

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

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A Happy New Year to all!

Two more distinguished Holmeses died in 1995. **Vassily Livanov** played the part in the well-received Lenfilms series between 1979 and 1933. **Erich Schellow** starred in the Südwestfunk TV series in 1967; an excellent critique of his performance by Uwe Sommerlad (**Schellow Holmes**) was published last year by Von Herder Airguns Ltd.

Chris Redmond reports the death last year of **Bill Schweickert**, "organiser and anchor of the Three Garridebs of Westchester County... the principal Sherlockian society for New York City". He wrote the poem "A Long Evening with Holmes" that appears as superscription to **The Universal Sherlock Holmes**.

BSI investitures awarded during the Sherlockian weekend in New York earlier this month were: Steven T. Doyle ("The Western Morning News"), Ralph Hall ("Smack! Smack! Smack!") (*he's an exterminator by profession*), Hugh Harrington ("Wisteria Lodge"), Peter Horrocks ("The Inner Temple"), Kate Karlson ("The Evening Standard"), John Pforr ("P.C. Cook"), Marsha Pollack ("A Small But Select Library") and Bob Steck ("A Mysterious Scientist").

Our distinguished former Chairman, Shirley Purves BSI, recently broke her leg on the ice. She'd appreciate correspondence and phone calls (Hérons Brook, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7RE; phone 01647 52588).

The 6th Musgrave Monograph is a fascinating account of greed, intrigue, manipulation and incompetence. **The Misadventure of the Sherlock Holmes Pilot** by Richard Lancelyn Green tells the story behind **The Man Who Disappeared**, intended as the first film in the first ever Holmes TV series. This nicely presented 40-page brochure contains numerous quotations (some of 'em damning) from relevant correspondence between the producers and the Conan Doyle brothers, and lots of rare stills. Copies can be had for £6.00 post-paid from Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4DN. **The Joint Investigation** by Brian P. Gallimore (see DM 156) can be had for £3.00 in UK or £3.75 overseas postpaid from Shelley Philipson, 4 Dolvin Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9EA. Sterling cheques drawn on UK banks should be payable to The Poor Folk Upon The Moors.

Derek Hinrich put me on to **The Mammoth Book of Historical Detectives** edited by Mike Ashley (Robinson Publishing, 7 Kensington Church Court, London W8 4SP; £5.99). This fat 532-page paperback contains 29 tales, divided into 5 historical periods: the last, "Holmes and Beyond", contains Jack Adrian's "The Phantom Pistol", an investigation by Inspector Stanley Hopkins, and "The Adventure of the Frightened Governess", one of Basil Copper's excellent Solar Pons narratives.

In April, Penguin Books (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ) will publish **Sherlock Holmes and the Speckled Band** at 60p in the Penguin Children's 60s

series. Last July Moody Press (no address to hand) published four children's books by Jerry B. Jenkins in a series called **Dallas O'Neill & The Baker Street Sports Club**, at £3.75 each.

The Pleasant Places of Florida have published **Mrs Hudson's Handbook of Sherlockian Cookery, Book no. 2** by Joan S. Wood at \$10.00 in the USA or \$15.00/£10.00 (cash) overseas (Mrs J.S. Wood, P.O. Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222-0740, USA). Due in early spring from Greenwich Exchange (50 Langton Way, Blackheath, London SE3 7TJ) is **The Case of the Scarlet Woman** by Watkin Jones, an illustrated 190pp novel by Watkin Jones, in which Holmes and Watson become entangled with Aleister Crowley, W.B. Yeats and the occult Order of the Golden Dawn.

Forbes Gibb (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ) has issued **Catalogue Baskerville**, full of Holmesiana and Doyleana for sale. Rupert Books' **Catalogue no. 15** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) is even fuller. **Catalogue 35** from Nigel Williams Rare Books (22 Cecil Court London, London WC2N 4HE) lists a number of Conan Doyle titles among its first editions; prices reflect the West End location and the rarity of the books. (*Wouldn't it be nice to be rich?*)

We recently found a recording of **The Hound of the Baskervilles**, a "full cast dramatisation" lasting 70 minutes on a single cassette. It's nicely done, with rather Rathbone-and-Bruceish leads, a competent script and atmospheric production: excellent value at £1.99. Oddly, there are no credits at all! If you can't find it in the shops (and I've not found another copy), write to Telling Tales, Unit 1, Mill Lane Trading Estate, Purley Way, Croydon CR0 4AA.

