-29 June. There's talk of the play coming to London too. We shall see.

A couple of days ago Jean & I were thoroughly entertained by **The Pantaloons'** outdoor production of *Sherlock Holmes* by **Mark Hayward**, which presents 'The Speckled Band', *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and, depending on what the audience says, either 'The Blue Carbuncle' or 'The Red-Headed League', with bits of *The Sign of Four* and 'The Final Problem' cleverly and wittily worked in. There are songs too, and 'elementary' jokes. The play is on tour until 22 August: (www.thepantaloons.co.uk/shows/sh2013.asp).

At Chorley in Lancashire this coming week there's a new adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by **Mark Jones**. 'In a world of illusions, where fact and fiction blur, this modern-day Sherlock Holmes adventure is not for the faint-hearted!' It's at Chorley Little Theatre 17-22 June (http://chorleylittletheatre.com/chorleytheatre/).

In October our Society will visit Gladstone's Library at Hawarden, near Chester. Those who'd like to spy out the country beforehand can catch the **Hawarden Players** in *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Stolen Suspender* by **Bob Bishop** at the Hawarden Institute, 18-20 July (www.hawardenplayers.com/).

Gladfest is **Gladstone's Library Literary Festival**, which will take place on 7 & 8 September. On Saturday evening, the crime writer **Martin Edwards** presents *Who Killed George Hargrave?* 'Come and solve a Victorian crime in this interactive event. Martin will be your guide…' Details are at www.gladstoneslibrary.org/GladFest/ - or write to Gladstone's Library, Church Lane, Hawarden, Flintshire CH5 3DF (phone 01244 532350).

Kristina Manente reports: 'Me and a powerhouse of other nerdy girls are throwing a giant *Sherlock* party at San Diego Comic Con. In order to fund it we're offering lots of goodies plus raffle tickets to win a signed *Sherlock* script (signed by Benedict Cumberbatch, Martin Freeman, Mark Gatiss, Steven Moffat, and Andrew Scott). If you wouldn't mind spreading the word around the society/etc I'd be very much so obliged. The link to the funding site is www.sherlockedcc.com.'

At www.sherlockology.com/news/2013/6/1/big-chief-studios-sherlock-update-010613, the invaluable **Sherlockology** website, there's an update from Big Chief Studios Ltd on their officially licensed collector figures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson: 'We are well into development for both Sherlock and Watson 1:6 scale figures, working on costume tailoring and pack design right now. We plan to have these figures made available for pre-order in July. Both figures are scheduled for delivery in Q4 in time for the holidays.'

The Real Sherlock Holmes, which appears to be a very good TV documentary, was first broadcast last September in Canada. This month it's being shown in Australia, New Zealand and nearly a hundred other countries – see www.realsherlock.com/. But it hasn't yet aired in the USA, and there's no indication that it'll be shown here. Weird or what?

Visitors to London might wish to check out the new **London Film Location Walking Tour**, rather incongruously combining locations relating to *Bridget Jones' Diary*, Sherlock Holmes and Harry Potter. The information is at www.viator.com/tours/London/London-Film-Location-Walking-Tour-Bridget-Jones-Diary-Sherlock-Holmes-and-Harry-Potter/d737-5936FILMWALK.

This is from **Katri Leikola**, whom I just failed to meet at the fourth *Great Sherlock Holmes Debate* last weekend: '**Sherlock Finland** and **Sherlock Turku**, two unofficial fan groups of Sherlock Holmes, are arranging a semi-academic seminar in Turku on 3 August 2013. The event will be held in lecture hall Janus, Artium, Sirkkala campus (Kaivokatu 12) at University of Turku. The main speaker of the event is Mattias Boström. He is one of the leading Sherlockians of Sweden and Nordic countries. He is finishing a book about the history of Sherlock Holmes, which is to be published in Sweden at the end of the year. The event is bilingual (Finnish and English).' There's no charge to attend. The programme is at http://sherlockfinland.wordpress.com/tapahtumia-happenings/semiakateeminen-sherlock-kohtaaminen-3-8-2013/tapahtumakuvaus-event-description/, and there's a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/events/518525201519562/ .

The Good Mr Holmes is a tribute in song to the great detective, written and performed by **John Paul McGuire** and **Linda E Smith**. You can listen to it, and read the lyrics, on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7vUEy7GyMI&feature=youtu.be.

Bad news from **Scott Monty**: the **Sherlock Holmes Social Network** (http://sherlockholmes.ning.com/?xg_source=msg_mes_network) will shortly close for good., owing to the cost of running the site and the overwhelming number of spam accounts. Fortunately there are two alternatives that are free to use and to administer. At https://plus.google.com/communities/114565123495685504221 is **The Sherlock Holmes Community** on Google+, and at http://facebook.com/ihearofsherlock is the **I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere** Facebook Page.

Next Friday and Saturday will see what I think is London's first conference devoted to the great detective: **Sherlock Holmes: Past and Present**, mounted by the Institute of English Studies at the University of London Senate House. '*The Strand Magazine* and the Sherlock Holmes stories contribute one of the most enduring paradigms for the production and consumption of popular culture in the twentieth- and the twenty-first centuries. The stories precipitated a burgeoning fan culture including various kinds of participation, wiki and crowd-sourcing, fan-fiction, virtual realities and role-play gaming... This conference aims to unpick the historical intricacies of Holmesian fandom as well as offering a wide variety of perspectives upon its newest manifestations.' The bewilderingly full programme is online at www.ies.sas.ac.uk/ies-events/conferences/SherlockHolmes, and there's a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SherlockHolmesPastAndPresent.

Peter Blau notes that **Sherlocktron**, Willis Frick's invaluable website at www.sherlocktron.com, features updated listings of 'Sherlockian purveyors and Sherlockian publications' plus Peter's own lists of 901 Sherlock Holmes societies, with contact details for the 419 active ones.

My friend **Roger Dobson**, who died recently, was never a member of our Society, but Sherlock Holmes was among his many interests, which also included the author Arthur Machen and the disputed Realm of Redonda. His article 'Sherlock Holmes: The Last Mystery', published in *Antiquarian Book Monthly Review* in February 1988, proposes a link between Holmes and George Gissing – and makes a curiously convincing case for Owen's College (now Manchester University) as Holmes's *alma mater*.

Publications received. ***The Alfalfa Gazette***, June 2013 (**The Friends of a Soldier Named Murray**, Jody Baker, 1005 Mountain Creek Road, #531, Cattanooga, TN 37405-1649, USA) ***The Gaslight Gazette***, May 2013 & June 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***The Illustrious Clients News***, June 2013 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Alisa West, IllustClients@gmail.com).

Ineffable Twaddle, June 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, 21 April 1913 *[*sic*]* (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***Mayday Mayday,*** May 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***Proceedings of the Pondicherry Lodge***, June 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of India**, Jayantika Ganguly, shsieditors@yahoo.in). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, 16 May 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, May 2013 (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

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**. *An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.*

It's a delight to welcome a really important new work of Holmesian scholarship, even though, as an English monoglot, I'm unable to appreciate it to the full. *Från Holmes till Sherlock*, the masterwork of **Mattias Boström,** winner of the BSI's 2009 Morley-Montgomery Award, is due in August from Piratförlaget (www.piratforlaget.se/bocker). The book is in Swedish. A Danish edition is expected next year, and I very much hope that the book will be translated into English before too long. Meanwhile, the Scandinavian influence on the English language allows us to grasp the essence of some, at least, of Mr Boström's text. In an interview posted at http://bakerstreetbeat.blogspot.co.uk/, on Dan Andriacco's blog, he explains the immense amount of research involved, and adds: 'I present some previously unknown facts regarding the years when Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was alive, but in the later half of the book there are big chunks of unknown facts.' Definitely one to look out for!

Some cartoonists have looked beyond the Sherlockian clichés, and combined artistic skill and a mad sense of humour with a deep knowledge of the canon. One of the best was the amazingly prolific **Norman Schatell** (1925-1980), whose work enlivened *The Baker Street Journal*, *Baker Street Miscellanea* and other publications. Who else could have devised a series of just-about-practical craft projects that include the Very Kinetic Holmes Marionette, the Late Professor Moriarty Oscillating and Magnetic Automobile-Dashboard Goodluck Figure, and the Holmes-Roylott Trick Poker? It took thirty-three years, but *The Lighter Side of Sherlock Holmes: The Sherlockian Artwork of Norman Schatell* compiled by **Glenn Schatell** (MX Publishing; www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £12.99) was worth the wait.

Clive Bloom, author of *Victoria's Madmen: Revolution and Alienation* (Palgrave Macmillan; www.palgrave.com; 2 August; £20.00), has written and lectured extensively on British popular fiction and popular movements in politics and religion. Arthur Conan Doyle features in this book, as one of many extraordinary people whose ideas ran counter to, or sometimes parallel to, the accepted conformism of the British imperial establishment. Some were genuinely insane, like the painter Richard Dadd; some were truly bad, and some may have been deluded, while 'Grey Owl', for instance, pretended to be what he was not for a sound and worthwhile purpose; some, like William Morris, knew that their visions were just that, but knew too that they were worth striving for. Drugs, ghosts, sham-messiahs, megalomania, piety, the fight against injustice – it's all here, though the linking thread is not always apparent. My one real gripe is that, although there's a bibliography, no sources are given for the many quotations. *[*Get 20% discount on* ***Victoria's Madmen*** *today by visiting www.palgrave.com and entering promotional code WORLDPALGRAVE20.*]*

The number of new Sherlock Holmes stories seems endless. Does anyone have time to read them all? The latest update of *The database of Sherlockian pastiches, parodies and related fiction* kept by **Philip K Jones** contains 10,205 entries! - www.sherlock-holmes.es/database.php.

