

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Jay Pearlman passes on the sad news that his wife **Trish Pearlman**, his partner in revivifying and running the Mini-Tonga Society, died at the age of just fifty-six on 26 May as the result of a stroke. Trish was a lively, funny, dedicated Sherlockian, and she's much missed.

That prolific and versatile actor **Richard Bebb** died on 12 April aged seventy-nine. In 1954 he shared with Richard Burton the narration in the original BBC production of *Under Milk Wood*, and in 1986 he played Sir John Hardy in *The Empty House* for Granada TV. Frankie Thomas, who died on 11 May aged eighty-five, is best known as the actor who played 'Tom Corbett, Space Cadet' on American television in the early 1950s; in later life, as **Frank Thomas**, he turned to writing, including a series of Sherlock Holmes pastiches. The first, *Sherlock Holmes: Bridge Detective*, a collaboration with George Gooden, is well worth a look. As a writer, **David Butler** created important TV dramas such as *Edward the Seventh*, *Lillie* and *Disraeli*. His acting career included playing Jack Woodley to Peter Cushing's Holmes in *The Solitary Cyclist* for BBC TV in 1968. He died on 27 May aged seventy-eight.

*The Science of Sherlock Holmes* by EJ Wagner (John Wiley & Sons, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester PO19 8SQ; £16.99) is a first-rate introduction to forensic science, with chapters covering criminal pathology, poisons, disguises, the methods of Lombroso and Bertillon, ballistics, handwriting, fingerprinting and more. Each topic is related to an episode in the Holmesian Canon, and the author demonstrates how often Holmes anticipated the work of later detectives such as Edmond Locard and Sydney Smith — and how, sometimes, his ideas were already becoming outmoded. The coverage of specific cases, including those of Constance Kent, Lizzie Borden and John George Haigh, is accurate and to the point. Some critics have dubbed this book *CSI: Baker Street*, and the comparison is apt, not least because EJ Wagner tells a damned good story. I can strongly recommend *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* to all Sherlockians and to all interested in the development of detection in fact and fiction.

*His Last Bow* by Arthur Conan Doyle, edited and annotated by Leslie S Klinger (Gasogene Books, Wessex Press, PO Box 68308, USA; \$22.95), is the penultimate volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*, and as such it really shouldn't need any endorsement from me, but it will get one anyway. For those who don't know, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* is essentially a very handsome version of this series, but aimed at the general reader, whereas *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library* is for the dedicated Holmesian. Not that it's dry or dull: Les Klinger has a neat turn of phrase and an eye for the incongruous. After their nearly disastrous experience with *Radix pedis diaboli* Holmes lights his pipe and offers Watson his tobacco pouch, saying, 'Some fumes which are not poisonous would be a welcome change,' on which Klinger notes, 'Ah, the innocence of those days before Surgeon General warnings!' The stories in *His Last Bow*, late though they may be, include some of the best and most memorable in the whole Canon — 'The Bruce-Partington Plans', 'The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax', 'The Dying Detective', and of course the case that gives the collection its over-all title. Such an important, almost essential, edition of the Canon will surely be updated and corrected as often as possible, so

I'll note that 'Barclay Square' in BRUC almost certainly does refer to Berkeley (pronounced 'Barclay') Square; that the parish of which Mr Roundhay was vicar in DEVI was the ecclesiastical rather than the governmental division; and that discussion of the location of Von Bork's house in LAST omits what is surely the definitive identification, Bernard Davies's paper 'The Eagle's Nest', first published by this Society in *An East Wind* in 1997 and reprinted last year in *Colour It Prussian Blue*.

(This month Naxos AudioBooks [2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 40A High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ] will release *The Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes*, the latest unabridged reading from the Canon by the brilliant **David Timson**. I hope to review it in the next DM.)

David L Hammer's *Cases of Identity: Real People in the Sherlock Holmes Canon* (Gasogene Books; \$19.95) is, I think, something new in Sherlockian literature. Mr Hammer's approach is different from Donald Redmond's in *Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Sources*, the explorer rather than the academic — which is, I suppose, to be expected from the author of *The Game Is Afoot* and its successors. Besides the usual suspects, we read here of the soldiers of the Clan Murray, Caroline Otero, Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, Judge John Moriarty, Violet Manners, Violet Hunt, the Duke of Rutland, and Surgeon-Major Preston, all entertainingly and often convincingly proposed as the originals of Canonical characters. The longest and most interesting section, though it makes no new identifications, deals with the Mollie Maguires, the detectives and the real Valley of Fear. David Hammer is the nearest thing we have today to Michael Harrison: polymathic, literate, witty, opinionated and sometimes careless. We should treasure him.

