

# The DISTRICT MESSENGER



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

The silly-season news has been that Conan Doyle stole the plot of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* from his friend Fletcher Robinson, had an affair with his wife, and murdered him. All will be revealed in *The House of the Baskervilles* by Rodger Garrick-Steele — which has been rejected by 90 publishers! Coverage has been wide, but evidence is thin. (\*The forename Rodger, spelt thus, is so rare in Britain as to be unknown. ACD himself apparently took it from an Edinburgh surname and applied it to characters in 'The Three Garridebs' and — er — *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Spooky, eh?\*)

Meanwhile the saga of Liberton Bank House continues. McDonald's and Pearl Assurance still want to build a drive-through restaurant yards away from the sole remaining Edinburgh home of Arthur Conan Doyle, making it impossible to restore the house properly. The City Council is considering the new application.

In November, John Murray (50 Albemarle Street, London W1), for many years Conan Doyle's publishers, will publish *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes: The Missing Years — His Exploits in India and Tibet as Faithfully Recorded by Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, CIE, FRS, FRGS, Rai Bahadur* by Jamyang Norbu, price £16.99. (\*The Great Hiatus seems to be very popular. We've recently had *The Travels of Sherlock Holmes, Chronicles of the Lost Years, The Siam Question* and probably some titles I've forgotten.\*)

Dennis Collins sends news of 15 year-old Edmund Hastie, whose first book, *Sherlock Holmes: The Disappearing Prince*, has been accepted for publication by Breese Books in October, with an introduction by H.R.F. Keating. (Breese Books, 164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER; price unknown.)

William S. Dorn BSI has published *A Study Guide to Sherlock Holmes, Volume 1: The Novels, The Adventures and the Memoirs* in two formats. The regular edition, a 300-page paperback book, costs (to Canada) \$25.95, or (other international orders) \$27.95. The student edition, on CD-ROM, costs \$10.95 or \$12.95. (Prices are in US dollars, and include postage. Sorry, I don't have prices for the USA.) Make checks payable to The Sherlock Store, and order from the Store at 2045 S. Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210-3734, USA. Check Bill's website at [www.TheSherlockStore.com](http://www.TheSherlockStore.com) for details.

Phil Attwell sends information about more new and forthcoming books. The 2000 edition of Richard Lancelyn Green & John Michael Gibson's *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Bibliography* can be had at £65.00 from Post Mortem Books (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH), Nigel Williams Rare Books (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE) and other dealers. In December, Constable & Co. will publish Barrie Roberts' novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Crosby Murder* (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER; £16.99).

In December the Arthur Conan Doyle Society (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., Canada V0K 1A0) will publish 'The Haunted Grange of Gresthorpe' with an introduction by Owen Dudley

Edwards and a preface by Ian McGowan of the National Library of Scotland.. This unpublished story is quite different from the well-known 'Selecting a Ghost: The Ghosts of Gresthorpe Grange'.

*Sail and Steam* is an attractive 24-page A4 booklet, published by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London to accompany its expedition to Norfolk earlier this month. Articles by Frank Meers, David Walsh, Peter Bower, David Hammer, Richard Lancelyn Green, Shirley Purves and Roger Johnson are complemented by Victorian photographs and facsimiles of letters from Conan Doyle. The price including postage is: UK £8.00; Europe £8.50; USA \$14.50; elsewhere £8.75. Cheques should be payable to the Society, and orders sent to Mrs E.M. Godden, Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Kent TN27 8QE.

(\*Check the Society's website at [www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk](http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk) for details of publications, events, membership, etc. — and an archive of *The District Messenger* back to no. 160.\*)

New catalogues are available, full of good (and expensive) things, from **Adrian Harrington Ltd** (64A Kensington Church Street, Kensington, London W8 4DB; [rare@harringtonbooks.co.uk](http://rare@harringtonbooks.co.uk); website [www.harringtonbooks.co.uk/rare/](http://www.harringtonbooks.co.uk/rare/)), and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** ((22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; [nwwrarebook@tcp.co.uk](http://nwwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); website [www.nigelwilliams.com](http://www.nigelwilliams.com)).

