

# The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON  
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I give such addresses and prices as I have; if I don't provide details of importers or agents, it's because I don't have those details.

Peter Blau reports the death on 15 September of **Charles J Shields** ('17 King Edward Street', BSI), longtime journalist and Sherlockian in Chicago. The career of **Sheila Keith**, who died on 14 October aged eighty-four, encompassed cult horror films, television sitcoms, and a regular part in *Crossroads*. In 1965 she played Miss Stoper in the BBC TV production of *The Copper Beeches*, with Douglas Wilmer and Nigel Stock. **Steve Clarkson** ('Morse Hudson', BSI) died on 19 October at the age of sixty-five. His father was a founder of the Six Napoleons of Baltimore, and Steve maintained the tradition. For years he dealt with enquiries sent to the Baker Street Irregulars by younger enthusiasts, and he compiled *The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2003 — 'The Strength and Activity of Youth': The Junior Sherlockian Movement*. **Robert Lang** (d. 6 November, aged seventy) specialised in self-important characters, whom he made distinct and very human. In Peter Ling's dramatisation of *The Resident Patient* for BBC Radio 4, he played Blessington, to Clive Merrison's Holmes and Michael Williams' Watson.

In the last issue I gave an enthusiastic welcome to the first two volumes of *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (WW Norton Ltd, Castle House, 75-76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT; £35.00). Since then the finished article has arrived, and it's magnificent. There are a few errors (the photograph on page 1468 shows Charing Cross Hotel not the Grand Hotel, for instance), but as I said before, the notes are exemplary in their breadth, depth and accuracy, the bibliography is as extensive as anyone could wish, and the introductory essay, 'The World of Sherlock Holmes', is masterly. There are few who could have done the job as completely, as energetically or as amiably as Leslie Klinger. He is, as John Bennett Shaw used to say, a benefactor of the race. Publication date is 1 December. *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* will make an ideal Christmas present for the Sherlockian in your life, even if that Sherlockian is you. There's a website at [www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com](http://www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com).

*Études en noir: Les dernières aventures de Sherlock Holmes* (Éditions de l'Archipel, 34 rue des Bourdonnais, Paris 1er; €18.95) was launched on 26 October. This French translation of *The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Peter Haining, contains most of Conan Doyle's extra-canonical writings about Holmes. This new edition boasts an introduction by Thierry Saint-Joanis, President of La Société Sherlock Holmes de France. [\*Haining's good but rather shallow collection has been republished several times in preference to the superior volumes edited by Jack Tracy (*Sherlock Holmes: The Published*

*Apocrypha*) and Richard Lancelyn Green (*The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes*).\*]

From Sweden come two new books. *En studie i rött* (Bokförlaget Lind & Co, [info@lindco.se](mailto:info@lindco.se)) is the first volume in Mattias Boström's new Swedish translation of the complete Canon. The rather splendid illustrations by George Hutchinson are reprinted from the 1891 Ward Lock edition, and Mattias Boström has provided a critical afterword. *Sherlock Holmes 150 år: En jubileumsbok från The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden* is an equally attractive book, including essays on *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 'Silver Blaze', Holmes as a boxer, gent's clothing, early Sherlockian theatrical productions in Stockholm, and parody and pastiche — and an example of each of the latter. Two of the pieces, one by Stephen Fry and one by me, are translated from English. The rest are the work of distinguished Swedish Sherlockian scholars. *Sherlock Holmes 150 år* is published by the Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden, c/o Anders Wiggström, Byggmästarvägen 29, 168 32 Bromma, Sweden. The Club has a website at [www.sherlockholmes.se](http://www.sherlockholmes.se). The books are available from Mattias (Domherrevägen 12, S-178 39 Ekero, Sweden; [mattias.bostrom@telia.com](mailto:mattias.bostrom@telia.com)) for £20.00 / \$40.00 / €30.00 each. Cash only, please.

