

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Well, here it is - the 100th issue. Along with your copy, you'll find another scrap of paper. Don't throw it away, as it contains the details of our special Centenary Competition.

Paula Brown provides more information about THE INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by John Bennett Shaw, Tsukasa Kobayashi & Akane Higashiyama. The publisher is Kodon-sha (Kyoritsuikaikon 4-6-19, Kohinata, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112, Japan), and the price is 2000 yen. Thanks to Michael Cox, I can now give at least a brief review of the book. The 400 pages contain about 1000 illustrations, between 3 and 30 for each of the 60 adventures, representing 100 years of artistic impressions of Holmes, Watson & their world. It's fascinating to see how each generation has (perhaps unconsciously) interpreted the Victorian era in its own image, beginning, I suppose, with the original 1920s pictures for THE CASEBOOK. Some (Stefan Lemke & Marie-Luise Pricker in 1967, Adolf Born in 1987, Sergio Martines in 1988 - and others) convince by their vigour or sheer artistic inspiration. Others, such as the uncredited drawings from the 1950 British FIRST BOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES, are hilarious in their solemn ineptitude. Yet others (let's be honest) are just plain dull. It's a fascinating book. The only cavil I have is the smudgy reproduction of the superb Frederic Dorr Steele illustrations.

Published last year, but only just brought to my attention, is a very good pastiche, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MARK OF THE BEAST, by Ronald C. Weyman (Simon & Pierre, PO Box 280, Adelaide Postal Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2J4, Canada; \$15.95). Here we have an alternative version of the events of the great hiatus, taking Holmes & Watson to Canada to combat a plot against the Prince & Princess of Wales. And while on the subject of books, Jon Lellenberg tells me that IRREGULAR MEMORIES OF THE 30s, the next volume in the BSI History Project, is due for publication in October; it will be followed in time by volumes on the 40s and 50s, and by an account of the making of the Limited Editions Club edition of the Canon, which was truly brought into being by the BSI, featuring the "purest version of Canonical text" and the very best illustrations. It's currently in print as the Easton Press Centenary Edition, leather-bound, beautifully produced, in 3 volumes at \$36.50 (+ \$2.95 postage) per volume (Easton Press, 47 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut 06857, USA). Julian Symons' Holmesian detective novel THE KENTISH MANOR MURDERS (the 2nd adventure of Sheridan Haynes) is now out in paperback, in the handsome Penguin Classic Crime series at £3.99. (Thanks to David Stuart Davies.)

I do urge you to support SpyGlass Books, set up by Clive Brooks as Britain's first specialist Holmesian publishing company (23 Sylvan Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton SO2 5JW). The first books from SpyGlass are Brooks' own work: SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED vol. 1 (£11.99 from SpyGlass) and THE MEMOIRS OF PROFESSOR MORIARTY vol. 1 (£14.95 from Rupert Books, 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). SpyGlass has other manuscripts to hand but can't publish them unless the first two books are successful. It's a brave venture that deserves our backing. Michael J. Connolly (Tigarve, Allistragh, Armagh, Co. Armagh BT61 8EZ, Northern Ireland) has a number of Holmesian books for sale; send a stamped & addressed envelope for a list.

Just out is THE BAKER STREET PILLAR BOX 3, the newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, full of interest. For details of the FHMC, contact Philip Weller, 4 Tickhill Square, Denaby Main, Doncaster DN12 4AN. Even more recent is the 3rd issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, annual journal of the Northern Musgraves. This is a bumper 92-page special devoted to Dr Watson (contributors include Edward Hardwicke, Bert Coules & Jeremy Paul). Non-Musgraves can have copies at £5 each from David Stuart Davies (Overdale, 69 Green-head Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). And while I remember, Peter Horrocks is compiling a booklet to accompany next year's SHSL trip to Winchester; if you'd like to contribute a short piece on any of the Hampshire cases, please get your MS to Peter before the end of November (22 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London W2A 3HJ). From Germany, another new journal is the 5th issue of THE SOFT-NOSED BULLET-IN, from Von Herder Airguns Limited (Corinna Koch,

Freiligrathstrasse 13, D-3000 Hannover 1, West Germany). This issue's all in German, but with a couple of the late Norman Schatell's lovely cartoons with English captions. On a sadder note, Kelvin Jones has resigned from editorship of THE SHERLOCKIAN; he will no longer publish, or distribute the magazine in Britain. All enquiries should be addressed to Magico Magazine, PO Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA. Finally, in this line, CADS (Crime And Detective Stories, Geoff Bradley's admirable magazine) is now into its 14th very welcome issue (£3.25 from G.H. Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA).