Issue 38 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* features Roger Llewellyn on his Canadian tour with *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!*; Robert Barnard on detective duos; David Stuart Davies on Granada's *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* and on the Arthur Wontner film *Silver Blaze*; Mike Ripley on best-selling crime fiction; Nick Utechin on Sherlockian parody and pastiche; Paul Chapman on detective heroes; Chris Senior on *Department S*; a new Luther Darke mystery by A.L. Blake; Gaynor Coules on Michael Dibdin's tales of Aurelio Zen; Pat Ward's report from the USA; a look at the Edgar Wallace Society — and much more. The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or \$6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail [sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com](mailto:sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com)).

Friends of Marilyn MacGregor BSI will be pleased to know that she's established in her new home at 1515 Shasta Drive, #4210, Davis, CA 95616-6692, USA ([marylinmac@urcad.org](mailto:marylinmac@urcad.org)). Bert & Gaynor Coules have also moved, to Trackside, 70 Romney Way, Hythe, Kent CT21 6PN ([bert.coules@fonix.org](mailto:bert.coules@fonix.org)).

Roger Llewellyn, having taken David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to the USA, Canada and Hong Kong, is now touring Britain again. Look out for it at a theatre near you.

Christopher Roden put me on to a website that has a good deal about the new TV film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, complete with stills: [www.geocities.com/sirharryflashman1/hound.html](http://www.geocities.com/sirharryflashman1/hound.html). It's due for transmission this autumn on CTV in Canada and the Odyssey Network in the USA.

Peter Horrocks notes that Leslie Klinger is seeking prospective purchasers for the complete *Baker Street Journal* on CD-ROM. The project needs 100 buyers to make it viable. The cost would be about \$100.00. If you have a ROM drive and \$100.00, this would be a great chance to own a complete run of one of the great

Sherlockian magazines. Contact Les at 2029 Century Park East, Suite 3290, Los Angeles, CA 90067, USA.

Brian Pugh, Curator of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, tells me that the town's proposed statue of Arthur Conan Doyle will probably be ready for unveiling by January. (*\*The Establishment supports the project, but is not responsible for its progress.\**)

Marcelle Shulman at **The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company** (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT) is looking to buy more second-hand Holmesian & Doylean books. Please contact her if you have books to sell.

Have a look at <http://home.ptd.net/~dobry/>. Denny Dobry, who lives in Reading, Pennsylvania, and is evidently dedicated beyond the call of duty, has installed in his basement a complete recreation of Holmes & Watson's famous sitting-room. There are 8 photographs of this magnificent project. Mr Dobry welcomes visitors, by appointment. E-mail him at [dobry@ptdprolog.net](mailto:dobry@ptdprolog.net) or phone him on 610 779 2363.

Joe Bevilacqua's iconoclastic ten-part series of 30-minute radio parodies, *The Mis-Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, is available on 5 cassettes or 5 CDs at \$16.00 each or \$59.00 the set. Prices include postage. Order from Joe at Waterlogg Productions, Box 10723, Austin, TX 78766, USA.

Douglas Johnstone reminds me of the unabridged recordings available from Isis Audio Books (7 Centremead, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES; phone 01865 250333): *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (10 cassettes, £18.99), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (5 cassettes, £15.99) and *The Sign of Four* (4 cassettes, £14.99) — all read by Patrick Tull — and *A Study in Scarlet* (4 cassettes, £14.99), read by Peter Mesney. Isis has a very full catalogue, with more of Doylean and Sherlockian interest.

Societies whose brief includes Victorian costume may like to be reminded of Amazon Drygoods, who have the most amazing range of reproduction clothing and household accessories. You can write to them at 2218 East 11th Street, Davenport, IA 52803-3760, U.S.A., or e-mail [info@amazondrygoods.com](mailto:info@amazondrygoods.com). Check the website at [www.amazondrygoods.com](http://www.amazondrygoods.com).

