

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
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Katherine McMahon ('Lucy Ferrier', BSI) died on 26 December 1999. Peter Blau notes that she was the last survivor of the elite band who earned membership in the Baker Street Irregulars by submitting correct solutions to the Sherlock Holmes crossword devised by Frank Morley and published by Christopher Morley in *The Saturday Review of Literature* on 19 May 1934. However, when invitations to membership were distributed to the winners, Miss McMahon and the other women were ignored, and she did not receive her investiture until 1991.

F. Dennis France, who died on 20 June, was a keen member of several Sherlock Holmes societies in the Chicago area and a valued subscriber to this newsletter.

That fine actor **Nicholas Clay** died on 5 May. Sherlockians will remember especially his excellent Jack Stapleton (and Hugo Baskerville) opposite Ian Richardson in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and his Percy Trevelyan to Jeremy Brett's Holmes in *The Resident Patient*.

Only one or two people seem to have noticed that the last DM was mis-numbered 196. Sorry about that!

There's a real collectors' item out from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH): *Upon the Distinction between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccos* by Sherlock Holmes! The editor is Nino Cirone, and the whole is very nicely got up in sepia print on cream paper, with many period illustrations, and bound in yellow cloth. It is, needless to say, a spoof, but perpetrated with an admirably straight face. The tobaccos named include 'Ouvrier Cabaret' by Lausanne & Montpellier, 'Black Formosa' by Smith & Smith, 'Negretto Head' by Minorities Crown Diamond, and Adler's Gold Filter Blend no. 2. This very nice book is priced at £14.99.

On the Internet at www.221bthebakerstreetflat.com Baker Street Publishing 'is proud to announce a publishing event for the discriminating Sherlock Holmes bibliophile. Newly discovered manuscripts available for the first time in a leather bound, numbered, limited first edition publisher's run, each with a book plate, certificate of registration and correspondence from Doctor Watson.' The titles of 'the first three of these newly discovered' chronicles are *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes and the Father of Lies*, *The Mysterious Case of the Nefarious Seafarers and Mister Holmes*, *You Have Been Followed . . . Tomorrow*. Great care seems to have been taken in producing these curiosities, but the ad suggests a distinct lack of the true Watson touch. No price is mentioned.

Sherlock Holmes and the Tandridge House Murder, a collection of stories by Eddie Maguire, is due later this year from Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER). Breese Books have accepted a novel from Eddie as well.

The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment has published a 24-page monograph by Philip Weller: *Doctor Arthur Conan Doyle and the Boer War: A Consideration of Some Non-Military Perspectives*. 'It examines what seems to have been, by his own confession, ACD's primary concern during the period he spent in South Africa in 1900, which is the writing of his grossly flawed history of the conflict, *The Great Boer War*, in terms of what his major preoccupation should have been: the treatment of the sick.' (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN; UK £5.00; Europe £5.50 or \$11.00; elsewhere £6.00 or \$12.00) Cheques payable to the ACD Memorial Fund, or US dollars cash, please.

Catalogues 79 and 80 are available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) website www.nigelwilliams.com.

Issue 37 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* features Grant Eustace on Holmes's weaknesses; Jeffrey Richards on Radio 4's third series of *The Radio Detectives*; David Stuart Davies on *The Eligible Bachelor* and less cuttingly (just) on *The House of Fear*; Mike Ripley on TV's Inspector Rebus; Alan Perry on fictional police inspectors; Paul Chapman on Batman; an interview with Ron Weighell, author of *The Irregular Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*; Russell James on Peter Cheyney's gumshoe Lemmy Cauton; the debut of a new private investigator, Johnny One-Eye; Gaylor Coules on the comic thrillers of Peter Gutteridge; Pat Ward's report from the USA; a look at The Antipodean Holmesian Society - and, as always, much more. The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.50 or \$6.00 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £20.00 (Europe £22.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the 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).

BBC Worldwide (Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) has released *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*, the entire Canon as dramatised, superbly, by Bert Coules and others for Radio 4, in a boxed set of cassettes priced at £150.00. (*It may still be possible to order the set by post at no extra charge, and get four free tapes of *Agatha Christie's Miss Marple*, starring June Whitfield. Phone 0870 727 4188 to check.*)

BBC TV's entertaining but historically deeply flawed *Murder Rooms: The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes* is out on video at £14.99 or DVD at £15.99 from Mosaic/BBC. Further series are in preparation, and I'll admit it will be good to see Ian Richardson's excellent Joseph Bell again. The Beeb also plans to film *The Lost World*, with effects by the team behind the stunning *Walking with Dinosaurs*. Sounds promising!

Gerit Stenitzer sends a cutting from the magazine *Elle*. If my schoolboy French serves me correctly, Goyard, purveyor of very high quality luggage, maintains a small museum in which can be seen a suitcase owned by Arthur Conan Doyle (Goyard Malletier, 233 rue Saint-Honoré, Paris 1er; phone 01 42 60 57 04).

Would-be Tongas may like to know that Hawkin's Bazaar (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0HN; phone 01986 782468; e-mail sales@hawkin.co.uk) sells a blow-pipe with (sucker-tipped) darts. It's no. A614 in the Summer Supplement catalogue, and

costs £3.99 plus postage. Great fun! Visit Hawkin's shops in Salisbury, Southampton, Tunbridge Wells or Windsor - or the website at www.hawkin.co.uk.

Mike 'Wiggins' Whelan sends news of an exhibition in the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington: *Bloomington by Gaslight: Sherlock Holmes in the Lilly Library*. The library's collection was compiled by the late David A. Randall, BSI, and includes the manuscript of 'The Red Circle' and a copy of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887 among other treasures.