Vol. 1 of **The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes**, with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, will be issued on cassette in February by BBC Enterprises Ltd, Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 OTT. Several BBC recordings can be had by post from Heritage Media, PO Box 200, Washington, Tyne & Wear NE37 3YY (Freephone 0800 374291), as can the Hodder Headline **Best of Sherlock Holmes** cassettes, featuring John Gielgud & Ralph Richardson.

A company called Speaking Books Ltd (13 Bramley Road, London W10 6SP) has reissued a number of Listen For Pleasure and other recordings in its "Word of Mouth" series, including **The Hound of the Baskervilles** read by Hugh Burden (WORD 4016); **A Study in Scarlet** read by Tony Britton (WORD 4017); **His Last Bow** read by Martin Jarvis (WORD 4018); and the **Return of Sherlock Holmes** audio cassettes taken from the Granada TV series: **The Man with the Twisted Lip/The Priory School** (Word 4007) and **The Musgrave Ritual/The Second Stain** (Word 4008). I spotted these in Woolworths.

I've had a nice letter from the MD of Tangled Web Audio, who says that the American address given in DM 154 is no longer valid ("though our mail is supposed to be forwarded"): **Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Intrigue** and **Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Adventure**, read by Edward Hardwicke, can be had at US\$16.95 + airmail postage (\$5.00 for one item, \$4.00 for 2 - 5, etc.), orders to Tangled Web Audio, 3380 Sheridan Drive, Suite 167, Amherst, NY 14226, USA or Tangled Web Audio, 1063 King Street West, Suite 133, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 1L8, Canada. Murder One does now carry the cassettes. A third collection is due later in the year.

Malcolm Payne of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment has very good news: Crowborough Town Council will include a life-sized bronze statue of Sir Arthur in the newly designed Town Centre Planning. Funds will be raised

by donation, and donors' names will be recorded in a special book to be on public display in the Town Hall. Brochures available from David Harris, Town Clerk, Town Hall, Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex (phone 01892 665464).

In early December, vandals attacked Hound Tor on Dartmoor, sending one of its three huge "fangs" crashing to the base of the tor. The damage cannot be repaired. (***The Daily Express** 11th December notes: "Cornishman Sir Arthur Conan Doyle told the film company that made the first Baskervilles production it was Hound Tor which had inspired his story." Hm...*)

Hirayama Yuichi BSI (2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181, Japan) offers copies of a Japanese poster publicising a display of spirit photographs and featuring the face of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He asks for a large self-addressed envelope and a US\$1.00 bill or one International Reply Coupon.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW; phone 0131-539 5629) has produced a white-metal figure, about 2½" high, of a pig, in deerstalker and Inverness, with a pipe and a delightfully confident expression. He's mounted on a shallow wooden base. Sherlock Pig was intended to be the main character in a book; the book was never completed, but the figure was, and at £5.00 postpaid it's a snip. (Charles has quite a range of miniatures, Holmesian and otherwise, for sale, as well as postcards, pottery, the handsome Edinburgh Medallion and his books. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope for details.)

Newish miniatures are in the shops. No. 62 in the "Country Companions" series by Gordon Fraser (Bedford MK42 0JX) is a hedgehog peering through a magnifying glass at a ladybird, who's holding up a card saying "I YOU". The hedgehog wears a backwards baseball cap, but the peak and his quiff of quills make it look quite like a deerstalker. It's a nice little resin figure, and costs about £7.99. "The Whimsical World of Pocket Dragons" is a series of cold-cast porcelain models from Real Musgrave (sic - no address to hand); it includes **Elementary, My Dear** at £21.95 and **Watson** at £13.95. These little figures would make good Valentine's Day presents.