Chris Redmond's invaluable website, a sort of Internet equivalent of Mycroft Holmes in its omniscience, is now called Sherlockian.Net, and can be found at [www.sherlockian.net](http://www.sherlockian.net). Just about everything of Sherlockian interest on the web is there.

**The Mini-Tonga Society**, devoted to the collection and creation of Sherlockian miniatures, has a very attractive new website at [hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/mini1.htm](http://hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/mini1.htm), with stunning photos of 1/12 scale models of the fabled sitting-room by Yves-Charles Feroq, and by Trish & Jay Pearlman — who have just taken over running the Society (1656 East 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA; [minitongasociety@aol.com](mailto:minitongasociety@aol.com)).

**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** Christmas card bears a new painting by Douglas West of a scene from *The Sign of Four*. Packets of ten (post-paid, cost: UK £5.50; Europe £6.00; USA \$13.00; elsewhere £7.00, from Geoffrey Stavert (22 Homeheights, Clarence Parade, Southsea, Hants. PO5 3NN).

**The Northern Musgraves** also have merchandise for sale, including a new Musgrave Cup: a white bone china mug, gold-rimmed, and bearing the society's logo and the text of the Musgrave Ritual (UK £7.00; Europe £8.00; North America \$15.00), and two of Kate Woodlock's lovely sculptures: the 3.5" bronzed resin bust (UK £18.00; Europe £19.00; N. America \$30.00) and the 5.5" pewter statuette (UK £25.00; Europe £26.00; N. America \$42.00), both of Peter Cushing as Holmes. Send orders to Ann Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 4DN.

On 7 October **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin (details from William R. Cochran, 517 North Vine Street, Du Quoin, IL 62832-2047, USA).

**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will meet at the Savage Club, on 11 October; Rosemary Hawthorne will give an illustrated

talk on 'Fashion Observed: Dress, 1880 - 1930' (Pamela Bruxner, 2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will explore Dartmoor over the weekend of 13 - 15 October, based in a barn at Hound Tor (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). 'The Priory School' will be the subject for **The Illustrious Clients** on 21 October (Steven T. Doyle, 540 W. Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). The fall dinner of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** will take place on 27 October in New York (Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA).

**The Northern Musgraves** will meet at the Bagshaw Museum at Batley, near Leeds, on 4 November for a meeting devoted to *Collectable Holmes* (Eilidh Gunson, 1 Dene Royd Close, Stainland, Halifax HX4 9QP). Also on 4 November, **The Friends of Dr Watson** will visit Salisbury, taking in the Museum of the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, and concluding with their Annual Dinner at the *Haunch of Venison* (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). The Annual Film Evening of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** at St Bartholomew's Hospital on 17 November will feature the rare 1931 Arthur Wontner movie *Sherlock Holmes's Fatal Hour*, supported by the première of the Society's documentary *Sherlock Holmes — The Statue* (Pamela Bruxner, 2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB). (*\*The documentary will shortly be for sale on video. Watch this space.\**)

**The Red Circle** will meet on 20 November to celebrate its 50th anniversary; founder and president Karen Anderson will be visiting from the West Coast, with her husband Poul Anderson (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA). The AGM and Luncheon of **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will be on 25 November at The Grove Hotel in Exmouth (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). On the same day, **The Sydney Passengers** will discuss 'The Sussex Vampire' over dinner (Bill Barnes, Captain, 19 Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; [bbarnes@ozemail.com.au](mailto:bbarnes@ozemail.com.au)).

Periodicals received. *All that Is Ours*, 'the second occasional newsletter' (**The Northern Musgraves**, John Hall, 29 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR). *Practice Notes*, September 2000 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *The Maiwand Dispatch*, 1 June 2000 (**The Watsonians**, Susan Diamond, 16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). *The Serpentine Muse*, Fall 2000 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA).

*The Illustrious Clients News*, September 2000 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T. Doyle, 540 W. Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *The School Report*, Autumn Term 2000 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Parallelogram*, September 2000 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). *The Camden House Journal*, September 2000 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).

*The Petrel Flyer*, July-August 2000 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Communication*, 'Special Opposites issue, 2000' (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

And the essential *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press* (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

*Roger Johnson*