

# The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON  
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**Hillary Brooke** died recently. She played opposite Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce in *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*, *Sherlock Holmes Faces Death* and (most memorably) *The Woman in Green*. Other losses are the author and early Baker Street Irregular **Clifton Fadiman**, the British actor **Graham Armitage**, who played Holmes on South African radio for 5½ years, and **Stella Zucco** (the former actress Stella Francis), widow of **George Zucco**, Moriarty to Rathbone's Holmes in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

A postcard from Arthur Conan Doyle will feature in a very important sale at Sotheby's in London on Thursday 15 July. The card confirms scholars' conclusions about the dropping of 'The Cardboard Box' from *The Memoirs*, and the transferral of the mind-reading episode to 'The Resident Patient'. A signed *Hound of the Baskervilles* is among the 80-odd Conan Doyle items in a catalogue that includes the extensive Dickens Archive among much else. (Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA; phone 0171 293 5000.) (\**The MS of 'Charles Augustus Milverton', plus Steele's portrait of the blackmailer, fetched \$255,000 at Christie's in New York last month, while Paget's picture of Holmes, Watson and John Hector McFarlane fetched \$18,400.*\*)

New from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., V0K 1A0, Canada; e-mail [ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca](mailto:ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca)) is David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act*. The script reads well, weaving Conan Doyle and Davies seamlessly together, and giving the reader a glimpse of Holmes the flawed but triumphant human being. It's a more successful play than either Martyn Read's *221B* or Jeremy Paul's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, excellent though those two are. This 68-page paperback costs £9.50 or Cdn\$20.00 or US\$15.00 (plus postage). Forthcoming from Calabash are *The Canonical Compendium* by Stephen Clarkson (£28.50/Cdn\$60.00/US\$45.00); and *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur M. Alexander (£17.50/Cdn\$37.50/US\$27.50). The web page is at [www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html](http://www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html).

David L. Hammer has written a fine series of books exploring the topography of the Canon, in Britain Europe and North America, all published by Gasogene Books (P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; e-mail [Sdoyle221@aol.com](mailto:Sdoyle221@aol.com)). Mr Hammer is also well stuck in to a series of new Sherlock Holmes stories, of which the latest is *The Vital Essence: Being the Further Annals of Sherlock Holmes* (Gasogene Books; \$12.95 + postage: \$2.50 in USA or \$3.50 elsewhere). Sadly, he doesn't do himself or his subject justice. Plots and characters are perfunctory, even though the stories often depend on psychological subtleties; atmosphere is lacking; and the style is hopeless. I never thought I'd encounter the phrase 'cock-up' in a serious Holmes pastiche! The book is unworthy of both author and publisher. Give it a miss.

For our Society's recent trip to the Welsh Marches, Anna Smyth compiled an attractive and instructive 52-page book, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery Tour*, with contributions from Grant

Eustace, Catherine Cooke, Nicholas Utechin, Antony Richards, Roger Johnson, Auberon Redfearn, Alan C. Olding, Victor Hamilton, Richard Lancelyn Green, John Hall, Roger Matthews and Anna herself. (Wot — no Bernard Davies?) I don't have details of price yet, but you can get information from Lynne Godden at Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE.

Our member John Radford, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of East London, has written the first book to consider Holmes and Watson from the point of view of modern psychology. *The Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Three-Pipe Problems: Psychological Studies of the Great Detective and Dr Watson* will be published in September by Sigma Forlag International (22 Jellicoe House, Osnaaburgh Street, London NW1 3AY) at £9.95. It should make a good companion for Richard Kellogg's *Sherlock Holmes and the Origins of Psychology*.

**Sherlock in L.A.** (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA) has issued a supplement to its Catalogue 14, featuring nearly 800 more items from the collection of Ted Schulz, Sherlockian and friend. **Philip J. Attwell** (105 Winstanley Road, Wellingborough, Northants, NN8 1JQ) has a list of books for sale, mostly crime & detective fiction; send a stamped & self-addressed envelope and a 1st class stamp, to cover copying costs. There's also a new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail [nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk](mailto:nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk)).