N M Scott is the author of two previous volumes of short stories. Due next week, but already available from Amazon.co.uk, is *Sherlock Holmes: The Russian Connection and other new adventures* (Book Guild Publishing; www.bookguild.co.uk/; £16.99), ten exploits that take Holmes and Watson to rural Sussex, Kew Gardens, the Yorkshire Dales, Bethnal Green, and Moscow. The cases involve espionage, blackmail, abduction and murder – and there's more than one Russian connection. The plotting is clever, the period setting faithful, and the style agreeable. Mr Scott writes well, and is well served by his publishers. The book is ideal for those who regret that there are only sixty canonical cases.

Even more prolific is **Hugh Ashton**. *The Deed Box of John H Watson MD* (Inknbeans Press; http://www.inknbeans.com/hugh-ashton.html; £15.99), is a 360-page hardback, in which the text is laid out in double columns, attractively evoking the appearance of *The Strand Magazine*. The punctuation and even some of the spelling follow the usage of *The Strand*. Eight of the eleven stories purport to tell the truth about those veiled hints that Watson dropped: here, for instance, are 'Colonel Warburton's Madness', 'The Mystery of the Paradol Chamber', 'The Strange Case of James Phillimore' and 'The Case of the Trepoff Murder', all ingeniously devised and very well written. The longest narrative, *The Darlington Substitution*, is published separately, as a 220-page paperback (Inknbeans; £6.40). It's a complex business, beginning with the theft of a family relic, supposedly essential to the continuation of the Darlington line, and eventually encompassing kidnap, corruption and murder. There are echoes of 'A Scandal in Bohemia', of course, and of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and 'The Red-Headed League'. John Clay plays an important part, but is rightly kept off-stage. In any case, the female instigator of all the strife is more than a match for him. Fortunately Sherlock Holmes is more than a match for her.

Having exhausted the deed box, Hugh Ashton has more recently found another source, resulting so far in two more paperbacks: *Notes from the Dispatch-Box of John H Watson MD* (Inknbeans; £6.18) and *Further Notes from the Dispatch-Box of John H Watson MD* (Inknbeans; £6.39). The first gives us 'The Affair of the Vatican Cameos', 'The Reigate Poisoning Case' ('The Reigate Poisoning Case Concluded', published separately as a Kindle, very cleverly turns the story on its head) and, unexpectedly, 'The History of John Augustus Edward Clay as Told by Himself'. In the second volume are 'The Abernetty Horror', 'The Case of the Finsbury House', 'The Curious Affair of the Archdeacon' and 'An Account of the Victor Lynch Forgery' – that last told by Inspector Charles *[*sic*]* Lestrade. Mr Ashton's stories are admirably close to the real thing.

From MX Publishing come three very different novels. *The Making of a Man* by **John Worth** (£9.99) gives a radically new account of how Sherlock Holmes came to be. Young Shiloh Coombes (originally Gomez), fallen on bad times after leaving his family in disgrace, is rescued by Isidor Feigenbaum, master of a gang of young thieves. The influence of *Oliver Twist* is plain, but Coombes's experience is not like Oliver's. It's a bold notion – perhaps a little too bold

In *A Study in Regret* (£6.99) **Claire Daines** reimagines another part of the detective's life. In this version, not only did Professor Moriarty die at Reichenbach but Dr Watson was shot dead by Colonel Moran – and Sherlock Holmes must live with the loss and the danger, supported by Inspector Lestrade and Mary Watson. It's an exciting and emotional story, though the informality between the three seems wrong. The adventure will continue in a forthcoming volume called *The Final Solution*.

The new novel by **Dan Andriacco**, however, is entirely to my taste. *The Disappearance of Mr James Phillimore* (£9.99) brings Sebastian McCabe, Jeff Cody and Lynda Teal from Erin, Ohio to London. McCabe has been challenged to a debate, Holmes vs Dupin; Jeff and Lynda are on their honeymoon, but they're inevitably drawn in when a distinguished Holmesian collector disappears. His name is James Phillimore, and he vanishes in just the way that his fictional namesake did, stepping back into his house to retrieve his umbrella. Perhaps for the first time, Sebastian McCabe finds himself up against a real deadly enemy, one who sees himself as a real-life Moriarty. The book actually gives us two separate mysteries on the same theme. Within the present-day narrative is a fine Sherlock Holmes pastiche, 'The Magic Umbrella', which may just be relevant to the disappearance of the real James Phillimore. And there's a bonus: Jeff and Lynda spent the earlier part of their honeymoon in Rome, where Lynda solved the curious case of the Vatican Cameos. Dr Andriacco's writing, as always, is witty and assured. Jeff, Lynda and Sebastian are people you'd truly like to meet.

Also from MX are new editions of *Mystery at St Andrews* by **W P Lawler** (£9.99) – I said of the first edition that the author's love of both the Holmes Canon and of golf ensures authenticity and appeal – and *The Papers of Sherlock Holmes* by **David Marcum** (two volumes, £9.99 each) – nine intriguing mysteries, very much in the classic tradition.

Conan Doyle said, 'Poe's masterful detective, M Dupin, had from boyhood been one of my heroes.' Yet very few writers have created new adventures for the Chevalier C Auguste Dupin. In their introduction to *Beyond Rue Morgue: Further Tales of Edgar Allan Poe's 1st Detective* (Titan Books; www.titanbooks.com; £7.99), the editors **Paul Kane** and **Charles Prepolec** say of Michael Harrison's 1968 collection *The Exploits of the Chevalier Dupin* that the stories 'capture the methodology of Dupin, but lack many of Poe's more outré elements; Poe having been known for his horror and fantasy tales, as well.' The contributors to this new volume, who include Clive Barker, Simon Clark, Lisa Tuttle and Stephen Volk, set about rectifying that omission. One story reveals Dupin as a monster. Another has him battling extra-dimensional invaders. Two, in completely different ways, concern his descendants. Yet another tells us that Poe himself did not die in 1849, but went to Paris and assumed the identity of his fictional creation. My feeling is that Michael Harrison was right to exclude the 'more outré elements' from his pastiches, just as Poe did from his original three tales, but the stories in *Beyond Rue Morgue* are imaginative and well written. I'm sure they have a ready audience.

I'm not big on graphic novels, but I'm bowled over by the *Grandville* series, written and illustrated by our member **Bryan Talbot**. The title is a tribute to the 19th century French caricaturist, J J Grandville, whose depictions of people as hominid animals (and other things) helped inspire surrealism. In Mr Talbot's novels England has only recently gained independence from France, having been conquered by Napoleon two hundred years ago along with the rest of Europe. In this Steampunk world, all the people are animals, French is the universal language, and the name Grandville is sometimes applied to the Imperial City of Paris. The artwork is superb, and the style allows for subtle little jokes, dropping in characters from Tintin and Rupert Bear. The hero of *Grandville*, *Grandville Mon Amour* and *Grandville Bête Noire* (Jonathan Cape; www.capegraphicnovels.co.uk; £16.99 each) is DI Archie LeBrock of Scotland Yard, a badger, whose sidekick is an elegant rat. LeBrock's character combines elements of Sherlock Holmes, Sam Spade and even Mike Hammer, and he needs all his intelligence and his courage to uncover political conspiracies that bring to mind the phrase 'madmen wielding sceptres'. The tense England/France political situation parallels that of Ireland/UK not so long ago.

Our own Calvert Markham has written the foreword to *Sherlock Holmes in Japan* by **Vasudev Murthy**, writing as Akira Yamashita (HarperCollins India; www.harpercollins.co.in/; Rs350). *'Dr John H. Watson receives a strange letter from his supposedly dead friend, and sets out for Tokyo. On the ship, his quiet, distinguished cabin-mate is murdered…. Meanwhile, in the opium dens of Shanghai and in the back alleys of Tokyo, sinister men hatch evil plots. And Professor Moriarty stalks the world, drawing up a map for worldwide dominion. Only one man can outwit the diabolical professor. And that man has survived Reichenbach Falls.'* The novel is available from www.buybooksindia.com/getProductDetail.action?id=13618776 and other sources.

Vernon Mealor, author of a very good series of stories with Colonel Moran as the protagonist, offers *The Crocker Factor: Some Observations on Sherlock Holmes*, three cases in which PC Crocker, a junior member of Lestrade's team, has a unique opportunity to observe Holmes's methods. It's available from Amazon as a Kindle at £1.02.

At www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-7.html you'll find the latest *Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-newsletter of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) – always worth a look.

The mordant farce *Broken Holmes* by **Robin Johnson** was well reviewed on at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2009, and was staged last month during the *Sherlock Holmes: Past & Present* conference in London. The original cast (James Bober, Canavan Connolly & Patrick Spragg, with Anna Nicholson replacing Rebecca D'Souza) will be back at the Fringe this year from 19-24th August at 4:55 pm in Venue 39, TheSpace on The Mile.

On 6 September **Roger Llewellyn** will perform *Sherlock Holmes – The Death and Life* at The Exchange, Sturminster Newton, Dorset (01258 475137; www.stur-exchange.co.uk). On 12-13 September he'll be at TheatreSevern, Shrewsbury (01743 281281; www.theatresevern.co.uk/).

A crime fiction event is planned for 5 September at **St Pancras Library**, across the road from St Pancras Station. The speakers will be **Mike Topping**, cover artist for the Penguin editions of Sherlock Holmes, and **Laura Thompson** of the Folio Society, biographer of Agatha Christie. This free event will also provide a rare opportunity to consult beautifully bound and illustrated Folio crime fiction works (including some of the more lavish limited editions not currently featured on the website). More details later.

On 29 October at **Clwyd Theatr Cymru** in Mold (www.clwyd-theatr-cymru.co.uk/#1), **Tony Earnshaw**, , author of *An Actor and a Rare One - Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes*, will give an illustrated talk called *Peter Cushing and the Strange Case of the Concertina Factor*. The evening will include a double-bill screening of Hammer Films' *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Mummy*.

Ken Ross has uploaded to YouTube his video recordings of the Society's weekend visit to Portsmouth in 2008. Go to www.youtube.com and type **ken ross sherlock holmes** in the search bar to bring up his page.

