

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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In the last issue we reported news from **Brian Pugh** that a new plaque to honour **Arthur Conan Doyle** would be unveiled at **Elliot Terrace in Plymouth** on Saturday 9 September. We can now confirm that the unveiling will take place at 3:00 pm “with nibbles afterwards.” If you plan to attend, please email Brian at brianpugh140@btinternet.com so that he can inform the organisers of how many to expect.

Brian also reports that the August edition of *Fortean Times* has dedicated six pages to an article on the **Cottingley Fairies**. It's the 100th anniversary of the incident of the famous photographs, and it has attracted a good amount of media interest. BBC Breakfast had a short feature on 18th July, and the Telegraph also published an article at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/photography/what-to-see/cottingley-village-thrall-fairies-tale/> The charming little Yorkshire village, where it all took place, celebrated on 29 July with its Cottingley Fairy Festival,

A reminder comes from **Geraldine Beare** about some forthcoming events planned by the **Poor Folk Upon the Moors**: “On 6 September we are arranging a round-robin steam train from Paignton, a boat trip from Dartmouth and the return train back up to Paignton and our AGM is on Saturday 2 December at The Two Bridges. Perhaps we shall see you at one or the other?” If you are interested in attending, contact Geraldine at gjwriter@gmail.com

If you've been thinking about visiting **Undershaw**, there will be an English Heritage Open Day on 10 September, which will include a talk by **Bonnie MacBird** on ‘*Writing Sherlock Holmes Now – Modern Holmes on Screen and in Print.*’ For information on this and other upcoming events, go to www.steppingstones.org.uk/

It has also been announced that Undershaw won the LABC Educational Building of the Year Award for the South East, and will now go forward to the national awards in the autumn.

Luke Kuhns brings news that **The Real Sherlock Holmes**, an Edinburgh walking tour, will be operating at the upcoming Fringe Festival. The tour includes Conan Doyle's birthplace and many sites relating to his education and upbringing, as well as a visit to the Sherlock Holmes statue, which had been removed temporarily while Edinburgh's new tram system was under construction, but happily is now back in place. Details can be found on their website at <http://realsherlockholmes.com/holmes-page/>

From **Peter Blau** comes an item in *Crowborough Life*, June 30 2017, regarding work carried out on the local Scout Troop's meeting hut. Arthur Conan Doyle was secretary of the Scouts' Group Executive when he lived in Crowborough, <http://crowboroughlife.com/scout-hut-watertight-grant-guttering-21386/>

Nightshade Productions will perform *A Study in Scarlet* at the Golden Fleece Inn, York from 26 July to 13 August. www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk/event/study-in-scarlet/

Illyria theatre company, who are touring with their version of *The Lost World*, have published their current schedule at <http://www.illyria.uk.com/> Based on the photos I've seen, the dinosaurs look very impressive!

Howard Ostrom notes that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is on in Portsmouth at the New Theatre Royal from 30 August to 2 September. This is the **Peepolykus** comedy adaptation by Steve Canny and John Nicholson, which members of the Society saw in London some years ago. It is deliriously silly, with three actors playing all of the roles. This production is performed by **Torchlight Mysteries** and details are available on their website at <https://www.newtheatreroyal.com/performances/the-hound-of-the-baskervilles/>

And if one *Hound* isn't enough, there's another in Manchester, running from 2 July to 16 September by the **Northern Rep Company**. Their website states: *This riotous comedy features two fearless actors playing every role in this fast-paced farce.* For information and to book tickets go to www.northernrep.co.uk/thebaskervilles

And a third *Hound*, this time the dramatic adaptation by **Simon Williams**, will be performed by the **Argosy Players** at the Compass Theatre, Ickenham on 5-7 October. For details and to book go to <http://argosyplayers.org.uk/coming-up/>

Howard also notes that *The Game's Afoot* by Ken Ludwig will be performed in Cheriton, Hampshire from 15-18 November. The premise is that the famous actor, **William Gillette**, has invited fellow actors as guests to a party at his Connecticut home, Gillette Castle. However, in the course of Christmas celebrations, a murder takes place. Gillette calls upon his experience of playing the great detective to identify the killer and prevent another murder. <http://www.thecheritonplayers.org.uk/production/the-games-afoot/>

And for something completely different, keep your eye out for **The Grand Theatre of Lemmings**. They perform in **The Smallest Theatre in the World**, a fully functioning theatre that sits on the sidecar of an old Royal Enfield motorbike. You will be able to see their version of the *Hound* in the Courtyard of The Piece Hall, Blackledge, Halifax HX1 1RE during the free Welcome Weekend events on 19 and 20 August. <http://www.thepiecehall.co.uk/events/welcome-weekend>

Sherlockians are well known for travelling great distances to attend events, so here's a real challenge. *The Baker Street Irregulars* by Eric Coble, based on the graphic novels by Tony Lee and Dan Boulwood, will be performed on November 10, 11, 17 and 18 at the **Alaska Fine Arts Academy** in Eagle River, Alaska.

