

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON**

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**N J Crisp**, who died on 14 June aged eighty-one, was a versatile, prolific and imaginative writer of film and television scripts, plays and novels. His screenplay for the 1984 film *The Masks of Death*, from a story by Anthony Hinds (alias John Elder), provided a mellow swan-song for Peter Cushing's Sherlock Holmes, partnering him with the excellent John Mills as Dr Watson. **Alf Joint**, fencing master, occasional actor, and one of the world's great stuntmen, died on 25 July aged seventy-eight. In 1987 he and Marc Boyle plunged 430 feet into the Reichenbach Falls, doubling for Eric Porter and Jeremy Brett in Granada TV's *The Final Problem*.

The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0) has just published three stimulating and highly entertaining books by Jim Goehmann. *Watson's First Drafts and Other Sherlockian Commentary* (two volumes, \$60.00) puts into practice an exceptionally clever and thoughtful plan — to account for some of the many inconsistencies and lacunae in the Canon by 'reconstructing' the original texts, which for various reasons could not be made public. Is the result pastiche? I suppose so, since Mr Goehmann attempts to write passages in the Watson/Doyle style (and does so with considerable conviction), but it is also scholarship of a high order. The uncertainties in 'the Musgrave Ritual', for example, are fully explained (at least, I think they are; I am no mathematician, and I have to take the calculations on trust), and most of the reconstructions are eminently satisfactory. Mr Goehmann is also adept at broad humour — see the reinterpretations of 'The Sussex Vampire' and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and of course the final section, headed 'Even Less Serious Commentary'. Other writers have placed Sherlock Holmes in a world of vampires, but few have had as much fun with the idea as Jim Goehmann does in 'Voyage, Victor, Venomous, Vittoria...'

*Baker Street Rhymes and Riddles* (\$25.00) makes a trio with the two *First Drafts* collections, though the 'Volume 3' on the cover and title page lead one to expect two earlier sets of doggerel and conundrum. Sherlockian light verse is nothing new, but Jim Goehmann's is a good deal wittier than most, and he has a sure touch with rhyme and metre. This section concludes with '221B Revisited', a serious and pointed tribute to the most famous Holmesian poem of all. Then come the quizzes. I was going to say that they'd sort out the men from the boys, but they're more likely to sort out the obsessives from the mere experts. This volume is great fun. The two books of 'First Drafts' may actually change the way you think about the Canon.

For the first time our Society has published a handbook to accompany a Swiss Pilgrimage. I need hardly say that *Sherlock Holmes in Switzerland* will be of immense interest to those of us who weren't able to participate. Guy Marriott and Bob Ellis have gathered 116 pages of material from Sweden, America, Britain, Switzerland and Germany. Most is new, but Bernard Davies's 'Canonical Connections' is a classic that deserved reprinting, Vincent Delay's two essays are translated in English for the first time, the papers by Albert Kunz and Julie McKuras are revised from earlier publication — and 'The Pass of the Gemmi, and the Baths of Leuk' is extracted from *The Penny Magazine* of 9 June 1838! I especially enjoyed the pieces by Catherine Cooke, Guy Marriott, and Susan Rice, and the whimsy of Auberon Redfearn and Reggie Musgrave (though the excess of apostrophes in the latter is confusing). The illustrations, including Turner's magnificent painting 'The Great Fall of Reichenbach', the Spy caricature of Silas Hocking, and Scott Bond's charming cartoon, are beautifully reproduced. *Sherlock Holmes in Switzerland* costs £12.50 plus postage from Bob Ellis (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington BR6 8DU).

Announced by Breese Books for publication in August is (was?) *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Mission* by Eddie Maguire. There's a special offer: order the new book and get *Sherlock Holmes and the Tandrige Hall Murders* half price. A total of £11.25 (€18.75 or \$27.75) including postage worldwide. (Breese Books, Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX; [www.baker-street-studios.com](http://www.baker-street-studios.com).)

This month CRW Publishing (Clive Reynard, 6 Turville Barns, Eastleach, Cirencester, Glos. GL7 3QB; [www.crw-publishing.co.uk](http://www.crw-publishing.co.uk)) releases a set of the Canon in six volumes, three containing two books each, all featuring afterwords by David Stuart Davies and each priced at £5.99. The pick, though, is a handsome illustrated hardback *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* at £25.00.

Alan Lance Andersen of Andersen Desktop Publishing Inc. (Roland, Iowa 50236, USA) informs me of *The Speckled Band: Author's Expanded Edition* by Arthur Conan Doyle (\$13.10). The aim is to 'correct some of the play's shortcomings by reintroducing material from the short story and integrating elements from other adaptations (notably the BBC radio & television series) with the original Conan Doyle stageplay'. Hm. That subtitle's a bit cheeky, but it's a sound idea. I hope to be able to review the book soon.