Aziz Bin Adam notes that *Timeshift - Everybody was Kung Fu Fighting: The Rise of Martial Arts in Britain*, the BBC TV programme featuring Bartitsu can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=St0-JDpJAIQ.

If you thought things couldn't get weirder, try *Shakespeare & Watson: Detectives of Mystery* at www.shakespeareandwatson.com/wordpress/...

Barry Young (the Scotland Yard Jack-in-Office) reports that there'll be a special meeting of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of Scotland** at 7.30pm on Wednesday 31 July in the Library of Glasgow Art Club, 185 Bath Street. **Daniel Stashower**, biographer of Conan Doyle and co-editor of *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters*, *The Narrative of John Smith* and *Dangerous Work: Diary of An Arctic Adventure*, will talk about his work. A major character in his latest history, *The Hour of Peril: The Secret Plot to Murder Lincoln Before the Civil War*, is Gorbals-born Allan Pinkerton, founder of the famous detective agency. The evening is free. Contact Barry for more details at sherlockscotland@btinternet.com.

Peter Blau notes that there's another active Dutch society, besides **The Sherlock Holmes Society of the Hague**. Jan-Just Middel is the contact for the **Baarn Baskervilles** (Nieuw Baarnstraat #4-C, 3743 BR Baarn, Netherlands).

Tim Symonds is looking to have a rose named after Sherlock Holmes. Suggestions for the preferred colour, scent and so on will be welcome. Contact me in the first instance, please, and I'll pass messages on.

It shouldn't have been a surprise to learn that our good friend **Reggie Musgrave** died on 24 June, as we knew he'd been ill for some time. The news came as a shock, none the less. Reggie was formerly Roger Matthews. Under both names he contributed a great deal to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London and the Poor Folk Upon the Moors, whose journal *The Torr* he edited from 2003 to 2011. Reggie was a good friend and excellent company, especially over a pint or two of bitter. He will be greatly missed.

Periodicals received. ***The Alfalfa Gazette***, July 2013 (**Friends of the Soldier Named Murray**, Jody Baker, josiahbaker@bkhcw.com). ***The Arthur Conan Doyle Newsletter and Birthday File XX***, 22 May 2013 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian W Pugh; www.the-conan-doyle-crowborough-establishment.com/). ***The Baker Street Journal***, Summer 2013 (Steven Rothman, www.bakerstreetjournal.com; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Bilge Pump,*** July 2013 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, http://barquelonestar.com). ***The Camden House Journal***, March 2013, April 2013 and May 2013 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Canadian Holmes***, Summer 2013 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, June 2013 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Gaslight Gazette***, July 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, July 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***The Petrel Flyer***, June 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***The Scion***, Summer 2013 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Summer 2013 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***The Sherlock Holmes Journal***, Summer 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, c/o Yours Truly).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, June 2013 (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

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no. 335 24 August 2013

The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London***. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.*

Perhaps the most important new publications in our field are the third edition of *The Bibliography of A Conan Doyle* by **Richard Lancelyn Green** & **John Michael Gibson**, with updates by **Phillip George Bergem** and including pdf files of book covers & title pages and magazine covers & illustrations – these extras being works in progress (Cdn$50.00); and *The e-Index to The Strand Magazine* by **Geraldine W Beare** (no price given). Both are published in electronic form on disc by The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (www.batteredbox.com; gav@cablerocket.com; PO Box 50, RR #4, Eugenia, Ontario, Canada N0C 1E0). I can't give you a proper assessment right now because the formatting seems to be too advanced for my computer. That obstacle should be overcome shortly. I can vouch for the excellence of the Green-Gibson *Bibliography* as the second edition is on my shelf, and to be able to consult it via the computer, with the various extras, will be a real blessing. Geraldine Beare's *Strand* index is long out of print in hard copy, so it'll be a delight to have it in any format.

John Gibson has also contributed to another new book from the same publisher, *The Budds of the West Country*, a well-illustrated 112-page paperback by **Brian W Pugh**, (no price given). Brian Pugh, Curator of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, author of the invaluable *Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, gives us a genealogical survey of that remarkable family from the Revd Richard Budd of St Columb Minor to the death of his great-great grandson (if I read the family tree correctly) Dr George Turnavine Budd of Plymouth. It was, of course, George Budd whose treatment of his younger colleague Arthur Conan Doyle influenced the latter's life and career in such unexpected ways. Fourteen pages are devoted to his life and twenty-four more to a selection of his letters and essays from medical journals, rebutting the myth that he was no more than a quack. He was brilliant, charismatic, eccentric and devious, qualities that, thanks to the researches of Messrs Pugh and Gibson, we can see developing through the generations of Budds.

For 'Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Place', the recent conference at the University of Minnesota, the Norwegian Explorers published *J Randolph Cox: A Sherlockian Festschrift* edited by **Phillip Bergem** (US10.00). This attractive 144-page paperback includes, as is only right, tributes to a senior and greatly admired member of the Explorers, from Andrew Malec, Jon Lellenberg and Allen J Hubin among others, but by far the greater part of the book features a selection of Randy Cox's own invigorating Holmesian essays, from the many published in *The Baker Street Journal*, *Baker Street Miscellanea* and elsewhere. The book isn't yet listed on the website at www.norwegianexplorers.org, but check with John Bergquist at john.bergquist@gmail.com (3556 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122, USA).

Among the many treasures in the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota (see www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/holmes) a good number were bequeathed by the late John Bennett Shaw, whose centenary falls on 10 October this year. In celebration of John's enthusiasm, wisdom and friendship, Sherlock in LA Press (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA; sherlockinla@cox.net) has published a delightful little booklet, *The Sage of Santa Fe: Adventures and Public Life of John Bennett Shaw* by **Susan Rice** and **Vinnie Brosnan**, with photographs, drawings, quotations and reminiscences ($7.00 postpaid to US, $9.00 postpaid to UK).

The Victorian Detective by **Alan Moss** and **Keith Skinner** (Shire Publications, www.shirebooks.co.uk; £6.99) is a first-rate introduction to the British police detective, from Fielding's Bow Street Runners to the age of scientific investigation. Alan Moss is a retired senior police officer. Keith Skinner is co-author of *The Official Encyclopaedia of Scotland Yard*, an authority on the Whitechapel murders, and a consultant to the Metropolitan Police Crime Museum – the so-called Black Museum. The 56-page paperback is splendidly illustrated, remarkably comprehensive, and written with great authority. Conan Doyle's depiction of the police often slides into caricature. *The Victorian Detective* is the reality.

The Criminological Holmes by **Kelvin Jones** (Cunning Crimes Books, http://cunningcrimes.blogspot.co.uk; Kindle £4.39) contains an A to Z guide to the criminological content of the canon, as well as a list of Holmes's own monographs and a rare reprint of *Upon The Tracing of Footsteps.*

The House of Silk was the first new Sherlock Holmes novel officially approved by the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd. Others have followed, including *Sherlock Holmes & the Master Engraver* by **Ross Husband** (GlenRoss Editions, Norfolk IP21 4YG; £11.95; Kindle £3.99) – first in a series of six called *The Revival of Sherlock Holmes*. In 1889 the plates for the next run of Bank of England £10.00 notes are stolen, along with the special water-marked paper. The quest to retrieve them before the country's economy is ruined takes Holmes and Watson into the foulest, most dangerous corners of London. The mind behind the crime is shielded by brutality and murder – and by his own extraordinary intelligence. It's a clever, fast-moving, atmospheric story, very acceptably written, except for a persistent omission of the comma in the vocative ('Now work swiftly if you please Watson'; 'I would not wish to presume Mr Holmes'…).

Sherlock Holmes: The Stuff of Nightmares by **James Lovegrove** (Titan Books; www.titanbooks.com; 30 August; £7.99) tells a more *outré* tale, as you might expect from a prolific and very popular science-fiction writer. The action begins with an explosion at Waterloo Station, and builds from there. The bomber's ultimate victim is to be Queen Victoria, but is he, as the police believe, the masked man who appears at each catastrophic scene? Or does that mysterious person (a sort of amalgam of Spring-heeled Jack and Batman, who calls himself Baron Cauchemar) have another and higher purpose, as Holmes suspects? James Lovegrove's steampunk thriller treats Holmes, Watson and their circle with intelligence and respect, and fulfils the promise of his short story 'The Fallen Financier' in *The Encounters of Sherlock Holmes*.

Black Coat Press titles available as e-books (kindle, nook, etc, etc) now include: *The Daughter of Fantômas*, *Fantômas in America*, *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Blonde Phantom*, *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Hollow Needle*, *Arsène Lupin vs Sherlock Holmes: The Stage Play*, *Rocambole* (two plays), *Gentlemen Of The Night* / *Captain Phantom* (two plays), and *Sherlock Holmes In Paris* by **Seamas Duffy**.

Carl Heifetz, a pillar of the Pleasant Places of Florida, reports the publication of his first novel, *The Voyage of the Blue Carbuncle* (Outskirts Press, www.outskirtspress.com; $8.95). 'Based on the work of Arthur Conan Doyle and Gene Roddenberry, *Voyage of the Blue Carbuncle* is a fun and exciting spoof, sure to please science fiction fans as well as those who love the stories of Sherlock Holmes and *Star Trek*.'

The launch party for *The Papers of Sherlock Holmes: Volume Two* by **David Marcum** (MX Publications, http://www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99) will be at the Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street at 7.00pm on 26 September. Free tickets are available from http://papersofsherlockholmes-efbevent.eventbrite.co.uk/. Ross Foad,

Luke Kuhns and Tony Reynolds will also be signing copies of their books David Marcum's next book, *Sherlock Holmes and a Quantity of Debt*, will be published on 6 November.

From MX on 8 October comes *Sherlock Holmes and The Lufton Lady*, a short novel by the much-missed by **Marlene R Aig**, edited by **Chris Redmond** (£6.99), and on 30 October comes *Watson Is Not an Idiot: An Opinionated Tour of the Sherlock Holmes Canon* by **Eddy Webb** (£9.99).