Mark Chadderton has sent "The Hound of the Basketballs", one of a series of punning greetings cards by Simon Drew of Dartmouth, Devon. The nicely drawn picture shows a dog surrounded by basketballs. You could write on the card with the Sherlock Holmes "Scribbler" pen, whose casing incorporates a detailed caricatural model of Holmes. The pen takes Bic refills. It's available from Cynthia G. Wein, 65 Briarwood Lane, Plainview, NY 11803-6329.

The University of Essex is running six day schools from 10.45 to 4.30 on Saturday 23 March in the Lecture Theatre Block. Peter Street, an extra-mural tutor in history for Essex, London and the Open Universities, will take the course "Sherlock Holmes and His London, 1880 - 1914". The fee of £12.00 (£8.00 concessionary) includes the cost of morning and afternoon refreshment. Write for details, or to book a place, to Continuing Education, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ (or phone 01206 872446/872519).

A reminder that The Sherlock Holmes Experience is running at Croydon Clocktower (Katharine Street, Croydon CR9 1ET) until 10 March.

American visitors in particular may be interested in "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Journey", an 8-day trip from Geneva to Meiringen and the Reichenbach Falls, roughly in the steps of Holmes and Watson, organised by Gemini Travel

(The Barn Studios, Carters Lane, Old Woking, Surrey GU22 8JG; phone 01483 757660). Cost is \$1930.00/£1198.00 per person in a twin room; single room supplement is \$120.00/£85.00. Flights aren't included. The brochure looks very attractive.

The next meeting of the Northern Musgraves will be the Jeremy Brett Memorial Luncheon on Saturday 16 March at the Café Royal in London (details from David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER), Over the weekend 23-25 February the Franco-Midland Hardware Company and the Baskerville Hounds' Company Workshop will investigate Holmesian locations on Dartmoor (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Michael Doyle has kindly sent a copy of **Canadian Holmes** for Michaelmas 1995 (The Bootmakers of Toronto, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). This issue of an always well produced, instructive and entertaining journal contains (among much other grand material) Michael's own story "Sherlock Holmes and the Legacy of Rachel Howells", in which he proposes a remarkable solution to a problem that baffled Conan Doyle (see "Some Personalia about Sherlock Holmes" and Richard Lancelyn Green's introduction in **The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes**). It's a very clever and well written tale which raises some questions about the relationship between fiction and fact. Copies of the journal can be had from Mr Raymond for Cdn\$7.50.

Other periodicals received. **The Sherlock Holmes Journal** Winter 1995 (*Derek Hinrich's essay on Mycroft Holmes and the Civil Service is first-rate*); **The Ritual** Autumn 1995 (The Northern Musgraves, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) (*given David Stuart Davies's relationship with Jeremy Brett and Granada, it's not surprising that this journal contains fuller and more personal appreciations of JB than any other except **The Sherlock Holmes Gazette***); **The Waterloo Sherlockian Letter** nos. 36 & 37 (Chris Redmond, 523 Westfield Drive, Waterloo, Ontario N2T 2E1, Canada) (*without doubt the most personal and intelligently opinionated Holmesian periodical I know; reading it is like chatting with Chris*); **The Cormorant's Ring** vol.2 no.4 (The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA) (*Vinnie Brosnan, Don Hardenbrook & Jim Coffin provide a delightful account of the dedication of the John Bennett Shaw Library at the University of Minnesota*); **The Soft-Nosed Bullet-in** no.19 (Von Herder Airguns Ltd, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) (*most of it's in German, of course, but it does include Uwe Sommerlad's engaging and enlightening interview with David Burke in English; as a supplement there's **Sherlock Holmes auf Briefmarken**, a short pictorial survey of Holmes on postage stamps*); **The Striking (T)rifles** November 1995 & January 1996 (Von Herder Airguns Ltd); **The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication** no.156 & no.157 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) (*always good fun, and Joan Wood's recipes are mouthwatering*); **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press** (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*the Sherlock Holmes newsletter*).

Stop Press: Mr J. A. Row (102 Hillview Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4PE; phone 0181-428 1778) has the first 13 volumes of **The Strand Magazine**, Jan. 1891 - Dec. 1897, containing the complete **Adventures and Memoirs** plus much else. Fair condition. Offers of £120.00 or better. Free delivery within Greater London.