In November come *The Silly Side of Sherlock Holmes* by Philip Ardagh, who concocts an absurd new story around the *Strand* illustrations (Faber & Faber, 3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AU; £7.99), and *Sherlock Holmes: The Biography* by Nick Rennison (Atlantic Books, Ormond House, 26-27 Boswell Street, London WC1N 3JZ; £14.99).

Due on 6 December is *The Forgotten Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by H Paul Jeffers (Carroll & Graf, 245 West 17th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10011, USA; \$14.95). This is actually the second book of adaptations from the classic mid-forties radio scripts by Anthony Boucher and Denis Green (the first, Ken Greenwald's *The Lost Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, was published in 1989). Mr Jeffers is a Baker Street Irregular, invested as 'Wilson Hargreave', and author of *The Adventure of the Stalwart Companions* (New York in 1880, Sherlock Holmes teams up with Teddy Roosevelt) and *Murder Most Irregular* (who is bumping off members of the BSI?). He achieves a generally acceptable likeness of the Canonical style — though there are occasional unfortunate constructions such as 'consult with' — and does well by Green's dialogue and Boucher's dazzling plots. It's a nice way of spending a couple of hours, but on the whole I'd rather listen to the original radio plays, all of which are quite easily obtainable now.

BBC Worldwide (Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) has now released on CD the entire dramatised Canon (with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams) and four plays each from the two series of Bert Coules' *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (with Merrison and Andrew Sachs). Listening again to the first set of *Further Adventures* I find some very special pleasures. Bert Coules is not the first to develop hints dropped by Dr Watson about cases that he omitted from his chronicles, but the solutions to these mysteries reveal unexpected depths to the lives and personalities of the people concerned, including Holmes and Watson. The presentation is cinematic, with cross-cuts, parallel narratives and other features that we associate with film. With excellent performances from the whole cast — including luminaries such as Timothy West, Tom Baker, Toyah Wilcox and Roy Hudd — it makes for engrossing, intelligent listening. Each four-disc set costs £17.99.

This month Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) will release *The Return of Sherlock Holmes III*, read as always by the brilliant David Timson (£16.99). I'm looking forward very keenly to this latest volume in the recorded Canon.

And David Ian Davies (One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail [ddavies858@aol.com](mailto:ddavies858@aol.com)) tells me that he's currently recording Barry Day's five Holmes novellas. *Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Globe Murders* is due shortly.

Writing colleagues David Stuart Davies, M J Elliott and Matthew Booth have teamed up as a 'literary performance group' **The Mystery Men**. Their first gig is at Burngreave Library in Sheffield on 31 October, where they'll present *Art in the Blood: An Evening with Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle*. On 24 October David will give a solo turn, *Elementary, My Dear Sherlock: Everything You Wanted to Know about the Great Detective*, at the Lit & Phil Library in Newcastle during the 'Bloody Murder Crime Fiction Festival'. Learn more from David at Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER; [overdale@btinternet.com](mailto:overdale@btinternet.com).

*Sherlock Holmes: The Athenaeum Ghoul* by Carl Miller will tour as follows: 11-16 Sept **Theatre Royal**, Bury St Edmunds (01284 769505); 22-24 Sept **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal (01539 725133); 26-27 Sept **Opera House**, Buxton (0845 127 2190); 29 Sept - 1 Oct **Gala Theatre**, Durham (0191 332 4041); 6-8 Oct **Theatr Hafren**, Newtown (01686 625007); 13-15 Oct **Theatre Royal**, Wakefield (01924 211311); 17-22 Oct **New Wolsey Theatre**, Ipswich (01473 295900); 24-25 Oct **Swan Theatre**, Worcester (01905 611427); 27-29 Oct **Brunton Theatre**, Musselburgh (0131 655 2240); 1-5 Nov **Bloomsbury Theatre**, London (0207 388 8822); 7-9 Nov **Riverfront**, Newport (01633 656 757); 10-12 Nov **Gateway**, Chester (01244 340392); 15-16 Nov **South Holland Centre**, Spalding (01775 764777); 21-26 Nov **Northcott Theatre**, Exeter (01392 493493).

Roger Llewellyn continues to tour with David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* He'll be at **Theatr Clwyd**, Mold 8-10 Sept; **Civic**, Doncaster 17 Sept; **RADA Vanbrugh Theatre**, London 7 Nov; **Friends' Meeting House**, Pickering 18 Nov; and he has bookings lined up until April 2006.

From 24 to 29 October **Salford Playhouse** in Westerham Avenue, Pendleton will stage *Mrs H of Baker Street*, a new comedy by Peter Tong. Tickets are available from the theatre on 0161 925 0111.