*La Vendetta de Sherlock Holmes* by Ugo Pandolfi (Éditions Little Big Man, 12 rue Rougement, 75009 Paris, France; □19.00) tells of an adventure in 1893. From Montpellier, Holmes goes to Corsica, still on the trail of Professor Moriarty's criminal organisation. He is helped by a friend of Guy de Maupassant, the engineer and geologist Ugo Pandolfi, whose great-nephew Jean Pandolfi-Crozier has edited this account. *La Vendetta de Sherlock Holmes* has received positive reviews from French Sherlockians.

From Italy, meanwhile, comes news of *Sherlock Magazine* edited by Luigi Pachi, who also edits the website at [www.SherlockMagazine.it](http://www.SherlockMagazine.it). The second issue runs to 200 pages, with full articles about the Canon by Stefano Guerra and Enrico Solito, and an introduction by the famous journalist Corrado Augias. The magazine is in Italian, of course. A three-issue subscription costs €32.00 from Delos Books at [www.delosstore.it](http://www.delosstore.it).

The Tryon Publishing Company of Chapel Hill, North Carolina ([tryonpublishing@earthlink.net](mailto:tryonpublishing@earthlink.net)) is about to publish *The Masque of Sherlock Holmes: The Extraordinary Life of William Gillette* by Henry Zecher. This is, I think, the first full biography of Gillette for some decades. It can be ordered \$32.00 plus postage from Brick Alley Books, 115 North Churton Street, Hillsborough, NC 27278, USA. Looks interesting! I hope to be able to review it before long.

John Gardner's website at [www.john-gardner.com](http://www.john-gardner.com) is worth a look. He says that the third Moriarty novel is blocked out and will be published under the title *The Redemption of Moriarty*, which is good news. He notes that the first two novels 'got much coverage in the USA where most of the many Sherlock Holmes societies got behind them. The most prestigious of these is the Baker Street Irregulars: a club that only accepts you as a member if they invite you to join. In the early '80s I was honoured by being invested

into the BSI in the name of Moriarty.’ And he adds, ‘At home in the UK, the Sherlock Holmes Society has never been in touch.’

After a long period of uncertainty it’s good to be able to tell you that the Sherlockian part of Breese Books has been bought by a company owned by our old friend Antony Richards. That’s a backlist of about thirty titles, plus eight or so not yet published. The next book to appear will be Matthew Booth’s *Sherlock Holmes and the Giant’s Hand*, followed next year by Eddie Maguire’s *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Mission*. Existing Breese customers and new ones who want to buy *The Giant’s Hand* direct from the publisher can have it at £5.00 plus £2.00 postage (shop price £7.50), and they can buy up to five titles from a list of ten at £3.00 each, with postage at a flat rate of £2.00. Get full details from Breese Books, c/o Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX (01226 473025; [holmes@holmesandcompany.com](mailto:holmes@holmesandcompany.com)). There’s a website at [www.holmesandcompany.com](http://www.holmesandcompany.com).

The latest catalogue from The Book People (Parc Menai, Bangor LL57 4FB; [www.thebookpeople.co.uk](http://www.thebookpeople.co.uk)) offers the nine-volume Penguin edition of the Canon, plus *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Richard Lancelyn Green, for £9.99. That’s quite a bargain.

The industrious Matthew (MJ) Elliott now has his own website at <http://mjelliott.co.uk/>. His story ‘The Extraordinary Lodger’ has been recorded by David Ian Davies, and can be downloaded from the Sherlock Holmes Society of London’s site at [http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/Media/Downloads/Audio/David\\_Ian\\_Davies/David\\_Ian\\_Davies.htm](http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/Media/Downloads/Audio/David_Ian_Davies/David_Ian_Davies.htm). Look out for a collection of Matthew’s Holmes stories from Mad for a Mystery.

New catalogues are available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; [nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk](mailto:nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk)); **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; [www.sherlock-holmes.com](http://www.sherlock-holmes.com)) [*\*as always, the Classic Specialties catalogue is really more of a magazine, full of interest\**]; **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (PO Box 204 Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0; [www.batteredbox.com](http://www.batteredbox.com)); and **Rupert Books** (58-59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; [www.rupert-books.co.uk](http://www.rupert-books.co.uk)). Lots of Holmes and Doyle material there.

