

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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During the recent weekend expedition to Dartmoor, the Chairman was delighted to award the Society's rarest and highest distinction, Honorary Membership, to **Shirley Purves**, who joined in 1963 and served as Chairman from 1990 to 1992.

'Good things come in small packages.' That's certainly true of the tiny but gorgeous item published on 2 October by Walker Books and the Royal Collection Trust. **Arthur Conan Doyle** was, when he chose, a first-rate comic writer. The obvious examples are the tales of Brigadier Gerard, but there's a good deal of wit in his other work, including the Sherlock Holmes stories, and some excellent comic passages too. In 1896, to help raise funds for his alma mater, Edinburgh University, he wrote 'The Field Bazaar', a clever spoof of his own stories, and in 1922 he was one of the notable authors who were invited to contribute to the library of Queen Mary's Dolls' House. *How Watson Learned the Trick* was the result, a very short self-parody, written in his small neat hand on tiny sheets of paper that were then exquisitely bound for the Dolls' House library. Conan Doyle's delightful little joke isn't nearly as well known as it should be, and this beautiful facsimile of the unique original is a real treasure. It comes in a lovely gold-stamped cloth-bound package, with an attractive, informative booklet. (www.walker.co.uk; £12.99)

Last year the Deerstalkers of Welshpool published the first-ever Welsh edition of a Sherlock Holmes story, 'The Speckled Band', translated by **Eurwyn Pierce Jones** as *Y Cylch Brith* – a timely move, as *Sherlock* is filmed in Wales. Now a commercial publisher, Y Lolfa, has issued the book in a similarly attractive edition (www.ylolfa.com; £3.95) – and it is available from Amazon.

Mentioned in the last DM, *Sherlockian Saturdays at the Pratt: Three Decades of Canonical Scholarship* edited by **William Hyder, BSI** (The Baker Street Irregulars Press; www.bakerstreetjournal.com; \$21.95 plus postage) is a splendid collection: twenty-eight papers, selected from those delivered between 1982 and 2011 at the Enoch Pratt Free Library's annual Holmes events in Baltimore. Full marks!

New from MX Publishing (www.mxpublishing.co.uk) is, well, rather a lot, actually. I'm always interested in scripts and screenplays, so *The Hound of the Baskervilles: An Adaptation for the Stage* by **Claire Malcomson** (£9.99) has a particular appeal for me. It was written for the drama company Enter Stage Right, who toured south-eastern England with it last year, and will take it on the road again in 2015. The story is cleverly and effectively dramatised, with the legend of the Hound performed as a folk play, and a very neat twist at the end. I hope next year's tour brings Enter Stage Right my way.

Back in June I welcomed *Sherlock Holmes in Montague Street, Volume One* (MX; £9.99), in which **David Marcum** demonstrated his proposition that Martin Hewitt, whose investigations were chronicled in *The Strand Magazine* and elsewhere by **Arthur Morrison**, was actually Sherlock Holmes in his pre-Watson days. With surprisingly little tweaking by Mr Marcum, Morrison's stories are remarkably convincing in their new guise – and, since he was a very good writer, the results are as engaging as the originals. *Sherlock Holmes in Montague Street, Volume Two*, by Arthur Morrison, 'edited, Holmes-ed', and with original material' by David Marcum, is out now, and Volume Three is due later in the year.

The new editions of tales from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* illustrated by **P James Macaluso Jr** (MX; £6.99 each) are certainly

eccentric. They're also exceptionally clever, beautifully presented, rather witty, and bang up to date. The illustrations are full-colour photographs of creations in Lego, each one a scene depicted by Sidney Paget in *The Strand Magazine*. *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* is due on 6 October, *The Five Orange Pips* on 10 November, and *The Man With the Twisted Lip* on 8 December. Ideal presents for the young Holmesian in your life, I'd say.

Sherlock Holmes: The Scottish Question, or Sons of the Thistle by **Mike Hogan** (MX; £8.99) seems singularly appropriate to the year of the Scottish referendum, as it starts with the reported theft of the Coronation Stone from Westminster Abbey (but is it the real Stone of Destiny?), leading Holmes to uncover a plot by Scottish nationalists to destroy the Union. In the shadows, behind the plot, is a foreign power, whose aim goes beyond the dismantling of the United Kingdom. Terrorism, espionage, danger and hair's-breadth escapes make *The Scottish Question* a political thriller rather than a detective story – and why not? There's also wit, and a pinch of satire in the mix. Mr Hogan writes well too.

Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Cold-Served Revenge by **Petr Macek** (MX; £9.99) also involves Holmes and Watson in terrorism, murder and the dark clouds of imminent war – and behind it all is a mysterious woman, out to avenge the death of her father at the hands of Sherlock Holmes.

