

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
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opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

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To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.00 or US\$10.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton.

Marlene Aig ("Mrs Turner" ASH), a noted journalist and stalwart of the New York Sherlockian scene, died in late April, aged 43. Her concrete memorial is the anthology *A Singular Set of People*, which she and David Galerstein edited for Magico in 1990, but she'll be remembered by many as a good friend. Marlene was one of the original **Occupants of the Full House**. A fortuitous typo in the Associated Press report called her "an award-winning journalist". She'd have liked that.

David Stuart Davies has done it again. *The Annals of Skelington Bones*, number two: *The Spectral Passenger of Swarthy Halt*, illustrated by Kathryn White, is the latest publication from Thumbprints (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). These clever and funny parodies are ideal for anyone who loves the Goons or Schlock Homes. Price £3.50 UK; \$6.00 US. No.1, *The Phantom Paper-hanger of Bughare Hall*, is reprinted at £2.75/\$5.00, or you can have both for £5.00/\$10.00. Cheques payable to D.S. Davies.

The seventh Musgrave Monograph, due in the autumn, is *Some Knowledge of Baritsu* by Hirayama Yuichi & John Hall. Copies can be ordered from John Addy (23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU) at: UK £5.00; Europe £5.50; USA \$10.00; Canada \$11.00; elsewhere \$12.00. This promises to be the last word on the subject.

Gerit Stenitzer tells of *Escapade* by Walter Satterthwaite (St Martin's Press; \$5.99), a new novel featuring Conan Doyle and Houdini. Murder One in London has (had?) signed copies at £5.99. Gerit also notes *Elementary, Mrs Hudson* by Sydney Hosier (Avon; \$5.50 — £5.50 at Murder One), an adventure of Mrs Emma Hudson, "the other sleuth of Baker Street". Gerit also came across Barbara Hambly's *Those Who Hunt the Night* (Del Rey; \$5.99 — £5.99 at Murder One), a fantasy of vampires in Victorian London.

Malcolm Payne of the **Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** gives notice of *Unravelling Piltdown* by John Walsh, due in September from Random House in New York. Malcolm praises Walsh's thoroughness in investigating the Piltdown hoax and exonerating Conan Doyle.

Murder One has a new London rival. **Crime In Store Ltd** opened on the 2nd May at 14 Bedford Street, London WC2E 9HE. The proprietors are Ralph Spurrier, whose postal business **Post-Mortem Books** is well regarded, and Kathryn Skoyles. The shop has a

pleasant atmosphere and a good stock. Call 0171-515 6791 and ask to be put on the mailing-list.

Derek Hinrich recommends *Is Heathcliff a Murderer? Puzzles in 19th Century Fiction* by J.A. Sutherland (Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP; £3.99). The "fiction" naturally includes a tale from the Holmes Canon. Due in August is *The Secret Marriage of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Eccentric Readings* by Michael Atkinson (University of Michigan Press, c/o Trevor Brown Associates, 114-115 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0BY; £19.95).

Very full new catalogues are to hand from **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE), the **Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB), and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE). (**The last specialises in first editions, and the books are priced accordingly.**) If you write for catalogues do enclose return postage.

Mark Hunter-Purvis (6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD; phone 0191-414 3218) has a copy for sale, as new, of Ron De Waal's 4-volume *The Universal Sherlock Holmes*. He invites offers around £70.00, or exchange for the Sherlock Holmes chess set.

Clive Stanhope of CSA Telltapes Ltd (101 Chamberlayne Road, London NW10 3ND) writes that the two double cassettes of unabridged Holmes stories read by Edward Hardwicke will be available as a limited edition boxed 4-pack from June/July till the end of the year, priced £11.99, as against £8.49 for each double cassette. The stories featured are Empt, Devi, Abbe, Card, Twis and Bruc. Catalogue number is TT4MC 604; ISBN 1 873859 92 9.

Brian Pugh and Philip Weller have both had word from the Viewer's Liaison Administrator (*sic*) at Granada TV that *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* will be released on video in Britain, through a new distributor, VCI. It may take up to 18 months to arrange.

From today until 31st May an exhibition called *Sherlock Holmes et la France*, mounted by the City of Paris with the aid of *la société Sherlock Holmes de France*, is on view at the *Bibliothèque des Littératures Policières (BILIPO)*, 48-50 rue du Cardinal Lemoine, Paris Vème. This promises to be something really special.

