

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Holmes Fest 2018 kicked off in Portsmouth on 27th June. Along with the exhibitions at Portsmouth Library there are a number of activities at a variety of venues, including talks and theatrical presentations. For a somewhat different experience, on 14th July, **The Gosport Steampunk Society** will offer a night of beers, a brewery tour and a viewing of the silent film of *The Lost World*. For more information go to: <https://www.lifeisamazing.co.uk/holmesfest>

There must be a number of authors who assume that **Mattias Boström** was either born under a lucky star, or that he has been practising the Dark Arts. Following on from his numerous awards and nominations over the past year or so for his excellent *From Holmes to Sherlock*, Mattias's latest achievement is to be nominated for the **Macavity Award**, for Best Mystery-Related Non-fiction 2018. Mystery Readers International, USA will announce the winner in September 2018.

It is a pleasure to announce that our friend and Society member **Russell Merritt** has received the Denver Silent Film Festival's **David Shepard Career Achievement Award**. Russell was guest speaker at the Society's annual dinner in 2015, where he related the adventure of how William Gillette's long-lost silent film, *Sherlock Holmes* (1916) was discovered and restored. Russell was also a leading figure in the restoration of Carlyle Blackwell's *Der Hund von Baskerville* (1929).

The annual **Victorian Cricket Match** took place on Sunday 24th June at the West Wycombe Cricket Club. Stalwarts of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London took on the 'Gold Bats' of the PG Wodehouse Society under a blazing summer sky. You can read Nicholas Utechin's account of the match on the Society's website, in which he reports that there was only one incident of electrocution. Our team accepted defeat in a most gentlemanly manner, and Peter Horrocks should be thanked and commended for yet again organising a most enjoyable event.

Nicholas Utechin recently came across a **Sidney Paget** watercolour, *Fishing Boats on the Shoreline*, that came up for auction on 22nd June at David Duggleby Auctioneers in Scarborough. It went for £160, just short of its low estimate. To be fair, it was not a particularly inspiring seascape, but it must have been worth the price just for Paget's signature. Peter Blau noted that in 2004, Paget's pen and ink-wash illustration of *The Death of Sherlock Holmes* sold for \$220,000.

Later in the year, Nicholas will be venturing into the wilds of the American midwest, as one of the presenters at **From Gillette to Brett V**. Organised by those clever folk at **Wessex Press**, the conference takes place from October 5th to 7th at

Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. Events will include an exclusive 30th anniversary screening of *Without a Clue*, a 60th anniversary screening of Hammer Films' *The Hound of the Baskervilles* starring Peter Cushing, and an exclusive Sherlockian Cinema Exhibit. You can find more information and obtain registration details at: <http://www.wessexpress.com/html/g2b5main.html>

Mike Whelan ("Wiggins" of the Baker Street Irregulars) shares news that the **BSI Archive**, formerly held at the Houghton Library at Harvard University, is being transferred to the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. The Lilly Library also holds the archive of the Mystery Writers of America.

In the last issue we mentioned that a Sherlock Holmes teddy bear was being offered as a prize on the **This is Ingleton** Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VisitIngleton/>. The competition went live on 1st July, and the winner will be drawn at the end of the month. The prize is donated by **Martyn Sutton**, proprietor of Uncle Jeremy's Household.

Each year the Audio Publishers Association honours the best titles in audio publishing. **Audie Awards** are given in twenty-seven categories, including Audiobook of the Year. This year's award for Excellence in Production went to the recording of Sherlock Holmes stories narrated by **Stephen Fry** for **Audible Studios**. The recording is available at www.audible.com.

Gyles Brandreth, author of the *Oscar Wilde Mysteries* (and a member of the Society) is also a regular contributor to **The Oldie** magazine. In the current issue (July 2018) his column includes an affectionate tribute to Sherlockian actor Roger Llewellyn, whose funeral took place on 10th May.

Gyles will be appearing at this year's **Edinburgh Fringe Festival** in *Break a Leg!*, celebrating all things theatrical (with lots of name-dropping). Also at this year's Fringe are shows entitled *Adventures of the Improvised Sherlock Holmes* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Conundrum of Conan Doyle*, as well as the popular **The Real Sherlock Holmes Walking Tour**. For full details of all Fringe activities go to <https://www.edfringe.com/> The Festival runs from 3rd to 27th August.

Jacqui McKechnie of **The Self-Important Scotland Yarders** (also known as the Sherlock Holmes Society of Scotland) reports that at their recent AGM, the founder Barry Young was appointed as their new Jack in Office, and they welcomed Ann Dickson as Social Secretary. 'Expect a flurry of activity as new, exciting events are arranged.' The group meets regularly in Glasgow.