Investigating Sherlock Holmes: The Jewish Connection and Other Inquiries by **Hartley R Nathan** & **Clifford S Goldfarb** is due on 31 October from Mosaic Press (www.mosaic-press.com; £16.09).

Due on 11 November, *The Illustrated Sherlock Holmes: Two Unabridged Mysteries from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* is a 'Literary Pop Up' book illustrated by **Chris Coady**, whose artwork so impressed in *The Lost Stories of Sherlock Holmes* by Tony Reynolds (Canterbury Classics; £12.84).

Anthony Horowitz is working on his second Sherlock Holmes novel. The *Daily Telegraph* reported on Friday: 'As part of a fundraising initiative, Horowitz will write the winner of a charity auction into the new book. Prospective victims can bid on eBay, with funds being donated to bullying charity Kidscape. The auction opened on Thursday evening, and will run until September 1. If the successful bid is more than £1,000, the winner's appearance and background will be written in. £2,500 will allow them to meet Holmes and for over £5,000, the donor will be killed off in a bespoke fashion.'

MC Black notes that Bibliophile Ltd is offering the paperback of *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters* at just 85 pence! (Bibliophile Limited, Unit 5 Datapoint, South Crescent, London E16 4TL; www.bibliophilebooks.com) He adds: 'People ordering or requesting a free catalogue are asked to quote 1045 so they know the source of the recommendation.'

Our Society's re-enactment of Holmes's fight with Roaring Jack Woodley features, with photo, on a nice website called *The Best of Farnham* at www.thebestof.co.uk/local/farnham/community-hub/blog/view/fascinating-stories-from-my-travels-around-farnham.

At noon on Bank Holiday Monday, 26 August, BBC Radio Norfolk will broadcast an admirable hour-long documentary (I don't say that just because I'm in it) called *Far From the Fogs*, in which **Paul Hayes** investigates the links between Sherlock Holmes and the county of Norfolk. Those outside the area can listen on-line at www.bbc.co.uk/radionorfolk, or catch up on iPlayer at www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01dwbkl, where there's a page about the programme.

Ken Ross is uploading more of his video recordings to YouTube. The 2000 Norfolk Weekend will be followed by Dartmoor 2002 and Sussex 2004. Go to www.youtube.com and type **ken ross sherlock holmes** in the search bar.

The fascinating *Sherlock Holmes Map* by **Thomas Bruce Wheeler** now includes routes based on the researches of **Bernard Davies**: 'Holmes and Watson's meandering route from Cavendish Square to the rear of Camden House, in 'The Empty House'. I modified it slightly, as I think the entire journey was by Hansom cab. In 'The Blue Carbuncle, Mr. Davies identified the trek from The Alpha Inn to Breckinridge's goose stand. I included my suggested route from 221B Baker Street to the Alpha Inn. Holmes, Watson and Mary Morstan's four-wheeler ride from the Lyceum Theatre to Thaddeus Sholto's house in *The Sign of the Four*. After identifying Pondicherry Lodge, Mr. Davies suggested the path Holmes, Watson and Toby took in what he called the Creosote Trail, to Mordecai Smith's boatyard.' Find the map at the splendid Hungarian website run (in English) by **Zsófia Marincsák**, **Edina Jászberényi** and **Adrienn Fray:** www.sherlockian-sherlock.com/the-london-of-sherlock-holmes.php or at https://mapsengine.google.com/map/viewer?gmp=msp&mid=zz7OCIy2oDA4.k6pgNWXmShgE.

Tom is also working on a map showing the location of famous Londoners' homes. There'll be over 700 sites when it's finished. See: https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?gmp=msp&mid=zz7OCIy2oDA4.klI46NrhEbLE.

Roger Llewellyn has sent a list of venues on his autumn tour in *Sherlock Holmes – The Death and Life*: 6 Sep: The Exchange, Sturminster Newton (01258 475137; www.stur-exchange.co.uk). 12-13 Sep: TheatreSevern, Shrewsbury (01743 281281; www.theatresevern.co.uk/). 18 Sep: Connaught Theatre, Worthing (01903 206206; www.worthingtheatres.co.uk). 20 Sep: St George's, Great Yarmouth (01493 331484; www.stgeorgestheatre.com). 15 Oct: Perth Theatre (01738 621031; www.horsecross.co.uk/perth-theatre). 25-26 Oct: Key, Peterborough (01733 207239; www.vivacity-peterborough.com/venues/key-theatre). 13 Nov: 40 Winks Hotel, London. 28-30 Nov: Mill Studio, Guildford (01483 440000; www.yvonne-arnaud.co.uk).

Sherlock Holmes 10 Minute Plays by **John DeGaetano**, will be at the Leicester Square Theatre, London 2-5 October (08448 733433; www.leicestersquaretheatre.com), then at Islington's Kings Head Theatre (0207 478 0160; www.kingsheadtheatre.com) 8-12 October.

Sherlock Holmes: The Speckled Band, Treasurer's House, York, November 14 to 24

Theatre Mill present *Sherlock Holmes: The Speckled Band* at the Treasurer's House, York, from November 14 to 24, inviting you to 'experience the thrill of discovery and the true power of classic storytelling' (01904 623568; yorktheatreroyal.co.uk).

The République du Congo, the smaller of the two Congolese republics, has issued an attractive *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* series of postage stamps. I've not yet seen them on offer in the UK, though some US dealers offer them on Amazon.com. You can see the stamps at www.trussel.com/detfic/sholmes.htm#Congo, and just above them a 2012 Liechtenstein issue that somehow escaped my notice before.

Aziz Bin Adam reports that the grand 1965 film *A Study in Terror* has been posted complete on YouTube. He adds: 'You can view @ 360p or change it to 720p - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iw_FyAjzewQ - Video quality is superb, btw.'

Not Holmesian, but of interest nonetheless: Mark Smith, Archivist at **Derbyshire Record Office**, advises: 'We have just put out a blog post about Conan Doyle and his bullet proof vest idea. Here is the link: http://recordoffice.wordpress.com/2013/07/17/sir-arthur-conan-doyle-ferodo-and-the-bullet-proof-vest/.'

And Alistair Duncan passes on news from Ian Bone of the **South Norwood Tourist Board**: 'We are launching a campaign to name the lake in South Norwood Country Park *Lake Conan* in honour of ACD. The lake is presently un-named and we are getting a positive response. We would be grateful for your support and that of The Sherlock Holmes Society.' See http://southnorwoodtouristboard.com/page/2/.

News just in from **Tony Earnshaw**, author of *An Actor and a Rare One: Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes*: his company, Reel Solutions, has published a 20-page monograph entitled *Putting the 'Grand' in Guignol: A Centenary Tribute to Peter Cushing*, with contributions from Peter Sasdy, Peter Duffell, Paul Annett, Kevin Connor, Bernard Cribbins, John Hurt, Val Kilmer, Barbara Shelley, Kate O'Mara and Uwe Sommerlad, plus a complete filmography, list of awards and an Holmes-oriented essay/lecture by Tony himself. Plus lots of production images and some behind the scenes candid shots. Copies can be ordered from tony@reelsolutions.co.uk for £6.20 postpaid.

Periodicals received. ***The Alfalfa Gazette***, September 2013 (**Friends of the Soldier Named Murray**, Jody Baker, josiahbaker@bkhcw.com). ***The Bilge Pump,*** August 2013 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, http://barquelonestar.com). ***For the Sake of the Trust: The Baker Street Irregulars Trust Newsletter***, Spring 2013 (**The BSI Trust**, Marshall S Berdan, 2015 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033, USA). ***The Gaslight Gazette***, August 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, August 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, Juli 2013 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***The Petrel Flyer***, September 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, July 2013 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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I can now access the electronic editions, both published on disc by The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (www.batteredbox.com; gav@cablerocket.com; PO Box 50, RR #4, Eugenia, Ontario, Canada N0C 1E0) of *The Bibliography of A Conan Doyle* by **Richard Lancelyn Green** & **John Michael Gibson**, with updates by **Phillip George Bergem** (Cdn$50.00); and *The e-Index to The Strand Magazine* by **Geraldine W Beare** (no price given, though *Index to The Strand Magazine* is listed as by **J F Whitt** at $10.00, which may be an error).). The *Bibliography* is, of course, excellent, and I'm particularly pleased to have Geraldine Beare's *Strand* index, which has been far too long out of print. Note, though, that this edition isn't fully searchable.

Each chapter of *Conan Doyle: Writing, Profession and Practice* by **Douglas Kerr** (Oxford University Press; www.oup.com; £30.00) looks at the various aspects of Conan Doyle's unusually varied life, and considers the influence and the impact that each had on his writing. Born in Scotland of an Irish mother and a second-generation English father, he was schooled in England, studied medicine in Scotland, and for the rest of his life was based in England. All three cultures are evident in his writing, and Professor Kerr may be right in calling him Britain's last national writer. His initial career in medicine, in which he twice acted as ship's surgeon and briefly as ophthalmologist, as well as general practitioner, influenced his creation of Sherlock Holmes as the world's first consulting detective. Even if you didn't know, you could probably deduce from his fiction that he was also a scientist, sportsman, historian, liberal imperialist and amateur criminologist, and of course his spiritualist mission occupied much of the latter part of his life. Douglas Kerr's essays are particularly valuable in placing each topic within its historical and social context. His prose is as intelligent and lucid as his approach to his subject. This is an admirable book.

Since John Camp's splendid little volume *Discovering London Railway Stations* was published in 1969, much has changed. Broad Street Station is no more. Liverpool Street and King's Cross have been successfully redeveloped. The Eurostar terminal at Waterloo has come and gone. St Pancras has become a magnificent international station. The grand hotels have been restored and reopened… *Discovering London Railway Stations* by **Oliver Green**, new from the same publishers, Shire Publications (www.shirebooks.co.uk; £6.99) is necessarily a completely new book, twice as long at 104 pages, and illustrated in colour. Broad Street, Willesden Junction and, rather sadly, Baker Street, are no longer included, but Blackfriars, currently being redeveloped, has been added, and each of the thirteen stations is covered in greater depth.