Peter Blau notes an exhibition in the Wilson Library at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis: *Better Holmes and Gardens: Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Architectural Design 'Down Under'* is co-ordinated by Derham Groves BSI and runs till the first week in August.

The Gila Lizards of the Arid and Repulsive Desert are (or is) a new Sherlock Holmes society in New Mexico. Visitors to that fascinating state should contact Marilynne McKay at 4903 Guadalupe Trail NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107, U.S.A. (e-mail mmckayABQ@aol.com).

The Maiwand Luncheon of **The Friends of Dr Watson** will be held at the Caravan Serai Afghan Restaurant in Paddington Street, near Baker Street, on 29 July (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). The same day will see the Film Festival of **The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis** (Steven T. Doyle, 540 W. Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). **The Inspector Morse Society** plans a *The Wench Is Dead* day on the Trent & Mersey Canal at Rugeley on 29 July, following the real-life murder of Christina Collins (details from Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX; e-mail arichards@msi-eu.com).

The Annual Membership Meeting of **The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections** will be held on 2 August at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. For information about the Friends contact Dr Richard J. Sveum at Sveum001@tc.umn.edu, or Julie McKuras at Mike9750@aol.com.

A Lodge of **The Red Circle** will be held on 11 August at the National Press Club in Washington. The Adventure of the Evening will be 'The Three Garridebs' (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgs.dgsys.com).

The annual Silver Blaze of the **Baker Street Irregulars** will be held on 19 August at Saratoga Race Track (Lou Lewis at Box 2990, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, USA; lewis-greer@aol.com).

After three years, **The Northern Musgraves** will return to Arthur Conan Doyle's *alma mater*, Stonyhurst School in Lancashire on 25-27 August. Guests will include Douglas Wilmer and Bert Coules (Christine Fell, 13 Greavestown Lane, Lea, Preston, Lancs. PR2 1PD). **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** will meet on 26 August at the Mother-in-Law Restaurant in St Charles (Michael E. Bragg, Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

The Irregular Special Railway Company will hold *The Remorseful Weekend* in and around Oxford on 30 September and 1 October: a celebration of the filming of *The Remorseful Day*, plus the launch of Inspector Morse beer and a plaque unveiling at Brakspear's brewery by Colin Dexter (Antony Richards, as above).

Bill Barnes passes on news from Enrico Solito of **Uno Studio in Holmes**: 'The next Sherlock Holmes Symposium in Italy will be constituted in two shows (posters, books, magazines, old pipes and so on) in Milan and in Sesto Fiorentino, close to Florence. The shows will go on for several weeks. We will have two meetings: the first on 9 - 11 September in Milan, the second on 15 - 17 September in Sesto Fiorentino. (The Sesto Fiorentino meeting has been dedicated to the memory of a Sherlockian from Trieste, Daniele Radacich, 25 years old, who became seriously ill and passed away recently.)' Speakers will include Thierry St-Joanis, Jane & Philip Weller, and a number of distinguished Italian

academics and Sherlockians. You can get more information from Gianluca Salvatori at cp 14, 55042 Forte dei marmi (LU), Italy (mycroft@versilia.toscana.it).

Periodicals received. **Sherlockian Snippets**, 20 June 2000 (Tabitha Smith, SarahlockH@aol.com) (**the world's first entirely e-mail newsletter devoted to Sherlock Holmes; enthusiastic and enjoyable**). **The Camden House Journal**, June 2000 and July 2000 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) (**June features a good essay by Jack Crelling on the historical background to 'The Engineer's Thumb'; in July, William Cochran looks at Watson's rôle in 'The Crooked Man'*). **The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections**, June 2000. (The Sherlock Holmes Collections, Suite 111, Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA) (*articles about Bret Harte, author of one of the best Holmes parodies, President Truman BSI, Sherlockian smoking collectibles, and more**). **The Tin Box**, vol. 2, May 2000 (Barbara & Terry Harding, Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY) (*the market place for Sherlockiana of all sorts - a must for collectors**).

The Illustrious Clients News, June 2000 and July 2000 (**The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis**, Steven T. Doyle, 540 W. Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA) (**June features a couple of brief pieces by the late Pete Williams, and Steven T. Doyle on Holmes's Irish heritage; July has articles by Pat Ward on the exhibition at the Lilly Library and the Illustrious Clients' Film Festival at the Wayne Public Library**). **The Serpentine Muse**, Spring 2000 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (**outstanding are Joe Fink's very tall tale about Conan Doyle and Houdini, and Susan Diamond's almost equally tall one about the third Mrs Watson**). **The Cormorant's Ring**, Spring 2000 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach and The Frenzied Hands**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4910, USA) (**a nice parody by Kevin Reed; Ron Doerfler on 'Why Sherlock Holmes Taps His Fingers'; a curious story by Georgia Carlton-Adams**). **Communication**, May-June 2000 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**a jolly account of the Sunshine State Sherlockian Symposium last month, and an intriguing piece about The Salon Pistols of Gainesville**).

The Passengers' Log, 22nd May 2000 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; e-mail bbarnes@ozemail.com.au) (**includes Bill Barnes's entertaining memories of the January festivities in New York, a very good piece on Holmes the swordsman by Erin O'Neill, and an interview with that human dynamo Susan Dahlinger; Rosane McNamara's editing and Philip Cornell's design ensure that the Log remains one of the most stylish of all Sherlockian magazines**). **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, July 2000 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (**among much of interest, the standout is the interview with Paul Smedegaard**). **SH-ACTU: L'actualité de Sherlock Holmes en France**, Juillet 2000 (Alexis Barquin, moucham@hotmail.com) (**a sort of French equivalent of Sherlockian Snippets**).

The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Summer 2000 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** - of course) (**still one of the best**). **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press**, June 2000 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (** the original Sherlockian newsletter**).

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Roger Johnson