Bert Coules reminds me that BBC Worldwide has released the complete Canon on CD, in the Radio 4 series with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. The boxed set of sixty-four discs, with an updated edition of Bert’s book *221 BBC*, is available from Amazon via Bert’s website at [www.bertcoules.co.uk/cassette.htm](http://www.bertcoules.co.uk/cassette.htm).

I’d love to be able to give you a favourable review of the computer game *Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Silver Earring*. I’d love to be able to give you any sort of review, but my PC, though it seems to meet all the requirements, just won’t play the discs. The comments I’ve had from other people have been overwhelming good. Players have praised the way that the game actually challenges the player’s intellect; the appropriate vocal acting for the characters, and the fact that it matches the graphics; the excellence of the graphics; and the feel for the Victorian period. The consensus holds that it’s way ahead of earlier Sherlock Holmes games.

Edinburgh, birthplace of Arthur Conan Doyle, inspiration for so many great writers — Burns, Scott, Stephenson, Barrie, Kenneth Grahame, Muriel Spark, Irvine Welsh, Ian Rankin, JK Rowling, Alexander McCall Smith — has been named the first United Nations City of Literature.

Takeshi Shimizu reports that in Montevideo police are being trained specifically to deal with tourists to Uruguay. With the support of the British Embassy, the Interior Ministry last month dedicated the Sherlock Holmes Auditorium for the training courses.

**Trinity Theatre Club** of Tunbridge Wells is staging Brian Clemens’ play *Holmes and the Ripper* this week, closing on Saturday 20 November. The box office number is 01892 678678 (10.00 am to 3.00 pm), and there’s a website at [www.tctw.com](http://www.tctw.com). Trinity Theatre is in Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Co-President John Hall sends important news about **The Northern Musgraves**. The society is now called simply **The Musgraves**, and a new logo, an acorn and magnifying glass, symbolizes its renaissance. ‘The primary aim remains always that of having fun in an atmosphere of Sherlock Holmes and good fellowship’. There will be three events and two or three newsletters a year. For the time being, at least, publications like *The Ritual* and *The Musgrave Papers* are formally abandoned. The next meeting will be on 20 February at the Huddersfield Hotel in Huddersfield, and the theme will be a *Study in Scarlet*. Confirmed speakers are MJ Elliott and Alan Duxbury. Get details from John Hall, 20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR (0113 258 4902).

Periodicals received. *Canadian Holmes*, Michaelmas (Autumn) 2004 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario, Canada L7G 1P1). *The Illustrious Clients News*, October 2004 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Communication*, November-December 2004, and Special Political Issue 2004 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) [*\*the latter is another of the PPOF’s grand parody issues; try these ‘slogans we’d like to see’ — ‘Jabez Wilson for Judge: Nothing Escapes Him’, ‘Ormond Sacker for MP: He’s the Real Thing’, ‘Vote for Wiggins: When You’re as Good as Me, You Don’t Need a First Name’*]. *Sherlockiana*, nr 3/4, 2004 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Mia Stampe Lagergaard, Hellebækgade 19, 3.t.v., 2200 København N, Denmark).

*Mayday Mayday*, October 2004 and November 2004 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Whaling News*, August 2004, September 2004 and October 2004 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). *The Camden House Journal*, November 2004 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, November 2004 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). *Explorations*, Summer/Autumn 2004 (**The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, John Bergquist, 3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122, USA) [*\*includes a full and affecting reminiscence of Richard Lancelyn Green by his long-time friend Andrew Malec\**].

*3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, October 2004 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA [pkblocker@comcast.net](mailto:pkblocker@comcast.net)). *The Parallelogram*, October 2004 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, September 2004 (Sherlock Holmes Collections, Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

And of course *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, October 2004 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [pblau@dgsys.com](mailto:pblau@dgsys.com)).

*Roger Johnson*