Shire has also published *Victorian and Edwardian Railway Travel* by **David Turner** (56 pages; £6.99) and *The Victorians and Edwardians on the Move* by **John Hannavy** (128 pages; £9.99). Unlike the 'Discovering' series, at 7" x 4½", these 'Shire Library' volumes are 8¼" x 6" and lavishly illustrated. Together with Oliver Green's book, they provide pretty much all you need to know about how Holmes, Watson and their circle got around. *[*Shire and its sister company Old House Books publish a wonderful range of material relating to our period, including facsimiles of the two Bradshaw guides that inspired Michael Portillo's* ***Great Railway Journeys****. Check the website.*]*

In DM 325 I welcomed *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes* by **Don Libey**, with slight reservations on account of the sometimes radical departures from the facts revealed in the Holmes canon, but I did note that there is serious thought behind the revisionism, adding, 'It's well written and it's not just whimsy.' This morning I received *The Biography and Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes: Being a Single Volume, Two-Book Compilation of:* ***My Brother, Sherlock*** *by Mycroft Holmes and* ***The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes*** *by Sherlock Holmes* (Campbell & Lewis; $17.00 – available on Amazon.co.uk at £10.70). I'm looking forward to learning more surprising and intelligently imagined new information about the great detective.

Knife Edge, the sixth of the rattling good *Young Sherlock Holmes* novels by **Andrew Lane**, brings Sherlock back from his perilous adventures in Shanghai. He disembarks from the *Gloria Scott* (no, a different *Gloria Scott*) at Galway and to his astonishment is met by his brother Mycroft. It is, of course, work that brings Mycroft Holmes so far from his protective routine. Sir Shadrach Quintillan is holding an auction at his castle, at which the world's great powers will bid for the services of a clairvoyant who claims to communicate with the dead and to see into the future. Mycroft's first task, aided by Sherlock, is to discover how genuine are Ambrose Albano's powers, and then there's the diplomatic battle of wits with the other prospective bidders. As if things weren't complicated enough, the legendary Dark Beast makes its presence known in a peculiarly violent way. (Macmillan Children's Books; www.panmacmillan.com; £12.99.)

In 1999 the brilliant real-life Edinburgh detective James McLevy first appeared on Radio 4, played by Brian Cox and transformed by the writer **David Ashton** from an Irishman into a native Scot and placed four or five decades later in the city's history. Since then there have been thirty-seven more plays, and four novels, the latest being *Nor Will He Sleep* (Polygon Books; www.birlinn.co.uk; 13 October; £7.99). Young Arthur Conan Doyle featured in the last one, *A Trick of the Light*. Now, in 1887, Robert Louis Stevenson returns for his father's funeral to a city that's close to chaos. An old woman was beaten to death by Leith Docks. Two rival gangs of students have been running riot, but it seems that the killer is someone more sinister. Could Stevenson's creation Mr Hyde have come to life? In the year of the first McLevy play David Ashton also wrote *The Other Side*, a play for BBC2, in which Frank Finlay played the elderly Conan Doyle and Richard E Grant a young man who claimed to be Sherlock Holmes.

Sherlock Holmes is at last available in Welsh, thanks to Roy Upton-Holder and the Deerstalkers of Welshpool. *Y Cylch Brith*, a nice paperback published in just 100 copies, is 'The Speckled Band' translated by **Eurwyn Pierce Jones** (Deerstalker Publications, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA; £6.00 plus postage; e-mail ruptonholder@onetel.com). The Deerstalkers' website is at www.sherlockholmeswelshpool.com.

The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes, Volume 1: The Adventures and The Memoirs edited by **Leslie S Klinger** is now available in Kindle format from Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com at £15.26 or $24.63. The other volumes will follow.

Pilgrims to Switzerland in 2012 will remember **Helmi Sigg**, author of a stylish novella called *Sherlock Holmes and the Giessbach Falls*. Albert Kunz reports that the English text is available as an e-book at www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=helmi+sigg or www.amazon.co.uk/Sherlock-Holmes-Giessbach-Fall-ebook/dp/B00EF42FVO/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1377262105&sr=8-1&keywords=helmi+sigg.

Back in April Endeavour Press published *The Best of The Strand Magazine* in Kindle format. They've now added *The Best of The Strand Magazine, Volume II*, introduced by **Andrew Roberts**, available from Amazon.co.uk for just 99p.

Brian Pugh is preparing a further revised edition of his invaluable *Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, for publication early next year in both paperback and electronic formats by MX (www.mxpublishing.co.uk). Also forthcoming are *The Mammoth Book of*

the Lost Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes by **Denis O. Smith** (Paperback: 512 pages, Publisher: Running Press Book Publishers, 1 April 2014); *Sherlock Holmes FAQ: All That's Left to Know about the World's Greatest Private Detective* by **Dave Thompson** (Applause Theatre Book Publishers; 30 Mar 2014); and *Further Encounters of Sherlock Holmes* edited by **George Mann** (Titan Books, 28 Feb 2014).

The winning bid in **Anthony Horowitz's** auction was £3,700, which goes to the anti-bullying charity Kidscape. A character with the winner's name will meet Sherlock Holmes in the follow-up to *The House of Silk*.

At http://lookingglasslantern.co.uk/ is the website of **Looking-Glass Lantern**, a project conceived by Graham Dunnington and fusing 1970s-influenced progressive rock with the atmosphere of Victorian England. The debut album, *A Tapestry of Tales*, features six tracks: 'The Blue Carbuncle' (a 12-minute progressive rock adaptation of the story); 'Six Pearls to Mary' (the Watsons' marriage, and Mary's untimely death); 'Two Solitary Men' (an instrumental depicting Holmes and Moriarty); 'A Scandal in Bohemia' (a 13-minute adaptation); 'Wisteria Lodge' (a short piece for classical guitar); 'A Tapestry of Tales' (a musical tribute to the world of Holmes). The second album, due in 2014, is an hour-long, progressive rock adaptation of a famous Holmes adventure.

Hirayama Yuichi reports that a DVD of the 1914 film *Der Hund von Baskerville*, starring Alwin Neuss, is in preparation. See www.edition-filmmuseum.com/product_info.php/info/p34_Forthcoming-releases.html.

Frannie Davis, an after-school tutor in Seattle, refers us to an article about Holmes discovered by one of her pupils. It was written by Mike Haldas, co-founder of CCTV Camera Pros, and it's on the company's website at www.cctvcamerapros.com/Sherlock-Holmes-s/645.htm.

Jonathan Hopson reminds me of the **Peter Cushing evening** at Theatr Clwyd, Mold on 29 October. It will include a showing of the Hammer *Hound of the Baskervilles* and a talk by Tony Earnshaw. www.clwyd-theatr-cymru.co.uk/en/whats_on/event/17705.

Peter Blau notes that *Elementary* season 1 has been released in America as a six-DVD set available at Amazon and elsewhere, and a set available only at Target stores with bonus features on a seventh disc. The (presumably standard) set is due in the UK on 23 December.

News from John Addy: Nick Rennison (author of *Sherlock Holmes - The Unauthorised Biography*, 2005) and Robert Ryan (*Dead Man's Land*, 2013) will contribute to 'Before Sherlock - the Novel Art of Detection' on 27 October at The Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate, as part of the Harrogate History Festival: http://harrogateinternationalfestivals.com/2013-history-festival/detection-a-novel-art/.

Conan Doyle's former house in South Norwood is still, I think, up for sale. Jason E Cooper & Ian Bone of the **South Norwood Tourist Board** (www.southnorwoodtouristboard.com) write: 'As the powers that be don't appear to hold 12 Tennison Road in the same esteem that we all do, we have decided to honour the area's most famous author by naming the lake in South Norwood's Country Park *Lake Conan*. Whilst it is not the same as having access to the house where the death of Sherlock Holmes was penned, it will at least keep the name of the author prominent within the area. We are hoping that all Sherlock Holmes enthusiasts around the world will back our aim to not only name the lake (which currently has no name) but also have an official unveiling with a plaque/sign marking its name. I hope you will all lend support to pressure those in the decision making that this is the right thing to do.'

At www.mapbox.com/tutorial-sherlock/ is what Andrew Koop rightly calls an 'awesome Sherlock map by **Young Hahn'**. Scroll down and it takes you to the locations of 'The Bruce-Partington Plans' in sequence.

At http://vimeo.com/47743812 is the trailer for a film based on **Stephen King's** story 'The Doctor's Case' (yes, *that* Stephen King). It doesn't look as if the film has got much further since this was posted a year ago.

Tom Ue, joint organiser of the stimulating *Sherlock Holmes Past and Present* conference at the University of London, has arranged a one-day symposium for 9 December in the Haldane Room at University College London. *Challenger Unbound* celebrates Conan Doyle's second most famous protagonist. Details are at http://events.ucl.ac.uk/event/event:vq-hj6dhvnb-vzwfzw/challenger-unbound or contact Tom at +44 (0)78 4942 8351; e-mail wai.ue.10@ucl.ac.uk.

The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes opens on 10 October at the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry in Portland. In February it moves to the Center of Science & Industry, Columbus, Ohio. The website's at www.sherlockholmesexhibition.com. Photos are at www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.452351758136422.99355.451969811507950&type=1.

Dates and days this year are exactly the same as in 1895. When that situation arose in 1963, Bernard Davies designed a nice calendar which the Society published. I'm afraid we've missed the boat this time.

Here's something for the really dedicated (and, er, comfortably off) collectors. Richard Lancelyn Green was a frequent customer at **David Drummond's Pleasures of Past Times**, London's leading emporium of books, playbills and bygones of the performing arts (11 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London WC2N 4EZ; phone 020 7836 1142; e-mail poptdrummond@gmail.com). Newly available is an original *Sherlock Holmes* programme and synopsis from William Gillette's brief run at the Duke of York's in 1905. Billy was played by Charlie Chaplin, so this item is doubly desirable. It's also very rare, which is why you'd be lucky to get it for £400.00.