The Open and Shut Case: Volume One of the Case Books of Octavius Bear by **Harry DeMaio** (MX; £12.99) is an Alternative Universe Mystery for Adult Animal Lovers, set on an Earth in which Homo sapiens is extinct and various other creatures have developed sophisticated skills, communication, and civilisation. Octavius Bear, PhD seems to have less in common with Sherlock Holmes than with Nero Wolfe, perhaps deliberately. This first ingenious, exciting and very funny exploit takes Bear and his mixed-species assistants pretty much around the globe in pursuit of Imperius Drake and the Deep Blue Sapphire, stolen from a Chicago museum. The official website is at www.octaviusbearslair.com.

With *The Empress of India* by **Michael Kurland** Titan Books have brought all five of the Professor Moriarty novels back into print (<http://titanbooks.com/creators/michael-kurland>; £7.99). Moriarty is suspected of doing away with Sherlock Holmes, who was commissioned with the safety of two tons of gold, bound from Calcutta for the Bank of England aboard the steamship *Empress of India*. But the gold has disappeared too, as if by magic, and suspicion again falls on Moriarty, though he and Colonel Moran are actually working to another plan entirely. What can he do but solve the apparently impossible problem himself?

The protagonist of *The Strange Case of Caroline Maxwell* by **Amanda Harvey Purse**, due in October, is Amelia Christie, struggling to become a journalist in the early 1900s. When Sherlock Holmes needs a woman's help with a sixteen-year-old case, Amelia becomes his temporary assistant, but as the investigation proceeds she begins to wonder whether Jack the Ripper is still alive and on her track. And where is Sherlock Holmes when she needs him? (FeedARead; www.feedaread.com/books; £7.99). Sign up for the author's newsletter by e-mailing mymischiefpurse@googlemail.com.

From www.bbcshop.com: '*Sherlock: Complete Series 1-3 Limited Edition Gift Set* (Blu-ray & DVD pack) This stunning UK Exclusive set includes every episode from all three series on both Blu-ray and DVD, along with the original bonus features released with each series. Additionally, the set features a bonus disc with all new commentaries, never-before-seen outtakes and a deleted scene and exclusive collectibles including mini busts of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson

and 2 limited edition art cards. This is the ultimate gift set to keep fans guessing until the next game is afoot.' It's priced at £109.99, and it does look very desirable.

But note this, from www.cnet.com/uk/news/sherlock-dvd-and-blu-ray-gift-set-loaded-with-extras/: 'The Special Edition of *Sherlock Series 3*, set for release on November 3 for £15 in the UK, includes bonus material from the already-released Series 3 discs but also includes not-previously-released outtakes from Series 2 and 3, four documentaries, a mini-episode, and a previously unreleased, deleted scene from Series 3. The set also includes new audio commentaries from Steven Moffat, Sue Vertue, Mark Gatiss, and Una Stubbs.' Amazon has it for pre-order.

Each Saturday during the opening month of the Museum of London's exhibition, *Sherlock Holmes: The Man Who Never Lived and Will Never Die* (i.e. 18 October to 15 November) **BBC Radio 4 Extra** will broadcast Sherlock Holmes plays & documentaries, featuring Cedric Hardwicke, Carleton Hobbs, John Gielgud, Nigel Stock, Robert Powell, Roger Rees, Clive Merrison and others. Check the *Radio Times*!

At 7.30pm on 15 October, to celebrate the publication of Val McDermid's new book *Forensics: An Anatomy of Crime*, Wilton's Music Hall hosts 5x15: *FORENSICS: An Anatomy of Crime*, a conversation on forensics between **Val McDermid** and **Kate Summerscale** (author of *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*). (Graces Alley, London E1 8JB; 020 7702 2789; wiltons.org.uk; £15.00).

The University of Huddersfield Lecture on 6.00pm on 9 October, at the Tolson Museum (Ravensknowle Park, Wakefield Road, Huddersfield HD5 8DJ; tolson.museum@kirklees.gov.uk; 01484 223830) will be *Conan Doyle & the Cottingley Fairies* by **Dr Merrick Burrows**, Head of English at Huddersfield University. Admission free, booking essential.

Bishop's Cleeve Players (near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire) are now rehearsing their new play, *The Curse of the Rajasthani Ruby*. This is a new, original, not too serious Sherlock Holmes mystery. The troop will be performing at a number of venues including the Tithe Barn on December 5. Tickets will be available from Lewis at Woodmancote Newsagents. For more information, call 01242 673917. [*Thanks to Karen Murdock.*]

The Museum of London has quite a range of events coming up, associated with the great Sherlock Holmes exhibition: an interview with **Anthony Horowitz** on 27 October; *Late London: Sherlock's City* on 27 November ('For one night only, enter the mind of the city's most iconic consulting detective. Immerse yourself in his unique pursuits and habits through installations, live performances, workshops and more'); *The Case of the Curious Cocktail* on 16 December ('Foodie futurologists, the Robin Collective, put on a thrilling cocktail-making hunt through the galleries after dark. Put your deduction skills to the test to craft your own Holmesian cocktail.');

a Sherlock Holmes Walking Tour each Saturday from 18 October to 20 November – and more. Details are on the website at www.museumoflondon.org.uk/london-wall/whats-on/adult-events/talks-and-workshops.

