

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

no. 265 27 August 2006

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £6.00 or US\$15.00 for 12 issues (dollar checks payable to Jean Upton, sterling cheques to me). Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

Brian Mills, who died on 3 June aged seventy-two, is most closely associated with *Coronation Street*, but he directed many other quality dramas for Granada, including *Silver Blaze* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (both 1988). **David Maloney**, who died on 18 July also aged seventy-two, worked mainly for BBC TV, directing many episodes of *Doctor Who*, including the 1977 thriller *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, in which the Doctor dons a deerstalker and Inverness to investigate horrible murders in Victorian London. Michael Cox alerted me to the death on 28 July of that splendid actor **Patrick Allen** at the age of seventy-nine. Allen's career embraced Shakespeare, Dickens, action movies, comedies, and much else. In 1986 he was a superb Colonel Sebastian Moran in *The Empty House* for Granada TV.

Sherlock Holmes and a Question of Science by Christopher Lindsey (Hadley Pager Info, Fetcham Park House, Lower Road, Fetcham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 9HD; £12.50) deals, as the title suggests, with aspects of science in the stories. Sample chapters, for instance, are headed 'The Medical Record (Medicine and Pharmacology)', 'Lady Nicotine and the Three Pipe Problem (Tobacco and Smoking)' and 'Bullets, Sharp Blades and Blunt Instruments (Ballistics and Weaponry)'. The main part of each chapter is essentially a list — under 'Animal or Vegetable? (Natural History)' we find Dr Roylott's household zoo, Teddy the mongoose, the 'remarkable worm, said to be unknown to science'... and, *inter alia*, the worms that 'are seen to have eaten their way through the wooden box Holmes finds in the chamber beneath the cellar of Hurlstone'. Equally important, though, are the extensive notes to each chapter, which could almost have been published separately as a Sherlock Holmes encyclopaedia. Mr Lindsay is conscientious (though he misses the significance of the spelling 'plows' in 'The Three Garridebs', and the difference between a gasogene and a seltzogene) and he has a dry sense of humour: of smoking concerts he notes, 'It is unlikely that cigarettes were smoked by the instrumentalists between pieces, least of all the woodwind and brass players, as they needed quite a different kind of puff to give a satisfactory musical performance.' The curious Sherlockian (is there another kind?) will find much of interest in *Sherlock Holmes and a Question of Science*. You can order it direct from the publisher (send a cheque for £12.50 payable to Hadley Pager Info), or any good bookshop. It's in stock at Murder One in Charing Cross Road and the Sherlock Holmes Museum at 239 Baker Street.

In his new booklet, *The Real Irene Adler: Caroline Norton née Sheridan*, Hugo Koch makes a convincing case for Richard Brinsley Sheridan's granddaughter as the inspiration for *the woman*. Mr Koch has kindly sent me four extra numbered and signed copies, which can be had by the first four applicants within the UK, for the price of postage.

The Agony Column Codes & Ciphers by Jean Palmer (authorsonline.co.uk, c/o Gardners Books Ltd, 1 Whittle Drive, Willingdon Drove, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN23 6QH; £12.95) reprints over a thousand secret messages, with their keys where available, from the personal columns of various newspapers. It sounds like something that would pique Holmes's interest.

On Friday 6 October, Marylebone Library will host the press launch of a new book about Jeremy Brett and Sherlock Holmes, published by **MDF the Bi-Polar Organisation** (formerly the Manic-Depression Fellowship, of which JB was a strong supporter). Details are currently under wraps.

From Oneworld Publications (185 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7AR) in November comes *Edgar Allan Poe and the Murder of Mary Rogers* (£16.99) in which Daniel Stashower tells the story behind Poe's second tale of the Chevalier C Auguste Dupin, 'The Mystery of Marie Rogêt'.

There's much of interest in *The Sherlockian E-Times* from **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; www.sherlock-holmes.com), and in the new catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) and **Black Cat Bookshop** (90 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1GE; blackcatuk@aol.com).