Sherlock Holmes has already featured in **Lucy Worsley's** fine series on BBC4, *A Very British Murder*, and of course also features in her book of the same name (BBC Books; £20.00). Unfortunately the programmes are broadcast at the same time, Mondays at 9.00pm, as the *Specsavers Crime Thriller Club* on ITV3, leading up to the Crime Thriller Awards. I'm told that Sherlock Holmes will feature on 21 October. Look out for at least one familiar face from our Society.

The report of the Annual Meet of the **Sherlock Holmes Society of India** is on the website at www.sherlockholmessociety.in/, along with a test to assess your Holmes Mania Quotient. (Thanks to Jay Ganguly.)

Ken Ross, a true benefactor of the race, has posted on YouTube his remaining video recordings of the Society's weekend trips: Norwich 2000, Dartmoor 2002, and Sussex 2004. Go to www.youtube.com and type **ken ross sherlock holmes** in the search bar.

The dramatist **Snoo Wilson** died on 3 July. His output included two plays about Conan Doyle: *In Defence of Fairies* with Simon Callow (1997), and *Moonshine* with Robin Soans (1999). Peter Blau says Wilson is reported to have worked on a script for the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1974 revival of Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes*.

The Egyptologist **Barbara Mertz**, who died on 8 August, is better known as a crime writer under the names of Elizabeth Peters and Barbara Michaels. PB notes that in *Other Worlds*, as by Michaels, Houdini, Conan Doyle and others suggest (and briefly debate) possible solutions to two unsolved ghostly 19th-century mysteries.

Periodicals received. ***The Baker Street Journal***, Autumn 2013 (Steven Rothman, www.bakerstreetjournal.com; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). ***The Bilge Pump,*** September 2013 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, http://barquelonestar.com). ***The Camden House Journal***, July 2013, and August 2013 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). ***Gaslight Gazette***, September 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, September 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Ironmongers Daily News***, 17 September 1913 *[*sic*]* (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). ***The Magic Door***, Summer 2013 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). ***Mayday Mayday,*** September 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Passengers' Log***, Autumn & Winter 2013 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Fall 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals***, August 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). ***The Serpentine Muse***, Fall 2013 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). ***The Torr***, Autumn 2013 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsburg, Switzerland).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, August 2013 and September 2013 (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

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The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**. *An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.*

You wait ages for a book about the British popular fascination with murder in fact and fiction, and then two come along – well, not exactly at once, but pretty close together. *The Invention of Murder* by **Judith Flanders** was actually published in 2011, and Ms Flanders acted as a consultant to the recent fine BBC4 TV series *A Very British Murder: The Story of a National Obsession*, and the book of the same title by **Lucy Worsley** (BBC Books; www.randomhouse.co.uk; £20.00). As Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces, Dr Worsley is probably best known for her works on the monarchy and the development of the British home, but her interest in murder as a social phenomenon is genuine. In 1827 Thomas De Quincey's satirical essay 'On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts' broached the idea of the English as 'Murder-Fanciers'. He was inspired by the brutal killing in 1811 of a shopkeeper and his family in Ratcliffe Highway, and the possible miscarriage of justice by which John Williams was speedily arrested, convicted and hanged. The Metropolitan Police, founded in 1829, developed in parallel with science and medicine. Detection of crime became gradually more sophisticated, but so did crime itself, including murder. Real-life detectives were immortalised in fiction – Inspector Field as Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House*, Inspector Whicher as Sergeant Cuff in *The Moonstone* – and fictional murder became big business, not least when it was satisfactorily solved by a truly great detective, as too few factual murders were. Sherlock Holmes came on to the scene just as the police and scientific specialists were learning, as Dr Worsley puts it, to read a body. It was a timely arrival. *The Invention of Murder* is rightly recommended as the fuller, more comprehensive study, and *A Very British Murder* makes an admirable companion volume.

New from **Hugh Ashton**, author of *The Deed Box of John H Watson MD* and others, is *Sherlock Ferret and The Missing Necklace*, a charming story for children (Ted E Beans; www.inknbeans.com; £3.73). Sherlock Ferret, who lives with his friend Watson Mouse in rooms underneath Mrs Hudson's bakery, is asked by Miss Leticia Rabbit to recover her gold necklace. Sherlock suspects Moriarty Magpie or his associate Sebastian Moorhen of stealing it. With the help of the police detective Lestrade (a rhinoceros, but not a very big one) and the Bakery Irregulars, Sherlock and Watson solve the mystery in a highly satisfactory manner. *Sherlock Ferret and The Missing Necklace* is a very handsome paperback, with illustrations by Andy Boerger that remind me rather of Paul Galdone's for the original *Basil of Baker Street* books by Eve Titus.

Reading *Sherlock Holmes: The Will of the Dead* by **George Mann** (Titan Books; www.titanbooks.com; 8 November; £7.99) I realised that I'd encountered the story before. It was originally an audio play called *The Reification of Hans Gerber* – the first entirely new play, I think, produced by Big Finish, with the splendid team of Nicholas Briggs and Richard Earl as Holmes and Watson (see review in DM 318). The plot, a good one concerning the unsuspected new claimant to a murdered man's estate, is faithfully reproduced here, but it's neatly interwoven with a separate parallel mystery, possibly inspired by 'The Cybernauts', a classic episode of *The Avengers*. Who is behind the spate of robberies committed by 'iron men', steam-powered mechanical androids? The novel doesn't quite capture the Watson style, but it's clever and very entertaining.

Doctor Watson's Charge, the third novella in the series by MP and military historian **Patrick Mercer**, concerns the death of Lord Cardigan, who led the disastrous charge of the Light Brigade during the Crimean War. The book is published in Kindle format by Endeavour Press at £1.99 (www.endeavourpress.com).

Stephen Norris notes that the graphic novel series *Watson and Holmes* by **Karl Bollers**, who goes beyond *Elementary* in reinventing the characters as African-Americans in present-day Harlem, has been successful enough to become a continuing series rather than its projected four issue run. (New Paradigm Studios; www.newparadigmstudios.com/about/watson-and-holmes).

Daniel Corey reports that *Moriarty Deluxe Edition HC* (Image Comics; www.imagecomics.com; £22.50) gathers issues 1 to 9, the first and second story arcs, of his well-received graphic novel series, in a sumptuous hardback volume.

Doug Wrigglesworth recommends *Sherlock Holmes in the Hound of the Baskervilles: A BabyLit Sounds Primer* by **Jennifer Adams**, illustrated by **Alison Oliver** (Gibbs M Smith, Inc; www.gibbs-smith.com; £5.99). 'Alison Oliver's bold illustrations correspond with Jennifer Adams' clever, simple text to create pairings little bibliophiles will love to have read to them, such as "hounds howl," "gates screech," and "stairs creak."' (The publishers' words, not Doug's.)

A reminder that on Friday 8 November, at the Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street, **Matthew J Elliott** will launch his new book *The Immortals: An Unauthorized Guide to 'Sherlock' and 'Elementary'* (MX Publishing; www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99). There's no charge, and everyone's welcome. Matthew, as many already know, compiles and presents the Society's annual Film Evening. He's also a wonderfully versatile and intelligent scriptwriter and a very decent actor.

More new and forthcoming titles *Sherlock Holmes and the Horror of Frankenstein* by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** & **Marcie Klinger** (MX; £7.99); *Sherlock Holmes and the Black Widower* by **Kieran McMullen** (MX; 11 November; £10.46);: *The Perils of Sherlock Holmes* by **Loren D. Estleman (**Tyrus Books; www.tyrusbooks.com; £9.87); *Sons of Moriarty and More Stories of Sherlock Holmes* by **Loren D. Estleman (**Tyrus Books; £15.43); *The Sherlock Holmes Quiz Book* by **Andrew Murray** (MX; 2 December; £8.99).

The newsletter catalogue of **Classic Specialties**, full of interest as always, is on-line at http://sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-10.html.

Disconcerting news passed on by Steve Emecz regarding **AudioGO**, the company that used to be BBC Audiobooks: 'Rachel Josephson, AudioGO's head of marketing and sales, told *The Bookseller*: "I can confirm that AudioGO has temporarily suspended business operations whilst we seek an investment or a sale of the business."'

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) writes: 'It has been some time since I have done anything relating to Sherlock Holmes. I am now selling off the remains of my stock.' Charles offers 30 different postcards for £6.00 and 16 Christmas cards, with envelopes, for £5.50. Prices include postage within the UK. With the nice cartoons by Ian Macgregor Fraser and by Charles Hall himself, each set is worth buying just to keep as a collectible.

Brenda Rossini notes some unique and attractive hand-made handbags at www.NovelCreations.etsy.com, recycling leather-binding from classic books – including, of course, Sherlock Holmes.

Oscar Ross reports a new digitally remastered release of that grand film *A Study in Terror* from Odeon Entertainment (www.odeonent.co.uk; 11 November) on DVD (£11.99) and Blu Ray (£16.99).

Just in is the news that *The Empty Hearse*, the first instalment in series 3 of *Sherlock* will receive its première, followed by a Q&A session with cast and crew, at BFI Southbank (which to most of us will always be the National Film Theatre) at 1.00pm on 15 December. BFI members can book from 6 November, and non-members from 12 November. www.bfi.org.uk.

Dr Watson in the Spotlight - on 13 November, **Robert Ryan** will be at St Bartholomew's Hospital Pathology Museum to talk about his Dr Watson novel *Dead Man's Land*. There'll also be a screening of *Sherlock Holmes and the Stolen Emerald*, a short silent film recorded at the Museum earlier in the year. (see the trailer at http://vimeo.com/68886273.) Tweed/ fancy dress/ steam-punk attire is not only encouraged but ensures entry into a raffle to win a copy of the book and film. 6:30pm for 7pm; £6.50 inc. booking fee and wine reception. Book through Eventbrite: http://bartsautumn6-eorg.eventbrite.co.uk/.