Murray Shaw, author of the admirable series for younger readers *Match Wits with Sherlock Holmes*, has turned his hand to writing new Holmes adventures and has hopes of publication. At 90 Murray attends a gym regularly, but can't get to Sherlockian functions; he'd probably appreciate hearing from other devotees. Write to him at 3601 N. 5th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85013, USA.

Avril Ashton recommends *Don't Walk in the Long Grass*, the first volume of autobiography by Tenniel Evans — Hilton Cubitt in Granada TV's *The Dancing Men* (Bantam Press, Transworld Publishers Ltd, 61-63 Uxbridge Road, London W5 5SA; £15.00).

**The Parallel Case of St Louis** (Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA) has published an anniversary booklet featuring essays by several distinguished members. *The Parallel Cases of St Louis* costs \$8.00 to non-members, plus \$2.00 in the USA, \$3.00 to Canada, and \$4.00 to Europe. Checks and money orders should be payable to Joseph J. Eckrich.

More new or forthcoming titles. Winston H. Plowes notes that *The Sherlock Holmes Companion* by Michael & Mollie Hardwick has been republished by Senate Books and is available for £2.00 + £2.50 postage from Bibliophile (phone 0207 515 9222). *The Case of the Crafty Cracksman* and *The Case of Sven Sigerson*, two more Sherlock Holmes plays by Stanley Reyburn (August; Players Press, c/o Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20, Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £7.00 each). *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* by Paula M. Krebs, an examination of the impact of ideas of race and gender on culture through various forms of discourse surrounding the Boer Wars (August; Cambridge University Press, Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU; £35.00).

In issue 31 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* Michael Cox continues his absorbing account of the Granada TV series; Paul Chapman observes Holmes's detective qualities; Shane Baldwin admits to being a Sherlockian punk rocker; Jeffrey Richards examines *The Radio Detectives*; Gaynor Coules discusses Frances Fyfield's books; **The Fratton Lodgers** come under the spotlight; there's a new Luther Darke story by A.L. Blake - and there's more from David Stuart Davies, Martin Edwards, John Hall, Roger Forsdyke, Pat Ward, Mike Ripley and Moriarty. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from Angeline Greenaway, Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail [sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com](mailto:sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com)).

Despite the publicity for the statue of Sherlock Holmes in London we shouldn't forget the plans to erect a statue of his creator. The Crowborough Conan Doyle Trust (reg. charity no. 1073842) has commissioned a fine sculpture by David Cornell, who had Dame Jean's enthusiastic approval. To make a donation, or for more information, contact The Town Clerk, The Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DA. Cheques should be payable to the Trust.

Winston H. Plowes (40 Dorset Avenue, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7WR; phone 0161 232 7590) is looking for a video of the Clive Brook movie *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. He has an extensive collection of Holmes videos, and is willing to exchange copies. Winston mentions two nice postcards: a Spanish poster for the Rathbone *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and an ad for Postum cereal. Both are from Mayfair Cards (phone 0181 813 8557; fax 0181 895 6118).

On 27 July the Guernsey Post Office will issue a set of six stamps marking 200 years of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Get details from Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Guelles Road, St Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands GY1 1AB (e-mail [philatelic@guernseypost.com](mailto:philatelic@guernseypost.com)).

Peter Blau notes an interview with Bert Coules in 'the latest issue' of *Scarlet Street* (\$6.95, or \$35.00 a year for six issues, from Box 604, Glen Rock, NJ 07452, USA). (\**Murder One stocks it.*\*)

Geoff Budd sends an ad for Britannia Collections (FREEPOST, Romford RM50 1JP), who offer the Sherlock Holmes Collectors' Edition (i.e. the Granada TV series) at £11.99 per video, plus £1.47 postage. Phil Attwell sends an ad for the RT Video Club (P.O. Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW; phone 01733 230500), offering videos of *The Eligible Bachelor* and *The Last Vampyre* at £9.99 each, plus £2.95 postage; quote RADT9013.