A handsome cover portrait of Jeremy Brett shows that issue 68 of *Sherlock Magazine* maintains the pattern set by the previous number. Richard Valley revisits the Rathbone film *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon*; Paul M Chapman considers Holmes as a lasting cultural icon; David Stuart Davies interviews Nick Rennison, author of *Sherlock Holmes. the Unauthorised Biography*; DSD also observes Holmes as a boxer; Matthew Booth concludes his look at Holmes as a dispenser of justice; Denis O Smith contributes a cracking new Sherlock Holmes story, 'The Adventure of the Brown Box'; Neil McCaw surveys the introductory exhibition drawn from the Richard Lancelyn Green bequest at Portsmouth; I investigate Holmes's relationship with the police; Robert Sanderson reviews the achievement of the American radio drama company Imagination Theatre ... and there are contributions from Charles Prepolec, Pat Ward, Kathryn White and Moriarty. A single issue costs £3.95. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 UK; £35.00 Europe; £46.00 or \$70.00 rest of world; from Atlas Publishing Ltd, Jordan House, Old Milton Green, New Milton, Hants. BH25 6QJ (subs@sherlockholmes.com). The website is at www.sherlockholmes.com.

[*David and Kathryn have moved from Huddersfield, so the temporary editorial address is: 31 Matthew Lane, Meltham, West Yorks. HD9 5JS; phone 01484 854576.*]

The monthly National Rail Timetable, the successor to Bradshaw, is to be discontinued since the information is now, theoretically, available in seconds online or by phone. Railway enthusiast Pete Waterman lamented its passing in *The Daily Telegraph* on 18 July.

Last month Andrew Sachs played Adso of Melk in a two-part BBC Radio 4 dramatisation of *The Name of the Rose* — appropriate, since he's Watson to Clive Merrison's Holmes in Bert Coules' series *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. If anyone recorded *The Name of the Rose* I'd be most grateful for a copy.

Looking towards Inside Justice Week in November, the government has set up an online poll where you can vote for the best fictional agent of justice. A couple of days ago Sherlock Holmes was well ahead of the field, but his rivals are a pretty odd bunch. Besides Inspector Morse, James Bond, Rumpole of the Bailey and Miss Marple, they include Iris Cope (of *Probation Officer*), Mr Barrowclough (of *Porridge*) and Danger Mouse! The website is <http://insidejustice.cjsonline.gov.uk/polls/index.php>.

Dr **Vitalh Rajan** of Hyderabad and Montreal, author of *Holmes of the Raj* (Writers Workshop, 162/92 Lake Gardens, Kolkata 700 045, India; 300 Rupees or \$6.50 plus postage) has been appointed an

Officer of the Order of Canada for achievement and merit in voluntary service.

Michael Harper informs me of a lecture at 12.30pm on Thursday 28 September at the National Army Museum in Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea: *Conan Doyle at War: From the White Company to the Western Front, 1914-18* by Dr Andy Simpson of the Centre for First World War Studies. Admission is free, and no booking is needed. The website is at www.national-army-museum.ac.uk.

From 9.30am till noon on 7 October, the Newberry Library at 60 W. Walton Street, Chicago will host a **Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Colloquium** featuring lectures on 'Doyle's Favorite Book', 'Dr Arthur Conan Doyle: A Self Portrait', and more. Speakers will be Dan Posnansky, Paul Martin and Glen Miranker. Phone 312 943 9090 for details. This is one item of many that have come my way via Scott Monty's *Baker Street Blog* at <http://bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com>.

Cotton Grass Theatre Company will shortly tour with Justin Webb's play *Sherlock Holmes and the Final Problem*, which 'explores the complex and creative minds of both his creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, and the real life deductive genius on whom he was based — Dr Joseph Bell.' September venues are: 8th, **Cannock Wood Village Hall**; 9th, **Bedworth Arts Centre**; 10th, **Lantern Theatre**, Sheffield; 12th, **Roses Theatre**, Kidderminster; 14th-16th, **Pomegranate Theatre**, Chesterfield; 17th, **Square Chapel**, Halifax; 21st, **The Hub**, Oswestry; 22nd, **Talbot Theatre**, Whitchurch; 23rd, **Cawley Hall**, Morton Eye; 27th, **Highfields School**, Matlock; 28th, **Derby Guild Hall**; 29th, **Berwick Maltings Arts Centre**. The website is at www.cottongrass.mirai.co.uk.