Later during the run of the exhibition there'll be an all too rare chance to see three classic silent Sherlock Holmes films on Sundays at the Barbican, all starting at 4.00pm. On 15 February there's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with **Eille Norwood** and **Hubert Willis**. The same pair play Holmes and Watson in *A Scandal in Bohemia*, *The Man With the Twisted Lip* and *The Final Problem* on 8 March; and **Arthur Cullin** replaces Willis in *The Sign of Four* on 22 March. The March screenings will have live musical accompaniment. Details and online booking is at www.barbican.org.uk/film/event-detail.asp?id=17107.

A reminder that all fifty of the *Books About Town* Book Benches will be sold at public auction on 7 October 2014 in the Purcell Room at Southbank Centre as part of the London Literature Festival, with all profits going to the work of the **National Literacy Trust** and **Wild in Art**. The Sherlock Holmes Book Bench, sponsored by the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd and painted by **Valerie Osment** is Lot 13. The auction, conducted by Edward Rising of Sotheby's and attended by *Books about Town* artists, begins at 7.45pm. Details are at www.booksabouttown.org.uk/index.php?action=ViewPage&Id=9, including the catalogue as a pdf file.

www.FourthGarrideb.com is the website of **The Fourth Garrideb**, founded last month during the American Numismatic Association's World's Fair of Money in Chicago. Greg D Ruby, who has the title of 'Mycroft', reports: 'We are now a member club of the American

Numismatic Association and will be recognized as a Scion by the Baker Street Irregulars. From now through the end of the year, we are accepting Charter members, who will be known as "of the Alexandrian school." Those joining after the clock hits 2015, will be regular members. A one-time fee of \$22.10 will allow a person to become a lifetime member and receive a membership certificate and a Garrideb dekadrachm, our homage to the Irregular Shilling. Those residing outside the United States, please drop me a note and we will make other arrangements. Members are encouraged to choose an investiture name from one of the stories (Holmes, Watson and Garrideb are not eligible). Please send a check for \$22.10 (there are no credit cards in 1895, yet!) payable to Greg D Ruby to: 2400 Boston Street #102-A19, Baltimore, MD 21224, USA.'

Sir Donald Sinden died on 11 September, a month short of his ninety-first birthday. Remembering him from films of the early 1950s, such as *Doctor in the House*, I was surprised and deeply impressed by his performances with the Royal Shakespeare Company in the late 1960s. He was a splendid Henry VIII and the best Malvolio I've ever seen. The Daily Telegraph obituary notes: 'In 1989 Sinden was offered the opportunity to play his long-time hero Oscar Wilde, whose work had always fascinated him, in John Gay's one-man show *Diversions and Delights*. In 1942, at a poetry club reading, Sinden had met Lord Alfred Douglas and had been one of the few mourners at his funeral. Thirty years later, when Wilde's London home was being demolished, Sinden bought the fireplace for his own house in Hampstead.' In 1998 his unmistakable orotund tones were heard as Sir Charles in Bert Coules' magnificent adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* on BBC Radio 4.

Bob Miller, who died on 16 August, aged sixty-six, will be known to members as Captain of the PG Wodehouse Society's cricket team, our Society's opponents in the annual Victorian Cricket Match. In his thirty years with Essex Police, he had helped set up a police force in the newly independent Republic of Vanuatu. Murray Hedgcock notes that after retiring in 1997 Bob became a government advisor on gypsy, showmen and traveller education and housing matters, and an Ofsted schools inspector with special concern for the travelling community. He was a Freeman of the City of London, had an Open University BA and a Cambridge MA. He founded The TS Eliot Society UK. And one of his teachers at Dagenham County High School was the great Holmesian scholar D Martin Dakin. David Jones and I represented the Society at his memorial service.

Periodicals received. *The Bilge Pump*, September 2014 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, <http://barquelonestar.com>). *Bootmakers Autumn Newsletter* (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, <http://www.torontobootmakers.com>). *Cri Bar Crier*, October 2014 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). *Foolscap Document*, August 2014 (**The Three Garridebs**, Jeanne Nathan, www.3Garridebs.homestead.com). *Gaslight Gazette*, September 1904 [*sic*] (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, September 2014 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). *Mayday Mayday*, September 2014 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Moor: Magasin för Sherlockianer*, Sep 2014 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden). *The Morning Echo*, Michaelmas 2014 (SHS Victoria, otkin.baker@gmail.com). *Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals*, August 2014 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellew, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). *The Serpentine Muse*, Fall 2014 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, www.ash-nyc.com). *Sherlockian E-Times*, September 2014 (**Classic Specialties**, Carolyn & Joel Senter, www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times14-9.html). *The Torr*, Autumn 2014 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Homburgstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsburg, Switzerland).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermacti Press*, August 2014 (Peter E Blau; <http://redcirclecd.org/index.php?id=39>).

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