There's lots of bad Sherlockian verse and remarkably little good stuff. Charles E Lauterbach (1884-1962) was responsible for some of the best, and two small posthumous volumes appeared in 1971 and 1979. Now, nearly thirty years on, comes *The Complete Baker Street Ballads* (Gasogene Books; \$16.95), eighty poems in all, thirty-seven previously unpublished. It's not all funny stuff either — try 'Dirge' and 'In Pessimistic Mood'. The verses are nicely set off by Henry Lauritzen's stylish illustrations, and there's a good introduction by the editors, Edward and Karen Lauterbach.

*The Best of The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Volume One* is a splendid production. Nicholas Utechin has chosen material from the years from 1952 to 1968, from members both notable and obscure, and non-members too, and ranging from sound scholarship to charming frivolity, taking in Society reports on the way. The proof-reading is fine (except that Philip Dalton is named as 'Philip Green' in the list of contents). Illustrations, especially maps, would be welcome, but otherwise my only complaint is that the first lines of paragraphs are not indented. The book is a beautifully printed and bound hardback, worth every penny of the price. £25.00 (Europe £26.00 or €40.00; rest of world £30.00 or \$60.00). Send cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Society of London (Euros in cash only) to Judi Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

Anna Massey's father Raymond played Sherlock Holmes, as did her first husband Jeremy Brett, and her brother Daniel played J Neil Gibson. They all feature, of course, in her newly published memoirs *Telling Some Tales* (Hutchinson, Random House Group Ltd, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA; £17.99). It's an intelligent, honest and well written book, far better than the average theatrical autobiography. Just don't expect to find more than a passing reference to Sherlock Holmes.

There's much of interest in *The Sherlockian E-Times* from **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; [www.sherlock-holmes.com](http://www.sherlock-holmes.com)) and in Catalogue 135 from **Nigel**

**Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; [nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk](mailto:nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk)).

**Eric Monahan** (Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW; [highcliff@tesco.net](mailto:highcliff@tesco.net)) is offering reprints of his Sherlockian stories: *The Adventure of Billingsgate Blacksmith* £4.49; *The Tower Bridge Affair* £4.49; *The Wednesday Murders* £4.49; *The Isadora Persano Affair*/ £4.49; *The Great Fires of London* £4.49; *The Man with the Shaven Scalp* £3.99; *The Singular Affair of the Aluminium Crutch* £3.99; *Holmes Right and Wrong* £4.49; *The Adventure of Marston Lodge* £4.49; *Murder in the Open* £4.49; *To Err Is Human* £4.49. And finally *Sherlock Holmes Illustrated with Alternative Captions* (humorous captions to some Paget illustrations) £4.99. Prices include postage within the UK, and there's 10% discount for orders above £12.00.

Something new and quite different is *The History of the Calabash Pipe* by Gary B Schrier (the author, 14229 Bethel-Burley Road SE, Port Orchard, WA 98367; USA; [gbs@wavecable.com](mailto:gbs@wavecable.com)). It's an 11" x 8½" paperback of 235 pages, with 335 photographs — 100 in colour, and it comes highly recommended by Howard S Smith of Alfred Dunhill Ltd. There's plenty of direct Sherlockian interest. Orders sent by 30 September are charged at \$60.00 plus postage; thereafter it's \$70.00. Full details are at [www.calabashpipe.com](http://www.calabashpipe.com).

David Stuart Davies is an editor on Wordsworth's new series of Mystery & Supernatural Tales. His first volume, *Dracula's Guest* by Bram Stoker, is already out. Due this month is DSD's own *The Tangled Skein*. All the books are priced at £2.99 (Wordsworth Editions Ltd, East Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9HJ).

Alan Lance Andersen's edition of Conan Doyle's play, *The Speckled Band: The Author's Expanded Edition* is available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and at [www.lulu.com/content/218901](http://www.lulu.com/content/218901). The book was recommended in DM 262.

Last Saturday an introductory exhibition opened at Portsmouth City Museum featuring up to 150 of the best artefacts from the Richard Lancelyn Green Bequest and running till 24 September. It's intended to make most of the 16,000 items accessible from next year. Check the website at [www.portsmouthmuseums.co.uk](http://www.portsmouthmuseums.co.uk).