Get out your snowshoes, hitch up the dogsled, and mush on over there! <http://www.alaskapublic.org/2017/07/14/alaska-fine-arts-academy-2017-2018-season/>

The list of **Emmy Award** nominations for 2017 has been published. There are many British nominees, including **Benedict Cumberbatch**, nominated in the category of Best Actor in a Limited Series, and *Sherlock: The Lying Detective* as Best Television Movie.

The phrase ‘**Smoking Gun**’ has crept into usage as a common cliché, popping up in crime fiction or in media reports of crimes. An article by Ben Panko explores its Sherlockian origin. http://www.smithsonianmag.com/cmart-news/more-century-smoking-guns-180964027/?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=socialmedia

The **St. James Bar** at the Balcon, St. James’s, London is offering cocktails with literary themes, including, naturally, Sherlock Holmes. Their 221b cocktail contains Metaxa Greek brandy, chai tea-infused crème de fig, liquorice bitters, lime juice, honey and dark chocolate syrup, shaken with an egg white. This is one of those moments when I’m rather glad I don’t drink... For more information see <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/luxury/drinking-and-dining/st-james-bar-balcon-review/>

Thomas Wheeler’s book *The London of Sherlock Holmes*, with its interactive maps of London, has been invaluable to visitors and researchers alike. He has now produced his *Day by Day Guide to Cruising the Thames*. He says “*It is really a ‘how to’ book, and walks the reader through planning the trip, what to do before they leave home, and even suggests a day-by-day itinerary.*” If you’re in a seafaring mood you can find the book on Amazon.

The History Press has a long-standing reputation for publishing high quality non-fiction, and five years ago embarked upon their very successful literary ‘*Miscellany*’ series. Carrying on with the literary theme, just published is *The Man Who Would Be Sherlock* by **Christopher Sandford**, author of a number of books including *Houdini and Conan Doyle: Friends of Genius*, *Deadly Rivals*, which was adapted for a recent television mini-series. With much biographical and historical content, it follows Conan Doyle from his time as a schoolboy through to his association with serious crimes of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. I especially like the quote on the back of the dust jacket: “*Holmes reflected the personality of his creator, a man who combined a lifelong passion for scientific enquiry with a finely honed sense of honour and justice.*”

SPECIAL DISCOUNT

The History Press has provided a special offer for readers of *The District Messenger*. To buy your copy of *The Man Who Would Be Sherlock* (RRP £20), for just £16.00 including free P&P to one UK address only, please telephone : 01256 302699, and quote code **MG3**. Offer ends 31 October 2017.

COMPETITION

Bonnie MacBird’s newly published Sherlock Holmes pastiche, *Unquiet Spirits* takes Holmes and Watson on a journey from the French Riviera to the Scottish Highlands. In the course of solving three intriguing cases, their investigations naturally include the process of distilling fine whiskey.

Publisher **HarperCollins** has provided five copies of *Unquiet Spirits* as competition prizes. To enter, you need to answer the following question: *In which story does Holmes ask, ‘Was there any other spirit but rum in the room?’* Answers must reach me by 21 August. Winners will be announced in the following issue.

We have received communication from **Irfan Shah**, a researcher and writer from Leeds. Irfan was the researcher and co-writer of *The First Film*, a feature length documentary about inventor **Louis Le Prince**, who shot the world’s first films in 1888 before disappearing on 16 September 1890. He is now working on a biography of Le Prince called *The Shadow Traps*, which he is attempting to crowd-fund. Irfan says, “*My project might afford Sherlockians with an opportunity to investigate the case themselves for their own amusement, but also in the belief that new discoveries might be uncovered as a result. I can demonstrate for the first time ever why Le Prince never returned to New York, and in doing so have uncovered a conspiracy theory within a conspiracy theory. On my webpage I have a section where people can ask questions, and I am going to use this space to start a dialogue. My work on Le Prince has been a passion for many years now. It would mean a lot if it made a connection with others who recognise a fellow enthusiast.*” You can find Irfan’s website at <https://unbound.com/books/the-shadow-traps>

Tom Ue has been in touch to say, “I’ve got a small piece of news. Our special issue of the *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, on Holmes, is now out.” You can find it at <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/vjpf20/current>.

Obituaries:

Actor **Trevor Baxter** died on 16 July, aged 84. He will be fondly remembered by Sherlockians for his role as Professor George Litefoot to **Tom Baker’s** Doctor in the Sherlock Holmes themed *Doctor Who* adventure, *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*. In recent years, he recorded a series of **Jago and Litefoot** audio adventures for **Big Finish Productions**.

Periodicals received:

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

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, June 2017 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA)

The Illustrious Clients News, June 24, 2017 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA; IllustClients@gmail.com)

Ineffable Twaddle, July & August 2017 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)

Memoirs et Documents 2016: La Cycliste Solitaire, Shoscombe Old Place (Société D’Études Holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande, Vincent Delay, Ch. De la Chaumiere 1, 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland)

The Petrel Flyer, Spring 2017 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Fran Martin; franziskah@shaw.ca)

Plugs and Dottles, July 2017 (**The Nashville Scholars**, Gael Stahl; seniorhawk@gmail.com)

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

The Serpentine Muse, Summer 2017 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Susan Z Diamond, 16W603 Third Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; szdiamond@comcast.net)

Jean Upton