Malcolm Payne passes on the very good news that the internationally praised sculptor David Cornell has been commissioned to create a statue of Arthur Conan Doyle, to be sited at Clokes Corner, next to Crowborough Cross. The project is likely to cost £20,000, of which £5,000 has already been raised. Meanwhile the

Crowborough Sherlock Holmes Festival is going ahead, with various events taking place from 29th June to 7th July. It all seems to be hastily organised, and with singularly little real Holmesian content — or Doylean, for that matter, except for the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment's annual ACD Memorial Ceremony at Terrace Montargis at 10.30 am on 7th July. The Festival Secretary is Susanne Purvis (phone 01892 665464); you may be able to get some information from her — I couldn't.

Mark Hunter-Purvis notes that the Caprian Operatic Society's production of *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* is running at the Little Theatre in Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, until Saturday 18th May. Tickets at £4.00 from Edith Quigley (phone 01207 270596).

Our Society's next event is the coach trip on Saturday 8th June to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and to Undershaw, Conan Doyle's house at Hindhead. On the evening of the same day the University of London Convocation will hold its annual dinner & dance at the Royal College of Surgeons. **The Irregular Special Railway Company** hopes to have a table at this Canonically important college. Interested parties should contact Dr Antony Richards at 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB.

The Glades of the New Forest will commemorate ACD's birthday by visiting his burial place at Minstead on 22nd May. For details contact Jane Weller (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 9th June the **Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and the **Priory Scholars** will visit the Tram Museum and other sites in Derbyshire ("The Stockbroker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU, or Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

The Northern Musgraves' Garden Party, under the title *Sherlock in Summer*, will be on Saturday 20th July at Bingley Grammar School. A Canonical Treasure Hunt, papers both light-hearted and serious, and a dramatic presentation are promised, as well as afternoon tea and a cash bar. Cost is £10.00 each. Applications should go to Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 4DN. Cheques payable to The Northern Musgraves. The big event in the Musgraves' calendar is *Write On Sherlock*, "an examination of Sherlockian writing" held at the Victoria & Albert Hotel in Manchester over Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th October. Details from Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER.

Malcolm Payne reports that the **Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** is to have an ACD information section on the InterNet. I'll pass on details when plans are finalised. The Establishment can be contacted through Malcolm at 4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST. Associate Membership can be had for a minimum donation of £11.00 (cheques payable to **ACD Memorial Fund**). For that you get the annual Birthday Newsletter and ACD Research File, as well as the knowledge that you're supporting a very worthwhile organisation.

Periodicals received. *Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser* no. 12, *Billy's Page 2* and *Le Petit Parisien, Mardi 14 Mai 1896* (all

published by **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France) (*the usual superbly produced spoofs of Victorian newspapers and magazines, full of wit and solid information about the society and its activities; Billy's Page also features a comic strip adventure, Les Irreguliers de Baker Street**). **The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In** no. 20 and **The Striking (T)Rifles** April 1996 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, 47906 Kempen, Germany) (*an equally admirable series of publications, this time in German; Von Herder Airguns Ltd are joining the Reichenbach Irregulars for a joint weekend at Bad Mergentheim from 27th to 29th September — for details contact Klaus Wörner, Törkelgasse 9, 97980 Bad Mergentheim, Germany**).

The Torr no. 8 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadlands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) (*outstanding are the editor's essay on "Codes and Ciphers in the Canon" and "Whatever Happened to Murray?"; a perceptive fantasy by the pseudonymous Gaberlunzie Man**). **The Ritual** Spring 1996 (the **Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) (*Paul M. Chapman's "Weddings in the Canon", Rosemary Parry's "No Ghosts Need Apply" and Barbara Roden's "Canonical Misconceptions" seem to me the best among a splendid collection of contributions**).

The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication no. 161 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA) (*brief, amusing and interesting; Joan Wood's recipe for Cullen Skink is mouth-watering**). **The Devon County Chronicle**, January 1996 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707, South 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, U.S.A.) (*Bob notes that the Watsonian Weekend V is scheduled for 19th-21st July; for details contact Susan Diamond ASH, 2851 N. Pearl Avenue, Melrose Park, IL 60164, USA**). **The Cormorant's Ring** April 1996 (**The Trained Cormorants** of Long Beach, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA) (*exceptionally interesting archival material about and by Robert Patrick, a founder of the Cormorants**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press April 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*the Sherlockian newsletter**).

Peter Blau notes that Brook Manor, once home to Richard Cabell (the "real" Hugo Baskerville), is now open as a guest house. Write to Brook Manor, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0HR. Also that Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) has copies of his BBC Radio 4 scripts for sale; write to Bert for details — these are among the best dramatisations ever. A new musical will play at the Grand Candlelight Theatre in Milton, PA in August: *The Molly Maguires* (book by William Strempek, music & lyrics by Sid Cherry) — the mind boggles!

Roger Johnson