Booking is now open for the one-day symposium to be held in the Haldane Room at University College London on 9 December, celebrating Conan Doyle's second most famous protagonist: http://store.london.ac.uk/browse/extra_info.asp?compid=1&modid=5&deptid=179&catid=31&prodid=562. This is *Challenger Unbound*.

From 29 November to 1 December, **Portsmouth Historic Dockyard** will host its *Victorian Festival of Christmas*. 'Festival favourites are set to return including our largest ever Christmas Market, Fagin's Real Ale Tavern, Dickensian-style snow covered streets, a traditional Father Christmas (dressed in green) stage show and a wonderland of Victorian characters and entertainment. New for this year we will also be highlighting Victorian character Sherlock Holmes whose author, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, lived for a period and wrote some of his famous novels in Portsmouth.' There'll be input, I understand, from the Conan Doyle Collection, and the organisers ask whether any members of our Society would be interested in doing any readings or re-enactments. 'We really want the public to feel like they are part of a Sherlock Holmes adventure and thought this may be something that could be of interest?' If the idea appeals to you, please contact Georgia Carne at Georgia@rem-events.com. The Festival website is at www.christmasfestival.co.uk/.

Milana Vibornova writes from rather further afield: 'I am happy to announce that **Sherlock Holmes' Birthday** event is going to be this year again! We will be pleased to see you in Riga, January 4th participating in our annual celebration of the World's most famous detective! Please follow information on the official celebration website http://holmes.lv for programme information of the event, videos, photos of the previous events, as well as on our page on Facebook/Sherlock Homes' Birthday. Event times and their final list may change.' This year's event, the first, was evidently a great success. Next year's should be just as good.

Earlier in the year you may have seen Jean Upton and me, with our team captain Jim Crozier, failing to disgrace ourselves on a certain TV quiz show. The latest news – about the series, not about our team, the Cat Lovers – is that '*Only Connect*, the hugely popular BBC Four quiz show in which teams compete to find connections between seemingly unrelated clues, is to move to BBC Two in 2014… BBC Four has tendered for a replacement show and following short-listing is currently seeing run-throughs of three contenders: *The Knowledge* from BBC In-House entertainment, *Enigma* from RDF-Parasol, the company behind *Only Connect*, and *Eliminate The Impossible* from Victory Television.' I like the sound of *Eliminate The Impossible*…

Talking of quizzes, Don Libey, 'Buttons' of **The John H Watson Society**, sends word that the weekly quiz is open to members and non-members alike. It's just for fun, but very competitive fun – be warned. Current and past quizzes are at www.johnhwatsonsociety.com/quiz-page.html. The whole website is worth a look.

Sad news, though not entirely unexpected, from John Addy, Membership Secretary of **The Musgraves**: 'It was announced in *The Scion* issue 25, Summer 2013, that after ten years, The Musgraves Sherlock Holmes Society is to be wound up due to poor attendance at meetings and limited contributions to *The Scion*. Current members are being given free membership for a year in which final *Scions* will be published.'

But as one door closes another opens. There's a new society, whose website you'll find at http://sherlockianviolinsociety.com/. Founder Becky Simpson writes: 'The idea for the **Sherlockian Violin Society** began at a Sherlock meeting in London, when three Sherlockians met each other for the first time and discovered they were all violinists too. We came to the conclusion that there must be quite a few Sherlockians who play the violin and that it's a shame there wasn't some kind of group for them. Well…now there is!'

Something a little *recherché*, to use one of Holmes's favourite expressions, regarding the late **Jack Tracy**… this is from Billy Rawl, Spokesman of The Hansom Wheels of Columbia, SC. 'If you're like me you didn't know anything at all about the life and times of the author of *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana* until Phil Dematteis's presentation at the HW meeting of Oct. 3rd. We've published it in its entirety here, and if you missed the meeting we think you'll find it an intriguing mystery and a look into the fascinating interior of this strange person. Even if you were there, due to the acoustics in the room and the fact that some of us don't hear as well as we used to, you may well find lots of stuff in this web version that you missed in the presentation: www.hansomwheels.com/jack_tracy_prologue.htm'

Anthony Hinds, who died on 30 September aged ninety-one, will forever be identified with the great days of Hammer Films, the company co-founded by his father, whose stage name was Will Hammer. Anthony's first film as producer was *Who Killed Van Loon* in 1948, In 1959 he produced *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for Hammer, and in 1982 he wrote a good play based on the novel for his local amateur theatre company. Two years later he devised the story for the TV movie *The Masks of Death*, in which Peter Cushing played Holmes for the last time.

In his long, varied and distinguished acting career, **Nigel Davenport** played Arthur Conan Doyle in the 1972 BBC TV series *The Edwardians*, Lord Smithwick in the 1988 Holmesian farce *Without a Clue*, and the Duke of Holdernesse in the 1993 Radio 4 production of *The Priory School*. He was also seen, uncredited, as an old man in the 2003 martial arts comedy *Shanghai Knights*, which contains some bizarre Holmesian elements. Nigel Davenport died on 25 October aged eighty-five.

Periodicals received. ***Canadian Holmes***, Fall 2013 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). ***Cri Bar Crier***, October 2013 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). ***Gaslight Gazette***, October 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA).

Ineffable Twaddle, October 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, Okt. 2013 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, September 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***The Scion***, Autumn 2013 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). ***The Wastsonian***, Fall 2013 (**The John H Watson Society**, Dr Joanne Yates, publisher@johnhwatsonsociety.com) *[*the first issue, splendidly produced and full of interest*]*.

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, October 2013 (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

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Yesterday Jean and I attended the preview of *The Empty Hearse*, episode 1 of the third series of *Sherlock*, so we could tell you just how Sherlock Holmes survived that fall from the roof of Bart's Hospital, but we're not going to. Molly is involved, as everyone suspected, and there really was an obvious clue in *The Reichenbach Fall*. Sherlock's return to London doesn't go as smoothly as in 'The Empty House', and his reunion with John Watson, provokes a more assertive reaction than a mere faint – but that was to be expected. During his two-year absence the detective has been active overseas; his return is prompted by warning of an imminent terrorist attack on London. Mark Gatiss's script is what Margery Allingham called a plum-pudding, rich with excitement, tension and sparkling humour, some of it very dark. There are nods to *A Study in Terror*, *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* and, gloriously, *The Spider Woman* – oh, and to the fine Father Brown story 'The Queer Feet'. The director, Jeremy Lovering, rises to the challenge with style and verve, but so does everyone else – notably new girl Amanda Abbington. (I'm bowled over by designer Arwel Wyn Jones's beautiful creation of a Tube train…) It was worth the long wait! *Sherlock* is one of the UK's most successful television exports. To accommodate BBC Worldwide's guests there had to be a separate simultaneous screening…

That admirable society **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors** has issued the first in The Camelot Series, limited edition chapbooks edited by **Stephan Arthur**. The title *First Books of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* may be a little misleading, though 'books' is the word Conan Doyle used in his contribution to the series called 'My First Book' in *The Idler*, edited by his friend Jerome K Jerome. What we have here, introduced and annotated by the editor, are a childhood fragment, an account of the toxic effects of gelsiminum, and ACD's first two published stories, 'The Mystery of Sasassa Valley' and 'Selecting a Ghost'. Copies of this attractive booklet cost £6.00 (post-paid in the UK). Please e-mail Stephan at stephan.arthur@gmx.ch or send a cheque, payable to Vosper Arthur, to Vosper at Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR.

The essays collected in *Watson Is Not an Idiot: An Opinionated Tour of the Sherlock Holmes Canon* by **Eddy Webb** (MX Publishing; www.mxpublishing.co.uk; £9.99) were originally posted on Mr Webb's blog at http://eddyfate.com. They are necessarily opinionated, as they must be; they're also intelligent, incisive and well-written. The nearest equivalent to *Watson Is Not an Idiot* is probably Martin Dakin's *Sherlock Holmes Commentary*, but Mr Webb takes the line throughout that the chronicles of Sherlock Holmes are fiction, written by Arthur Conan Doyle. His book can help us appreciate just what is good in the stories, what isn't, and why they still appeal when so much contemporary work is forgotten. It would make an ideal present for the Holmesian neophyte or for the long-time scholar.

I first encountered **Matthew Elliott** as a fellow-contributor to *Sherlock* magazine, whose last issue appeared in 2006, the year in which Mark Gatiss told the Society of the mad idea he and Steven Moffat had for an updated Sherlock Holmes. Matthew has since established himself as a scriptwriter and occasional actor, and as the deviser and presenter of our annual Film Evening. There's no one better qualified to provide a survey of *Sherlock* – which he does in *The Immortals: An Unauthorised Guide to Sherlock and Elementary* (MX; £9.99). Cumberbatch or Miller? They're both fine actors, equally superb in Danny Boyle's production of *Frankenstein*, and Matthew Elliott's guide is throughout perceptive, witty, affectionate and deeply knowledgeable.

Why, in the enlightened 1880s, is someone stealing the bodies of young women from London cemeteries? That's the starting point of *Sherlock Holmes and the Horror of Frankenstein*, the graphic novel by **Luke Benjamen Kuhns** and **Marcie Klinger** (MX; £7.99). Ms Klinger's splendidly atmospheric full-colour illustrations enhance Mr Kuhn's luridly exciting story, and the result is full-blooded gothic horror.

There's ideal material for a Holmesian quiz night in *The Sherlock Holmes Quiz Book by* **Andrew Murray** (MX; £8.99). The thousand questions, covering individual stories, stage, screen and radio adaptations, characters, crimes, disguises and more, range from the straightforward to the truly brain-teasing. Also written by **Andrew Murray**, *Is That My Holmes?* and *Is That My Watson?* (MX; each £6.99) are very slim booklets, but very attractive, with the neat little verses illustrated in full colour by **Deakin Brook**, parodying toddlers' board books such as *That's Not My Duck*.

