

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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In the last issue, readers were set a task of naming five original canonical adventures that included a number in the title, in order to win a copy of *Arthur and Sherlock* by Michael Sims. I'm pleased to announce that the five winners are: Shane Baldwin, Andrew Lees Rakshita Patel, Oscar Ross and Frank Wright. Correct answers included: 3 Gables, 3 Garridebs, 3 Students, The Sign of 4, 5 Orange Pips, 6 Napoleons, Missing 3 Quarter, and 2nd Stain. Congratulations to all.

I'm always delighted to discover new sources of Sherlockian gifts, and recently came across **The Literary Gift Company**. Carrying items inspired by many authors, they offer a very good selection of unusual and creative gifts related to both Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes. Their attractive SH tote bag, in black canvas, has a silk screen line drawing of the Houses of Parliament in white, with Holmes's familiar silhouette in black, and the quote "I am a brain. The rest of me is a mere appendix." Their SH women's socks are high quality, and the SH temporary tattoos could be amusing to show off at a summer party. There are loads of other items, including jewellery, ties, cards and notebooks. I especially like their Map of Fictional London, which is a good test to see if your knowledge of the streets could rival Holmes's; the roads are laid out, but identified only by the titles of stories where incidents took place. There is, however, a Title Index on the back of the map to identify the street. The website provides the ability to search items according to author, key word, title or genre, and it's well worth a look. I spotted items that I've certainly not seen elsewhere. www.theliterarygiftcompany.com

Geraldine Beare reports: "I thought you would like to know that SHERLOCK has been purloined by the CRISPR gene editing system and stands for Specific High Sensitivity Enzymatic Reporter Unlocking. Apparently it is a tool that helps to detect Zika virus in blood, urine and saliva and has been developed by Omar Abudayyeh and colleagues at the Broad Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts." The acronym is a bit strained, but it's forgivable when you consider the benefits that SHERLOCK will be providing. If you are interested in learning more, there are a number of articles on the web that provide details of how it works.

Our good friend, the actor and raconteur **Robert Lloyd Parry**, will be performing rehearsed readings of 'The Dying Detective' and 'The Veiled Lodger' at the Rosemary Branch Theatre, Islington on Sunday 11th June at 7:30 pm. The two adventures will be performed with live musical accompaniment. Tickets are £10, bookable at rosemarybranchboxoffice@gmail.com. (If you have problems or queries email Robert at roblloydparry@hotmail.com.) We've been to see Rob many times when he has told ghost stories in the persona of MR James, and his one-man interpretation of *The Time Machine* was simply stunning. To find out more about his work, go to The Nunkie Theatre Company website at www.nunkie.co.uk

Also from Geraldine Beare, **Illyria Theatre Group** will be performing *The Lost World* outdoors at The Castle Gardens, Sherborne on 11th July. Book online at www.illyria.uk.com or ring 01935 814633. Tickets are £15 or £13 concessions, gates open at 6:30 and the performance begins at 7:30, lasting two hours plus a 20 minute interval. You can find information about The Castle Gardens at www.thegardenonline.co.uk Several years ago we saw Illyria perform their imaginative version of *The Hound of the*

Baskervilles outdoors at Fulham Palace. Despite having to contend with the constant roar of planes overhead, it was extremely enjoyable and their gigantic Hound was truly terrifying.

David and Audrey Jones have provided a news clipping about another theatrical production: "*Six Acre Productions* are transporting you back to an era of the greatest detective – Sherlock Holmes. He has been summoned to the home of Cuthbert Worthington-Jones to solve the case of *The Seven Wooden Figurines*. During his stay the great Sherlock Holmes's investigation turns to murder. Does the curse of the Semer moors still live on, or has the Butler, Wooster, finally lost the plot? Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson will need your help to solve the murder at **Manor Farm, Semer** on the 30th June, 1st July, 7th and 8th July. Tickets at £12 each include a light supper. For tickets call 07508 472142 or email us at sixacreproductions@live.co.uk." I should probably point out that Semer is in the wilds of Suffolk, and you will require your own transportation to get there.