A reminder that **MDF The Bi-Polar Organisation** will hold two Jeremy Brett Memorial Events at the Bandstand on Clapham Common. On Saturday 24 June at 6.00pm, following contributions from Michael Cox (presented by Dr Kim Gilbert) and David Stuart Davies, Roger Llewellyn will perform David's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* On Sunday 25 June at 2.00pm there'll be a concert of Victorian and Edwardian songs by the Garden Operatic Company. Appropriate costume will be welcome. Tickets for both events are £5.00 each, of which £4.00 goes to MDF, from [www.mdf.org.uk](http://www.mdf.org.uk).

Next month the *Eastern Daily Press* in conjunction with the Norwich School of Art & Design plans to put up a blue plaque at the Hill House Inn at Happisburgh in Norfolk, to mark Conan Doyle's visits there, which he drew on for 'The Dancing Men'. For details, contact Keiron Pim at [Keiron.Pim@archant.co.uk](mailto:Keiron.Pim@archant.co.uk).

**Charles Hall** (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has published two colourful Christmas cards with paintings by Ian M Fraser: a benign Hound painting the portrait of Sherlock Holmes in the snowy grounds of Baskerville Hall, and Holmes accompanying a group of (mostly) recognisable Canonical carollers outside 221B. Only 1,000 of each have been printed, priced at 60p each (no envelopes, but they fit standard A6). The carollers picture is also available as a postcard at 45p, as is a painting of Holmes and Watson in a hot-air balloon ('The Hound') hovering over the Lost World. Again, only 1,000 of each.

At [www.221b-baker-street.com/index\\_cover.php](http://www.221b-baker-street.com/index_cover.php) is *A Trifling Reference*. it's a very useful research tool, containing the complete Canon in searchable form and all the major chronologies, with the capacity to sort the stories chronologically according to each. This is just one item that's come my way via Scott Monty's *Baker Street Blog* at <http://bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com>.

Catherine Cooke notes that the Spring 2006 issue of *National Railway Museum Review* contains a Sherlock Holmes story.

Brian Pugh reports that the excellent Russian Sherlock Holmes series, made by Lenfilm between 1979 and 1986, is available as a set,

with English subtitles, from [www.alldvd.ca](http://www.alldvd.ca) for a total cost of about US\$97.54.

**David Ian Davies's** recording of Barry Day's gripping novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Apocalypse Murders* was released on CD last month and is available from [www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com), where you can hear a sample. There are other Holmesian recordings there too.

'*The Yellow Face*' and '*The Three Students*', dramatised by **MJ Elliott** and performed by the **Old Court Radio Theatre Company** has been well received, and Matthew Elliott is working on more scripts from the Canon. You can hear the recording at [www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk](http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk) or it's available post-paid from me on CD at: UK £5.00; Europe £6.00 or €9.00; elsewhere £9.00 or US\$12.00. Sterling cheques payable to me, please, and dollar checks to Jean Upton. Euros in cash only.

Jim French Productions offers *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, #11*, a CD from Imagination Theatre, featuring 'The Moriarty Resurrection' by MJ Elliott and 'The Strange Death of Lady Sylvia Eichhorn' by Jim French. These splendid productions, very reminiscent of the great radio series of the 1940s, can be bought or downloaded at [www.jimfrenchproductions.com](http://www.jimfrenchproductions.com). See also [www.sherlockholmesradio.com](http://www.sherlockholmesradio.com).

Great creations of Scottish writers, including Sherlock Holmes, are celebrated at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, opened on 1 June in Edinburgh's Royal Mile and incorporating the John Knox House.

Periodicals received. *The Arthur Conan Doyle Birthday File and Research File XIII*, 22 May 2006 and *Irregular Newsletter (The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment*, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). *The Baker Street Bugle*, issue 31 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Joan & Roy Upton-Holder, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7BA). *The Baker Street Journal*, Spring 2006 (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). *Bohemian Newsletter*, no. 64 (Ďeské spoletnost Sherlocka Holmese, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, May 2006 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Communication*, May/June 2006 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

*The Illustrious Clients News*, June 2006 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, June 2006 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *Mayday Mayday*, June 2006, *Chronicler*, June 2006, and *C-Extra*, 28 May 2006 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Petrel Flyer*, June 2006 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *The School Report*, Summer Term 2006 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Torr*, Spring 2006 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA).

And of course *Scuttlebutt from the Spermacti Press*, May 2006 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net)).

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