BJ Rahn recently attended a gin tasting evening at the Lansdowne Club, where she discovered **Sherlock & Sons Gin**. It comes from a small batch artisan distillery in Ripley, Surrey. Launched by its Head Distiller, Simon Sherlock, their Solstice gin 'is inspired by the English summer (the warm, sunny kind as opposed to the wet and miserable weather we're used to) and comes in a rather lovely embossed, pink bottle. Served over plenty of ice and topped up with a premium tonic, this makes for a super G&T.' They also do a Nautical edition. If you are inclined to enjoy a tippie in the garden, you can find out more at <https://www.distillersofsurrey.co.uk/>

Chapterhouse Theatre Company, who perform at open-air venues, must be thrilled with this summer's weather so far. Their touring production of **The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** is well underway, and from now until the beginning of September they are appearing all over the UK. You can check their website for the venue nearest to you at: www.chapterhouse.org. Rather appropriately, they will be at Stonyhurst College on Friday the 13th of July.

The Baker Street Babes have announced a Scavenger Hunt for SherlockDCC, as part of the upcoming San Diego Comic Con. 'We at The Baker Street Babes have unearthed a lost Sherlock Holmes story, and Dr. Watson needs YOUR assistance to figure it out. Complete tasks, solve clues, and make a fool of yourself in public...' <http://bakerstreetbabes.com/the-game-sdcc-goers-is-on-sherlockedcc-is-back/>

Conan Doyle for the Defence by **Margalit Fox**, 318pp, hbk with dust jacket, Profile Books, £16.99. This handsomely presented volume is a non-fiction account of Conan Doyle's efforts to overturn Oscar Slater's conviction for the murder of Marion Gilchrist. **Alistair Duncan**, who has posted a full review on his blogspot <http://alistaird221b.blogspot.com/2018/06/review-conan-doyle-for-defence.html> notes that the author has provided more information on Slater's time in prison than has appeared in previous books: "This was a pleasant surprise and helps to mark Fox's book out." **The Sunday Times** of 1st July has also chosen the book as a 'pick of the best recent reads.'

COMPETITION

Profile Books have provided a copy of **Conan Doyle for the Defence** as a prize giveaway, but you must first identify the adventure in which Holmes said to Watson: 'I am not retained by the police to supply their deficiencies.' Submit your answer via email or post, to reach me no later than 23rd July. The winner will be drawn at random and announced in the next issue. Good luck!

A Study in Emerald by Neil Gaiman, 88pp, hbk, Dark Horse Books, £13.62/\$17.99. A new graphic novel adaptation of Neil Gaiman's short story in which Holmes and Watson are pitted against H.P. Lovecraft's **Cthulhu**. The book is co-written by Rafael Scavone and Rafael Albuquerque with art by Albuquerque and colourist Dave Stewart, who have created a beautiful, chilling journey through Victorian London. <https://www.avclub.com/neil-gaiman-tackles-sherlock-holmes-in-this-a-study-in-1826571114>

Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Pigtail Twist by MJH Simmonds, 300pp, pbk, MX Publishing, £11.99. A murder has shattered the bucolic peace of the sleepy arable farmlands of Bedfordshire. The owner of a small stately home has been killed while hosting a dinner party. But what and where is the murder weapon?

Sherlock Holmes and the Roswell Incident by Michael Druce, 224pp, pbk, MX Publishing, £9.99. Holmes and Watson find themselves in a web of Cold War intrigue, stolen secrets, double agents, and double crosses all connected to the mystery of Roswell.

OBITUARIES:

We are very sorry to report that one of our members, **Brian Scrivener**, died on 4th June after a short illness. Oscar Ross noted that Brian was also a member of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment and Oscar's own Belfast-based group, The Crew of the SS May Day. 'He contributed several articles to our publications in those early days. On several occasions, when I was in London, we met up for a drink and a chat, usually at the Globe in Marylebone Road, directly opposite the Sherlock Holmes statue.' We extend our sympathy to Brian's family.

Periodicals Received:

The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, June 2018 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov)

Canadian Holmes, Summer 2018 (The Journal of the Bootmakers of Toronto, Mark and JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada; markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca)

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

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

Proceedings of the Pondicherry Lodge, June 2018 (The Sherlock Holmes Society of India; shsieditors@yahoo.in, shsieditors@gmail.com)

Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals, May 2018 (The Sherlock Holmes Society of Southern Australia, Mark Chellew; mchellew@gmail.com)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, May & June 2018 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net)

The Watsonian, Spring 2018 (The John H Watson Society); selena@johnwatsonsociety.com)

Jean Upton