Howard Ostrom has flagged up information on *Sherlock Holmes and the Crimson Cobbles* by Toby Hulse, from an original story by David Hastings, which will be at Chipping Norton Theatre, 19th – 24th September. It is a comedy, described as "a hilarious, deeply daft theatrical explosion for adults and family audiences," and apparently involves murders in Whitechapel and the identification of Jack the Ripper. The performance on 22nd September will be British Sign Language interpreted. <http://www.chippingnortontheatre.com/index.php?p=whatson&id=3509>

And there's more theatrical communication from **Jonathan Goodwin** of **Don't Go Into the Cellar** theatre company, who says: "We are taking bookings now for 2018. Specialising in original adaptations of Victorian and Edwardian popular fiction, we have stage thrillers, theatrical chillers, comedy and children's shows on offer." For information about the theatre company, or to book them for an event, go to www.dontgointothecellar.com. Several years ago we saw one of their productions at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel and were suitably impressed.

Oscar Ross has discovered that Upham Brewery in Wiltshire has produced its own Silver Blaze Ale. For more information go to: www.uphambrewery.co.uk/page/118/Silver-Blaze.htm

Anne Edwards, Business Manager at Undershaw, which is now the home of **Stepping Stones School**, informs us that they have begun a series of lectures. The first in the series was on 24th May by **Michael Gurton**, senior archivist at the Portsmouth Collection. There will be a **Heritage Open Day** on Sunday 10th September, which will enable visitors to have a good look around Undershaw while school is not in session. Future lecturers will include **Mark Goodchild**, the architect of the renovation of Undershaw, local historian **Marion Dell** who will discuss the life of ACD in Hindhead, and **Luke Kuhns**, author of *Welcome to Undershaw*. During the week of 22nd May 2018 there will be numerous ACD themed events. Additional talks and events are being lined up and dates confirmed, so it's worth checking their website for information and updates as they become available. www.stepsstones.org.uk/News/Arthur-Conan-Doyle-Lecture-Series/

In past years we've seen the Cow Parade and the Elephant Parade. Now **Catherine Cooke** brings news that the **Haslemere Hogs** are on the loose: "There are a lot of hogs in Haslemere itself, but carry on to Hindhead crossroads, by Undershaw, then cross and go a couple of yards up Tilford Road. On the left is **The Cookie Bar**, and inside you will find **Sherlock Hams**, who should be there until the beginning of July. The Cookie Bar is a very good cafe that is frequented by students and staff from **Stepping Stones School** for work and social experience." For more information go to www.haslemerehogs.co.uk which has a hogs gallery, where you can see Sherlock Hams at No. 10 on the list. There will be 60 hogs displayed around Haslemere for several months, after which they will be sold off with proceeds going to the Mayor of Haslemere's Charity.

The May 2017 issue of **CADS (Crime and Detective Stories)**, edited by Geoff Bradley, contains several articles of interest: *Doyle's Valley of Fear and the Country House Mystery Novel* by Kate Jackson; *Had Conan Doyle Read Henry Cauvain's Maximilien Heller?* by Susumu Kobayashi; *Animals in Sherlock Holmes Short Stories: A Consideration* by Lyn McConchie. If you haven't yet discovered **CADS**, its editor describes it as "an irregular magazine of comment and criticism about crime and detective stories." To obtain a copy of the current issue or to set up a subscription, email Geoffcads@aol.com or write to Geoff Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA.

Ten years ago **Gyles Brandreth** published *Oscar Wilde and the Candlelight Murders*, a tale from 1889, which teamed up Oscar Wilde with Arthur Conan Doyle. In a Holmes-and-Watson type of relationship, the two friends embarked on solving a series of inexplicable murders. Gyles's newest book, *Jack the Ripper - Case Closed* (Corsair, £18.99 hb) is the seventh in this excellent series. This time, Conan Doyle is the narrator, writing in 1924 about events that begin on New Year's Eve, 1893. Another murder has occurred in the style of Jack the Ripper. Oscar's neighbour on Tite Street happens to be the detective in charge of the Ripper investigations, who welcomes assistance from the brilliant minds of Oscar and Arthur. ACD's wife, Touie, is in Switzerland with the children, so without the normal household responsibilities, he quickly finds himself at Oscar's beck and call. Scrupulously researched, Brandreth has drawn on new material discovered in the papers of George R Sims (celebrated Victorian journalist and friend of Oscar Wilde) who coincidentally was the first cousin of Gyles's grandmother. The story really whips along, and what initially appear to be red herrings or pointless detours inevitably turn out to be crucial to the case. One gets an almost tangible feeling of the atmosphere of 1890s London and the eccentric characters of that era. I am not a Ripperologist, but I suspect that the solution is going to surprise many readers.