Ian Heritage tells of a shop called SOUVENIRS in Marylebone Road, selling Holmes mugs at £2.99 and Holmes T-shirts at £6.99. I recently saw in the duty-free shop of a P&O cross-Channel ferry a Sherlock Holmes clock, one of a series called Pub World Collection. The design (vivid & rather ugly) isn't based on any Sherlock Holmes pub sign I've ever seen. It's made by Brambles of England and priced at £13.50. Deirdre Keetley of Studio Gallery Decorative Editions (who made that lovely Portrayals of Sherlock Holmes plate) tells me that the company has produced a small range of bone china souvenirs for the Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street, including a plate, mugs, a bell & thimble. They look very nice in the photograph. For a list of all the hotel's souvenirs and an order form, write to Nickolas Mouzakitidis, The Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street, London W1. Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) has also produced a pair of Holmesian mugs, with amusing cartoon designs; £5 the two + 95p postage. Two other designs are due at the end of the year.

Dennis Collins kindly sent a copy of THE SCOTSMAN Weekend supplement for Saturday 7 July, the 60th anniversary of the death of Arthur Conan Doyle. The long leading article is a good-natured & respectful pastiche in which Holmes & Watson discuss their creator.

Ian Gale brings the good news that the Rathbone/Bruce films are being reissued on video in the UK by Virgin Vintage Classics, starting with THE WOMAN IN GREEN for a reasonable £6.99 (strange choice, though: why not THE HOUND?). Allan Smith and Stanley MacKenzie have both had letters from Granada TV correcting information given in good faith in DM 96. For information about the Sherlock Holmes programmes, write to the Viewers Enquiries Department, Granada Television International Ltd, Manchester M60 9EA; please do not write to Debra Hall at Granada.

A.G. Andrews says that Sherlock's Restaurant (50/52 High Street, Aylesford, Kent ME20 TEA; phone 0622 710649) looks like a pleasant place to eat. Debra Long (30 York Road, Cheam, Surrey SM2 6HH) is after a couple of collectibles: she wants Basil Rathbone's signature and a programme, poster or handbill from the US production of THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD with Charlton Heston & Jeremy Brett. (I'm after some videos myself. Can anyone please help with the following on VHS? THE BAKER STREET BOYS, Granada TVs YOUNG SHERLOCK, THE 7% SOLUTION, THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, SHERLOCK HOLMES IN NEW YORK, THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS.) Edward J. Halloran of C.E. Brock Productions Inc. (6000 East Evans, Suite 1-240, Denver, Colorado 80222, USA) tells me of a proposed new radio (eventually TV) series called HOLMES & ASSOCIATES in which Holmes & Watson head a modern American management "think tank", using Holmesian logic & state-of-the-art technology to solve management problems. Associated will be a range of wearables & collectibles aimed at Holmes fans everywhere.

THE 7% CONVENTION, Britain's first Sherlock Holmes convention, will be held at the Shepperton Moat House Hotel on the 25-26 August, featuring talks, seminars, videos, films, quizzes, an auction and what promises to be a quite amazing variety of dealers. Douglas Wilmer will be there; so if engagements allow will Edward Hardwicke, Jeremy Paul & Richard Carpenter. Peter Cushing wrote the forward to the Convention souvenir book. You can attend for the whole weekend or for just one day. All profits will go to the Samaritans. If you can't attend but would like to support this worthwhile venture, you can take out Non-Attending Registration (which will get you a copy of the book) for £6 (UK & EEC), £7 (rest of Europe), \$18 (airmail; rest of world). Make cheques payable to The 7% Convention and send them (or your enquiries) to Jane Sayle, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU.

A couple of new societies: The Fratton Lodgers (Mr Terry Weller, 25 York Place, Portsea, Portsmouth, Hampshire) and The Reichenbach Society (Mr Sim Lew-Gor, Stephenson Hall, Oakholme Road, Sheffield S10 3DF). Remember to enclose a large SSAE with your enquiry.

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