Mark Dindal, director of *Chicken Little*, is due to make his live-action debut with *Sherlock's Secretary*, written by Julie Golden. Reuters says, 'Holmes famously resided at 221B Baker Street, and the address — now the Sherlock Holmes Museum — has been receiving letters from people seeking Holmes' help in solving real crimes. The film will centre on the person living at that address, whose world is turned upside down when he gets one of these letters and decides to take on a case.' [**It was Abbey National whose offices incorporated 221 Baker Street and who for nearly sixty years employed a succession of people to act as Holmes's secretary. The Sherlock Holmes Museum at 239 Baker Street pretends that its address is 221B, but it isn't and never has been.**]

Peter Blau reports Ken Lanza's discovery of www.dailyscript.com, 'a collection of movie scripts and screenplays intended "to serve as a resource for writers and actors and those who simply enjoy reading movie scripts".' Billy Wilder and IAL Diamond's script for *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* is one of those accessible on the site.

Our member **MC Black** is an established guide for walking tours through Holmes's London, and his portfolio of routes continues to expand. He currently offers: Bloomsbury to Charing Cross; St James's Park to Marble Arch; Oxford Circus to Baker Street (the Empty House walk); and Liverpool Street to Saxe-Coburg Square. No, you won't find the name of Saxe-Coburg Square on any official map, but MC reckons to have discovered the real location of Jabez Wilson's pawnshop! There's no schedule: he will arrange walks to suit clients. Phone him on 01920 467930, or e-mail him at MCB@DetectiveWalks.co.uk.

Guided tours are also offered at **Stonyhurst College**, Arthur Conan Doyle's *alma mater* near Clitheroe in Lancashire. According to the Lancashire Evening Post, 'Tours are available daily (except Fridays and the August Bank Holiday). No dogs allowed. 1-5pm. For more information, call 01254 826345.'

Conan Doyle's Hampshire house, **Bignell Wood** at Brook, near Minstead where he and his second wife are buried, is currently for sale by Savills. The asking price is in excess of £1,450,000 — which gets you eight bedrooms, eight reception rooms, conservatory, detached garage block, five acres of grounds, and private access to the New Forest. See savills.co.uk.

Scott Monty has created a new feature arising from the *Baker Street Blog*. He 'started with Peter Blau's master list of Sherlockian societies, then mapped them all on a new site called Frappr in order to give us the beginnings of **Sherlockians Around the World**. This

site uses Yahoo's/Google's mapping technology and allows us to create a visual/virtual community of Sherlockians around the world. It is entirely interactive, so you can add your name, photo, make comments, edit your scion society contact information (including adding a Web address if appropriate). It works for individuals as well as scions, and Sherlockian sites of interest. Take a look at <http://bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com/2006/08/well-i-chose-august.html>

LM Goode, sole proprietor of Goode Press, announces the formation of a new Sherlock Holmes Society with a membership of one. The 'group' will be called **The Friendless Drifter** — one of the world's most dangerous classes. When queried if this name sounded self-pitying, Goode replied. 'It's tongue-in-cheek. I'm sure all the Sons of Beeches will understand.'

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Summer 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*, nos. 66 and 67 (České společnost Sherlocka Holmese, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, July 2006 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Canadian Holmes*, St Jean Baptiste Day (Summer) 2006 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). *The Confederate Chronicles*, August 5, 2006 (**The Confederates of Wisteria Lodge**, Kent Ross, 6875 Fielder, Rex, GA 30273, USA). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, June 2006 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *Grimpen Mire Gazette*, July 2006 (**Hugo's Companions**, David C Humphrey, 1843 Winnetka Road, Northfield, IL 60093, USA).

Ineffable Twaddle, August 2006 and September 2006 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *The Passengers' Log*, Autumn & Winter Issues (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). *The Petrel Flyer*, Summer 2006 and Autumn 2006 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *The School Report*, Autumn Term 2006 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Scion*, Summer 2006 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). *The Solar Pons Gazette*, Summer 2006 (www.solarpons.com, Bob Byrne, bob.byrne@solarpons.com) **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, August 2006 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net). *The Whaling News*, May, June, July and August 2006 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, July 2006 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Roger Johnson