

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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No. 372 January 2018

At our Annual Dinner on 6th January the Tony Howlett Award for dedicated service to the Society went to our intrepid webmaster, **Jonny Hough**, who manages to keep things ticking over nicely, despite the activities of Moriarty's internet gremlins. Photos of 'The Stormy Petrel Supper' can be viewed on the Society's website.

Meanwhile in New York, on 11th January the Baker Street Babes continued their annual tradition of 'The Daintiest...', with this year's bash entitled '*The Daintiest Scream on the Moor*'. The auction raised nearly \$6,000, which will be donated to the Disabled American Veterans Trust.

At the Baker Street Irregulars Dinner on 12th January, Michael Whelan (Wiggins) announced the following new investitures: 'Beacons of the Future' to **Shannon Carlisle**, 'Watson's Journal' to **Dean Clark**, 'A Single, Large Airy Sitting Room' to **Denny Dobry**, 'Rache' to **Maria Fleischhack**, 'The Five Orange Pips' to **Jeffrey Hatcher**, 'The Old Russian Woman' to **Anastasia Klimchynskaya**, 'A Little Art Jargon' to **Candace Lewis**, 'Seventeen Steps' to **Nick Martorelli**, 'That Gap on That Second Shelf' to **Rebecca Romney**, 'Sir Hugo Baskerville' to **Al Shaw**, and the Two Shilling Award was presented to **John Linsenmeyer**.

On the same evening, the Gaslight Gala welcomed all Sherlockians who weren't otherwise engaged. The theme for the evening was '*Fear and Loathing in Victoria's London*'. From the photos I've seen, it looked like enormous fun!

The *New York Times* published an article on 15th January, chronicling the various Birthday activities. They even had the good grace (as well as a sense of humour) to print an apologetic correction regarding Maria Fleischhack's imaginative costume. You can read the full article here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/14/nyregion/sherlock-holmes-celebration-manhattan.html>

Congratulations are in order for **Mattias Boström**, who is a finalist for the 2018 Edgar Award and has also been nominated for the Agatha Award at Malice Domestic for best non-fiction for his book *From Holmes to Sherlock*.

Congratulations also to **Benedict Cumberbatch**, who has been appointed as LAMDA's (London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art) new President. He succeeds Timothy West CBE, who steps down after 31 years in the role. Benedict graduated from LAMDA in 2000 with an MA in Classical Acting and in 2013 he launched LAMDA's fundraising campaign for its new building which opened in spring 2017.

There was a ripple of horror in the Sherlockian community, when an article in the *Daily Mail* announced that the Arthur Conan Doyle pub in Edinburgh was being renamed in honour of JK Rowling. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5226425/Mystery-pub-named-Harry-Potter-author-JK-Rowling.html> Clarification was provided in a later article from the *Edinburgh News*, explaining that the change was only temporary, as a Hogmanay 'art installation' stunt to promote

Edinburgh writers. However, why they chose to rename a pub already named after an Edinburgh author is beyond my comprehension. <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/our-region/edinburgh/underbelly-reveal-reason-behind-conan-doyle-pub-name-change-1-4651467>

Takeshi Shimizu shares the news that this year is the 70th anniversary of the Tokyo Baritsu Chapter and he has been researching the meeting that was held in October 1948. *I have not been able to find the details of one of the participants – George Francis Blewett, of Philadelphia, the attorney of General Hideki Tojo at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. I enquired at the Philadelphia Bar Association without success. Now I am waiting for a reply from the Theodore F. Jenkins Law Library in Philadelphia. Could you ask Sherlockians in Philadelphia about Mr George Blewett, please?* If anyone has any information to share, I'll be happy to pass it over to Takeshi.

Geraldine Beare writes: 'You may recall that back in September a small group of Sherlockians gathered in Plymouth to take part in the unveiling of the Doyle plaque at Elliott Terrace. In yesterday's Sunday Times (28th January), heading the homes-for-sale section, a flat in that lovely Terrace is going on sale for £750,000. What's more, it is at No. 4, the former home of Nancy Astor, the first female MP to take her seat - and there is a plaque on the wall celebrating her residence. Sadly though, the article does not mention the Doyle connection a few doors down, but does point out that the next door house is the lord mayor's official residence.'

A new Japanese TV series will star **Yuko Takeuchi** as a female Sherlock Holmes. The role of Watson (or Wato Tachibana) will be played by **Shihori Kanjiya**, and the two will go about solving crimes in modern day Tokyo. *Miss Sherlock* is set to debut in April, and you can view a trailer here: <http://wegotthiscovered.com/tv/miss-sherlock-hbo-2018/>

Phil Atwell reports that South West Silents are screening the 1925 silent version of *The Lost World* at the Curzon Cinema in Clevedon, North Somerset on Sunday, 24th February 2018 at 4:30pm. This is a new restoration, incorporating original elements from archives and collections from around the world. A new score is provided by silent film composer Robert Israel, and the film has a special introduction by Peter Lord, co-founder of Aardman Animation. Tickets are £6.50. For more information go to: <https://www.curzon.org.uk/event/36629>

Holmes and Watson, the film starring Will Ferrell and John C Reilly, has been described as '*a humorous take on Arthur Conan Doyle's classic mysteries featuring Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson*.' Not much to go on, but that's all the information that has so far been provided by Columbia Pictures. The film's release date is 9th November 2018. The cast includes Ralph Fiennes as Moriarty and Hugh Laurie as Mycroft.