COMPETITION

On 19th March 2010 a joint project by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, Gyles Brandreth, the Oscar Wilde Society and the City of Westminster resulted in the unveiling of a plaque at the **Langham Hotel** to commemorate a dinner given by Joseph Marshall Stoddart, publisher of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, at which he commissioned a novel each from Oscar Wilde and Arthur Conan Doyle.

Corsair/Little Brown has offered five copies of *Jack the Ripper - Case Closed* as competition prizes. Here is your challenge: *The Langham Hotel is mentioned by name in three Canonical stories. Can you name which ones?* Answers must reach me by the 21st June. The winners will be announced in the following issue.

Information comes from **Jonathan Hopson** that there will be a workshop on Sherlock Holmes held at the **Gladstone's Library** literary festival on Sunday 3rd September. For details go to www.gladstoneslibrary.org/events/events-courses-list/gladfest/gladfest-2017/the-speakers#Matthew_Bradley

SHSL members **Bryan and Johanna (Hanna) Stone** have sent news of their recent activities: "The new book of church history by Bryan, *Basel and the Church in England* has so far been well received. Hanna has her new book, *Eine Studie in Basiliken* (as by Johanna M Rieke), which confirms that Holmes and Watson in August 1890 solved the mystery of a young Englishman, dying in unexplained circumstances – and very uncomfortably – in Basel." You can find both books on Amazon.

Michael Connolly has been in touch to report "I have just re-read Michael Hardwick's *Prisoner of the Devil*, which I have just discovered is being reprinted by **Meantime Books**. There is some interesting new information here:" www.ace-that-test.com/simonhaugh.com/prisoner-of-the-devil.php

The **BBC** (purveyors of *Sherlock* and many other fine programmes) has announced the closure of its digital download service, **BBC Store**. They have found that they cannot compete with other streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime. BBC Store will close on 1st November 2017, and its customers are being contacted with options to claim a refund or an Amazon Video voucher.

Richard Dalby died on the 21st April, aged sixty-eight. A member of the Society, he was an author and book dealer, with specialist knowledge in crime fiction and gothic literature. He compiled and edited anthologies in both genres, and was a contributor to every issue of *Book & Magazine Collector*. Some members might have had the opportunity to meet Richard when he attended the launch of Douglas Wilmer's memoirs, *Stage Whispers*.

Roger Moore died on the 23rd May, aged eighty-nine. Known for his roles in *The Saint*, *The Persuaders*, and as James Bond, he portrayed the great detective in *Sherlock Holmes in New York* (1976). Knighted in 2003 for his charity work, he was known universally as a gentleman and thoroughly nice fellow. I worked with him (albeit briefly) in 1971 when I was 17 years old, and he could not have been more kind.

We have just learned of the recent death of our member **John Barker, OBE**, whose presence at meetings, at Annual Dinners, and especially on pilgrimages to Switzerland and elsewhere will be remembered with pleasure by many. As a long-serving Common Councilman of the City of London, it was John who enabled the Society's Council to hold its meetings at the Guildhall.

Periodicals received:

The Arthur Conan Doyle Newsletter and Birthday File, 22nd May 2017 XXIV (**The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, Brian W. Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN; brianpugh140@btinternet.com)

The Baker Street Journal, Spring 2017 (**The Baker Street Journal**, P.O. Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077-1934, USA; email@bakerstreetjournal.com)

The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star May 2017 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov)

Mayday Mayday, May 2017 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Adcam Way, Belfast BT5 7RP; oscarross@hotmail.com)

Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals, May 2017 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of Southern Australia**, Mark Chellew; mchellew@gmail.com)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, April 2017 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net)

The Sherlockian E-Times, May 2017 (Carolyn & Joel Senter, Clifton Avenue, OH 45219; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com)

Jean Upton