*'Philip Weller's Deerstalker Tours organizes Holmesian and Doylean excursions, ranging from one-day visits within Britain to seven-day expeditions visiting Holmesian sites in continental Europe. The one-day tour of Holmesian and Doylean Hampshire sites, including guide and transportation, costs £25 (about \$60) a person (for a minimum of two people). A two-day tour of Dartmoor is £50 (\$120) a person plus accommodation. Bookings are now being taken to celebrate the centenary of The Hound of the Baskervilles in 2001 on Dartmoor. E-mail: [sherlock.publications@btinternet.com](mailto:sherlock.publications@btinternet.com) or write Philip Weller at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3RU, England.'* (Footnote to a good long travel article in a recent issue of the *Toronto Globe & Mail*.)

Richard Greep of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment notes that a new café, *Sherlock's Coffee Shop*, opened in the town in time for last weekend's Sherlock Holmes Festival.

*Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* by David Stuart Davies will be at the **New Vic Theatre**, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 9 & 10 July (01782 717962); **Penistone Theatre**, Penistone, 12 July (01484 313663); **Wycombe Swan**, High Wycombe, 20 July (01494 512000); **Quay Theatre**, Sudbury, 31 July (01787 374745); **Roman Eagle Lodge**,

Edinburgh Festival, 6-29 August (0131 622 7207); **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal, 1 September (01539 725133); **Gladstone Hall**, Port Sunlight, 4 September (0151 645 57559); **Cockpit Theatre**, London NW8, 20 Sept. to 10 Oct. (0171 402 5081).

**The Northern Musgraves** will hold a reception at the Cockpit from 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturday 25 September. *Meet the Musgraves* will feature talks and a dramatic presentation - and it's free. If you'd like to attend, please contact Terry & Barbara Harding at Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY.

**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France, La Société d'Études Holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande** and **The Reichenbach Irregulars** invite Sherlockians and Holmesians to take part in the Millennium Congress of Holmesian Societies, based in Lausanne, in May 2000. For full details, contact Michael A. Meer, Morgenstrasse 70, CH-3018 Bern, Switzerland.

**The Sydney Passengers** meet on 17 July to mark the 110th anniversary of 'The Second Stain' (contact the Captain, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; e-mail [bbarnes@ozemail.com.au](mailto:bbarnes@ozemail.com.au)). The 8th annual *Watsonian Weekend* in Chicago, 23 to 25 July, includes the Regimental Dinner, the running of the *Silver Blaze* and the Fortescue Honours Brunch. (Susan Z. Diamond, 16 W 603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; e-mail [szd@ix.netcom.com](mailto:szd@ix.netcom.com).) **The Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers** celebrate 25 years on 24 July, at the Westin William Penn (Lynda Conway at 2330 Bensonia Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216, USA). **The Friends of Dr Watson** plan their Battle of Maiwand Luncheon for the same day, at Hudson's Victorian Dining Room, attached to the Sherlock Holmes Museum at no. 239 Baker Street (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding at 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). (\**The winner of the first Dr John H. Watson Annual Prize Essay is Joe Marino, and the runner-up is Theo Skeat.*\*)

Periodicals received. *The Serpentine Mews*, Summer 1999 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). *The Baker Street Journal*, March 1999 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (\**all correspondence for The Baker Street Irregulars should be sent to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', 414 N. Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA*\*) *The Formulary*, June 1999 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *The Maiwand Dispatch*, March 31 1999 (**The Watsonians**, Fred Levin, 8242 N. Ridgeway Ave, Skokie, IL 60076, USA). *The Log of the Canonical Hams*, July-December 1998 (*sic*) (**The Sherlock Holmes Wireless Society**, Ron Fish, PO Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919, USA). *The Ritual*, Spring 1999

*Annual Report 1999: The Stock-broker's Clerk Contract* and *The FMHC Memo*, June 1999 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3RU). *Sherlockian Snippets*, July 1999 (Tabitha Smith, [sherlockian.snippets@email.com](mailto:sherlockian.snippets@email.com)) (\**this lively newsletter is available only via e-mail; note the new address*\*). *Communication*, Father's Day 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The School Report*, Summer Term 1999, (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, June 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *The Parallelogram*, May 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA); *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, June 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 390 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

*Roger Johnson*