

# The DISTRICT MESSENGER



## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The cover of *Sherlock* no. 62 shows the regular cast of *Foyle's War*: Michael Kitchen, Honeysuckle Weeks and Anthony Howell. Inside, David Stuart Davies interviews the series' creator, Anthony Horowitz. Also in this issue, Paul M Chapman considers Holmes's involvement with America, M J Elliott investigates Jacques Futrelle's brilliant detective 'the Thinking Machine', Kathryn White asks whether Sherlock Holmes was a woman, Calum McLeod examines the *oeuvre* of Mark Billingham, Martin Edwards compares series and stand-alone, DSD views the screen career of Professor Moriarty, Alan Perry looks at the now almost forgotten Philo Vance. 'A Blessing of Unicorns' by Robert Sanderson introduces a new sleuth, Hilary Caine ... There's a report on the Sherlock Awards, and a host of further articles. The magazine is published six times a year by Atlas Publishing Ltd, at £3.95 or \$7.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 or \$45.00) from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; [sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com](mailto:sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com)). Check the website at [www.sherlockholmes.com](http://www.sherlockholmes.com).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Michael Cox, the man to whom we owe that television series, has for sale the complete Simon & Schuster set of *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on cassette. These are the classic 1940s radio broadcasts with Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce, in near mint condition. There are twenty-six cassettes, costing a total of over

£200 new. Michael is asking £100 for them. If you're interested, please contact me, and I'll forward enquiries to Michael.

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

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

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

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

*Sherlock Holmes-Kurier*, Sommer/Herbst 2004 (**Von Herder Airguns**, Uwe Sommerlad, Rödelheimer Landstrasse 32, 60487 Frankfurt a. M., Germany). *Communication*, September-October 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, August-September 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA [pkblocker@comcast.net](mailto:pkblocker@comcast.net)). *The Baker Street Journal*, Autumn 2004 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, October 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, August and September 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [pblau@dgsys.com](mailto:pblau@dgsys.com)).

*Roger Johnson*