Dave Elsey is a movie make-up effects artist who's worked on some impressive films. An admirer of Sherlock Holmes and Peter Cushing, he owns several of Cushing's props and now wishes to sell one of his briar pipes (guide price £200) and a calling card (£120) from the 1968 BBC TV *Sherlock Holmes* series. Also for sale is a life-size bronze resin bust of Cushing as Holmes, sculpted by Mr Elsey from a life-mask (£400). E-mail him at [imagecreative@iprimus.com.au](mailto:imagecreative@iprimus.com.au) for details and photographs. He has a website at [www.imagecreative.net](http://www.imagecreative.net).

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has a new line: the Edinburgh Medallions — round, flat-backed, low-relief casts in ivory or brown resin. They come with a green baize backing, or you can fix a ring to hang them on the wall. Just a few: *Conan Doyle Head* large £10.00 or small £4.00; *ACD, Holmes & the Fairies* £8.00; *Sherlock Holmes* large £6.50 or small £4.00; *Holmes & Watson* £7.00; *Laurel & Hardy as Holmes & Watson* £8.00. Some are taken from Charles's classic white metal figures. Postage is £1.50. Each model is 70p less without the baize backing. Charles still offers his splendid resin head of the *Baskerville Hound* carrying a Holmes doll in its mouth (£36.00 plus £4.00 postage), and the pair of small resin caricatures of Charlie Chaplin as Holmes and Watson (£8.75 plus £1.50 postage).

*Death Defying Acts* is set to begin filming in Edinburgh early next year from a script by Brian Ward and Tony Grisoni. Guy Pearce will star as Harry Houdini and Rachel Weisz as the Edinburgh woman he falls in love with. Arthur Conan Doyle will be portrayed in the film.

Bob Miller, captain of the PG Wodehouse Society's cricket team, the Gold Bats, was a pupil of the great Holmesian scholar D Martin Dakin at Dagenham County High School. Alison Dakin has given

Bob some of her father's Sherlock Holmes books, to be presented to the DGHS player of the match in the Old Dagonians vs May & Baker fixture and to the SHSL player of the match in the annual Victorian cricket match between the Gold Bats and the Field Bizarre.

Doug Wrigglesworth sends the good news that Toronto Public Library has appointed a successor to Victoria Gill. **Peggy Perdue** is the third Curator of the **Arthur Conan Doyle Collection** at Toronto Reference Library, 789, Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2G8, Canada. Her e-mail address is [pperdue@torontopubliclibrary.ca](mailto:pperdue@torontopubliclibrary.ca)

Rodger Garrick-Steele's obsessive campaign against Arthur Conan Doyle continues. He and a small group that includes a forensic scientist, Paul Spiring, hope to exhume Bertram Fletcher Robinson's body. The aim is to prove that he was poisoned by Conan Doyle in order to conceal Robinson's contribution to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and Conan Doyle's affair with Mrs Robinson! [*\*It would be funny if it weren't so pathetic.\**] Rather more interesting is that an unidentified man took a box of previously unknown Conan Doyle letters, possibly written during his time in Plymouth with Dr Budd, to *The Antiques Roadshow* in Tavistock earlier this year.

**Hugo's Companions** of Chicago have published *Musings from the Mire*, a CD-ROM containing all the newsletters 'and other scribbles' from the Companions' first fifty-five years, 1949-2004. There was a lengthy gap from 1950 to 1964, but the disc is a fascinating archive about one of the world's senior Sherlockian societies, and one organised on very different lines from ours. It's all in clear, fully searchable PDF files, and Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.0 is included. The cost is a reasonable \$25.00 plus \$2.50 postage. Checks should be payable to Hugo's Companions, and orders sent to William Sawisch, 1008 Pleasant Street, Apt. 1B, Oak Park, IL 60302, USA. You can e-mail Bill at [wmsawisch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wmsawisch@sbcglobal.net).

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Summer 2005 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA) [*\*Al Gregory points out that Catherine Cooke has achieved a rare double: publication in the Summer BSJ and in the Summer SHJ.\**]. *Bohemia Newsletter* nos. 54, 55 and 56 (**Ceská společnost Sherlocka Holmese**, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, August 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Communication*, September/October 2005 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The Formulary*, June 2005 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB) [*\*this is Brian Scrivener's last issue as Practice Manager — thanks for all the work and inspiration you've put in to the Friends, Brian!\**]. *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, June 2005 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, September 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *The Passengers' Log*, 20th Anniversary Issue (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). *The Petrel Flyer*, Summer 2005 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Prescott's Press*, June and September 2005 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). *The Soft-nosed Bullet-in & Striking (T)rifles*, Sommer 2005 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Jan Kipping, Schürbeker Str. 2, 22087, Hamburg, Germany). *The Whaling News*, June, July and August 2005 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And of course *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, July 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net)).

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