In 2011, when the Society visited Greenwich, **Lawrence Owen** presented his atmospheric auditory dramatisation of *The Hound*

of *Baskervilles*. He has gone on to produce a version of *The Time Machine*, which received ecstatic reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. It will now be performed at the Greenwich Theatre on 27th February. For information and to book go to: <https://www.greenwichtheatre.org.uk/events/hg-wells-time-machine>

Carla Hepburn, Marketing Manager for the **Edinburgh University Press** has written to offer a special discounted rate on their titles. You can claim a 30% discount when ordering direct from www.edinburghuniversitypress.com. To take advantage of this discount, enter SHS30 at the basket stage. P&P rates apply. Of particular interest is *Twentieth-Century Victorian: Arthur Conan Doyle and The Strand Magazine 1891-1930*, just published in paperback for £24.99. <https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-twentieth-century-victorian.html>

Author **Ray Lyon** has been in touch to say that his book *The Sherlock Effect* is being re-published by Thistle Publishing on January 25th. (It was first published in 1997 by Alibi Books, and received positive reviews.) Ray would like to involve some Sherlockians in a publicity event being planned to promote the relaunch: 'Just to let you know, what we are planning is an event, at the earliest (weather permitting) on Saturday 10th February, on Baker Street, where people dressed in Victorian or Holmesish attire will promenade. Those who are kind enough to take part will receive a signed book, as thanks from me.' For more details, and if you are interested in participating, you can contact Ray by email at ray_lyon2003@yahoo.co.uk

The Mitchell Library in Glasgow will be holding an event called *The Square Mile of Murder*, taking place on Tuesday 6th March from 6 – 7.30pm. Attendees can join the Mitchell's Librarians and archivists to explore resources relating to four notorious murders that took place in Glasgow's historical 'Square Mile of Murder.' Book by ringing the Library at 0141 287 2999 or apply at the Granville Street reception desk. Places are limited.

Darren Grey brings news of The Signum University London Speculative Fiction Symposium, to be held on Saturday 28th April at UCL. This is a one day series of talks on speculative fiction and classical literature. There is an open call for papers, with a deadline of 5th March, for interested participants to submit talks and to host sessions at the conference. Darren says, 'I'm keen to see some most singular Holmes related talks at the symposium, and am hopeful that some Sherlock Holmes Society members would be interested in submitting to the call for papers.' <http://www.londonmoot.com/p/call-for-papers.html>

Luigi Pachi has been in touch with the following: 'Would it be possible to let your followers know about our eBook collection *221B*? Published by Delos Digital and edited by myself, the collection has published so far seven titles, all available on Amazon and on other eStores, price from £0.99 to £2.99. Here the last few titles available: *A Scandal in Nova Alba* by Orlando Pearson (The King of Nova Alba approaches Sherlock Holmes with a mystery: who killed his predecessor?); *The Führer and his Deputies* by Orlando Pearson (May 1945. The British Government needs to decide whether to put Rudolph Hess, Hitler's deputy, on trial on for war crimes); *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Risen Corpse* by Paul D Gilbert (On a particularly cold and foggy Halloween, Dr Watson is shaken to the core by the spectral sight of a woman, long thought dead, hurrying anxiously along the murky thoroughfare of Baker Street!); *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Christmas Stocking* by Paul D Gilbert (Crime does not go on holiday, even at Christmas); *Sherlock Holmes and the Last Pre-Raphaelite* by

Victor Carstairs (A quest through the dark meanderings of the glittering metropolis).'

Geraldine Beare reminds us that 'on 28th Jan 1908 Sidney Paget died at Margate. He is buried in East Finchley Cemetery. In other words, it will be 110 years since his death. His two brothers were also well-known illustrators and his eldest brother Henry Marriott was a volunteer in the Artists' Rifles Brigade serving in the First World War. Henry made a name for himself as illustrator during the Balkan Wars just prior to WWI, working for *The Sphere*.'

Obituaries:

Sue Grafton died on 28th December, aged 77. Her popular series of 'alphabetical' mysteries began with *A is for Alibi* in 1982. She intended to conclude the series with *Z is for Zero*, but sadly only got as far as *Y is for Yesterday*, published in 2016.

Yves-Charles Fercoq died on January 5th, 2018. He was regarded by many as one of the most prominent and erudite French-speaking Holmesian scholars. Notably, he built two fascinating miniature models of the 221B sitting room and Nathan Garrideb's private museum. He was equally skilled as a cartoonist.

Bella Emberg died on 12th January at the age of 80. She was a versatile and much loved comic actress, who is probably best known for her television and stage appearances with fellow comedian Russ Abbot. She appeared in a musical Sherlock Holmes sketch with Abbot, but is especially memorable for her portrayal of *Blunderwoman*, paired with Abbot's *Cooperman* character. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-42671503>

Peter Wyngarde died on 15th January, aged 90. He had a varied career on stage, film and television, and is best remembered for playing the flamboyant Jason King in the early 1970s. In 1965 he was a memorable Baron Gruner to Douglas Wilmer's Holmes in *The Illustrious Client* for BBC TV. In 1994 he appeared in Granada TV's *The Three Gables*, as Langdale Pike to Jeremy Brett's Holmes. He also narrated the BBC *Timeshift* television documentary *How to be Sherlock Holmes*, broadcast in 2014.

John Morris died on 25th January, aged 91. He was the composer for an astonishing number of popular films including *The Producers*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein* and *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother*.

Periodicals received:

The Baker Street Journal, Winter 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, January 2018 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov)

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

The Illustrious Clients News, January 2018 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA; IllustClients@gmail.com)

Ineffable Twaddle, January 2018 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)

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

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