Marlene Aig died in 1996, aged just forty-three. I don't know how old she was when she wrote *Sherlock Holmes and the Lufton Lady* (MX; £6.99). It's very much a young woman's story, a romantic tale that ignores, as so many do, Holmes's very clear statement, 'I have never loved.' But as one would expect, it's rather better written than most. Marlene circulated it to her Sherlockian friends and probably never expected it to be published. That it is, and nicely too, edited by Chris Redmond, is a tribute to much-missed friend and colleague.

In *The Death of Cardinal Tosca: From the Dispatch-Box of John H Watson MD* (Inknbeans Press; http://221BeanBakerStreet.info; £6.23) **Hugh Ashton** maintains his place as one of the best writers of new Sherlock Holmes stories, in both plotting and style.

Our member **Jayantika Ganguly**, General Secretary & Editor of the Sherlock Holmes Society of India, writes: '*Thanks to Steve Emecz, Tom Ue, Calvert Markham and Bob Gibson, my very first book,* The Holmes Sutra, *a gift for Sherlock Holmes for his 160th birthday, is about to come to life on January 6, 2014! To celebrate the event, Steve is throwing a party for Sherlock Holmes on January 9, 2014 (7 PM onwards) at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel on Baker Street, London. Details and registration at http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-holmes-sutra-celebrating-sherlock-holmes-160th-birthday-tickets-8990634229?aff=eorg. It is an open event, and free, and Steve has Sherlockian goodies to give away!*' This is nicely timed, just before our Annual Dinner on the 11th, so I'll hope to see some of you there. Calvert Markham contributed the foreword, by the way.

More new and forthcoming books: *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of Einstein's Daughter* by **Tim Symonds** (MX; £8.99); *Sherlock Holmes and the Black Widower* by **Kieran McMullen** (MX; £9.99); *Sherlock Holmes The Spirit and the Letter: A chirographic and semiotic study* by **Z W Wolkowski** (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform; £15.45); *The Mammoth Book of the Lost Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes* by **Denis O Smith** (Constable & Robinson; 16 January 2014; £8.99);

Le Boucher de la St-Martin (Les Éditions-Limitées, rue Curtat 9-1005 Lausanne, Switzerland) is the fourth murder mystery by our Swiss member **Vincent Delay**, Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Museum at Lucens – Switzerland's (and, I think, the world's) first such museum.

On 31 December Penguin USA will publish a paperback edition of *Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes* by **Maria Konnikova** (www.us.penguingroup.com; $16.00). They've offered three copies as prizes for the first correct answers to the question: To whom does Holmes say 'To a great mind nothing is little'? The winners

will be drawn from the hat on 2 January, so get entries in to me before then, please.

Hugo Koch has kindly sent four copies of his Christmas booklet, which I can offer to the first UK applicants for the cost of postage. This is *John **Hugo** Watson, MD: Some Brief Remarks Upon Victor Hugo and Upon the Identification and Origin of Dr Watson's Middle Name*.

Gregory F A Ross of British Columbia is looking to sell some of his Sherlock Holmes books, including some dating from around 1900. For details, please contact him at alpinewriting@lycos.com.

Congratulations to **Mattias Boström**, whose masterly *Från Holmes till Sherlock* (Piratförlaget; www.piratforlaget.se/bocker) won the Swedish Crime Writers' Academy prize for Best Non-Fiction Book of 2013.

Admirers of **Solar Pons**, the 'Sherlock Holmes of Praed Street' will welcome this news from **Bob Byrne**: *'My long vacation from Praed Street has come to an end. I'm almost finished with a new Solar Pons Gazette. And I've got commentaries and summaries finished for about 90% of the original Derleth tales. If I can get those uploaded, www.Solarpons.com will become a Pons resource, rather than just the hosting site for the newsletter.'*

Thomas Bruce Wheeler has completed his remarkable project: a map of the 747 official Blue Plaques that mark the homes of famous Londoners since the 18th Century. Tom notes: *'The map is interactive in that a click on a site marker will display the name of the personage, the year of their birth and death, and their street and GPS addresses. I plan to republish by Amazon/Nook book Famous Londoners and their Blue Plaques, to include this map. It will complement the book's current links to each person's Wikipedia page, and a street photograph of their home.'* You'll find the map on-line at https://mapsengine.google.com/map/viewer?gmp=msp&mid=zz7OCIy2oDA4.klI46NrhEbLE.

The latest issue of *The Sherlockian E-Times*, newsletter-catalogue of **Classic Specialties** of Cincinnati – which has a good claim to be the world's senior specialist dealer in Sherlockiana – is at www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times13-12.html.

Something you may not (yet) be able to buy from Classic Specialties is a pair of *Sherlock* leggings. See http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57615068-1/wrap-your-legs-in-sherlocks-wallpaper/

From 19 March to 12 April Southwark Playhouse (77-85 Newington Causeway, London SE1 6BD; phone 020 7407 0234) will present Tacit Theatre's production of *A Study in Scarlet*, dramatised by **Lila Whelan** and **Greg Freeman**. The theatre's website is at http://southwarkplayhouse.co.uk/the-little/a-study-in-scarlet/, and at Tacit's you'll shortly find a podcast: http://www.tacittheatre.co.uk/.

In March **The Pantaloons** will resume touring with their intelligent, entertaining and wildly funny play *Sherlock Holmes* - www.thepantaloons.co.uk/shows/sh2014.asp. They'll be at Harlow Playhouse on 12 & 14 March (www.playhouseharlow.com) moving to the Regal Theatre, Minehead on the 18th (regaltheatre.co.uk), the Gate Arts Centre, Cardiff on the 21st (www.thegate.org.uk), the Pavilion Arts Centre, Buxton on the 16th (buxtonoperahouse.org.uk/pavilion-arts-centre), Fisher Theatre, Bungay on the 27th (www.fishertheatre.org.uk) – and on through till 27 April at Braintree Arts Theatre (www.braintreeartstheatre.com).

On Sunday 12 January the BBC1 programme *Countryfile* will visit **Undershaw** at Hindhead in Surrey, the house that Conan Doyle helped design for his family – which, had he been a less popular author, would surely by now be listed Grade I.

Jason Cooper of **South Norwood Tourist Board** reports on the Board's progress in commemorating Arthur Conan Doyle's residence there in the early 1890s: *'The lake in the country Park will be named Conan Doyle Lake on 1st February 2014. Currently we are doing this unofficially as I continue to hassle the council and MPs to help make it happen. We have also started up a fund to commission a sculpture of Conan Doyle to be displayed in the centre of South Norwood. http://www.gofundme.com/5en97s Whilst we cannot gain access to [ACD's former] house, the nearby Wetherspoons displays photos and a local community café wants to actually start up a Sherlock Holmes reading society. I am also trying to research any grants I can get to help raise any money.'* http://southnorwoodtouristboard.com/

Colin Bradbury, a new member of our Society, writes: *'I am looking forward to participating in events when I am in London. However, as I live in Cornwall, I will not be able to get to as many events as I would like. On that basis, I was idly speculating on whether there might be a sufficient number of Holmesians in the county to justify setting up an informal group down here.'* Colin lives at St Agnes. Holmesians living west of the Tamar – or east, for that matter – can contact him at colin.bradburyhk@gmail.com.

And here's a plea from the Netherlands: *'My name is Kyra van Rijzingen and I'm a 20 year old student of English from the Netherlands. I'm also a massive Sherlock Holmes fan. Next semester I will start on my bachelor thesis and as my subject I have picked Sherlock Holmes and Victorian Popular Culture, focusing specifically on the Victorian Sherlock Holmes fans. I was sorry to see that not a lot of academic research has been done on this subject, so I will have to my own (not that I mind). However, to do this properly I will need access to some sources found only in the UK. I'm therefore attempting to fund a trip to London somewhere in March. Since I can't afford to pay for this myself, I have set up a fundraiser. I was wondering if the Sherlock Holmes Society would help me spread the word on my fundraising campaign so I might possibly reach people who would be willing to donate? (http://www.gofundme.com/5ebjrc).'*

Congratulations to our member **Dr Wang Chong**, President-Elect of the Royal Society of Medicine's Pharmaceutical Medicine & Research Section. His two year presidency starts next September.

Barbara Hicks, who died on 6 September aged eighty-nine, was described by Mel Brooks as the funniest woman he'd ever met. A minor but notable role in her long career was as Emily Garrideb in Granada's unsatisfactory 1993 production of *The Mazarin Stone*.

Ken Ross has forwarded the sad news that **Lady Cottesloe** died on 8 November. Our thoughts are with Lord Cottesloe, a long-time member of the Society.

At his best – *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Becket*, *The Lion in Winter* – **Peter O'Toole** was superb. At his worst…Well, he voiced Sherlock Holmes in the early 1980s in four regrettable animated TV films, so it's probably as well that he didn't play Holmes with Peter Sellers as Watson, as was proposed, in Billy Wilder's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. He died on 14 December, aged eighty-one.

Periodicals received. ***The Bilge Pump*,** November 2013 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, http://barquelonestar.com). ***For the Sake of the Trust***, Fall 2013 (**BSI Trust**, Andrew Solberg BSI, 5612 Thicket Lane, Columbia, MD 21044, USA). ***Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections***, October 2013 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). ***Gaslight Gazette***, November 2013 & December 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). ***Ineffable Twaddle***, November 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). ***Mayday Mayday*,** November 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). ***The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer***, Dec. 2013 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). ***The Passengers' Log***, 8 October 2013 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). ***The Petrel Flyer***, Dec 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). ***Proceedings of the Pondicherry Lodge***, December 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of India**, Jayantika Ganguly, shsieditors@yahoo.in). ***Proceedings of the Sherlock Holmes Society of The Hague***, October 2013 (The Society, Jacques Zonneveld, Vlierboomstraat 464, 2564 JL Den Haag, Holland). ***Sherlockiana***, Nr 4 2013 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Svend Ranild, sr@ranild.dk).

And ***Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press***, November 2013 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

The Compliments of the Season

Roger Johnson