

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Jan Stauber ('The Hotel du Louvre', ASH) died yesterday after a three-year battle with cancer. With her husband Al Gregory, Jan acted as secretary for **Mrs Hudson's Cliffdwellers**, and, like Al, she was a great apostle and contributor to the literature. She was also a bright, positive, and very likeable person. Friends are asked to make a donation to the National Trust or the Royal Oak foundation.

Peter Blau notes the death on 4 September of **Alan Truscott**, bridge editor of the *New York Times*, who edited an annotated Reginald L Johnson's *They Came to Baker Street* (Magico, 1992).

J E Preston Muddock (1842-1934) lived a life of travel and adventure that made Arthur Conan Doyle's seem tame. As an author he was extraordinarily prolific and versatile, yet only a few ghost stories remain in print, all credited to his best known pseudonym 'Dick Donovan'. And now we have a selection of Muddock's best crime stories in *Dick Donovan: The Glasgow Detective* (Mercat Press, 10 Coates Crescent, Edinburgh EH2 7AL; £9.99). A *Study in Scarlet* was published a few months before Donovan's first adventure, but at least three volumes of Donovan's exploits appeared before *The Sign of Four*. The early cases in this book, taken from the *Dundee Weekly News* of 1888 and 1889, seem to have been inspired to an extent by the memoirs of James McLevy and the fictional adventures of James McGovan. Both detective and setting are more realistic than in the later stories of Dick Donovan and Muddock's numerous other sleuths. In his day Dick Donovan was hugely popular (it's claimed that the Americans owe their word 'dick' for a detective to Dick Donovan.). Reading these tales we can see why — and we can understand why Sherlock Holmes has outlasted him. Mercat Press did us all a great favour by reprinting *McLevy: The Edinburgh Detective* and *The McGovan Casebook*. We're indebted to them again for *Dick Donovan: The Glasgow Detective*, and to Bruce Durie for his perceptive, informative and witty introduction.

Due next month from WW Norton (Castle House, 75/5 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT) is the third and final volume, containing the four long stories, of Leslie S Klinger's great work, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. There's not really much I can say that I haven't already said about the first two volumes: Mr Klinger concentrates on sound research and applies admirable judgement in selecting and presenting his findings. His application and energy in tackling his monumental task are astounding. The notes, which are the *raison d'être* of the book, are exemplary in their breadth, depth and accuracy. The many illustrations, some quite unfamiliar to me, are nicely reproduced. The theories of various scholars on such contentious subjects as the identity of 'Fred Porlock' are neatly and dispassionately summarised. Before the bibliography there is a painstaking chronological table of the life and times of Sherlock Holmes, which admittedly, but perhaps unfortunately, includes speculations drawn from William Baring-Gould's imaginative 'biography' *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street*. No matter! As *The Baker Street Journal* said: 'There is no doubt that Klinger's work will become the standard text of reference for all serious Sherlockians.' Highest recommendation! There's a website at <www.annotatedsherlockholmes.com>.

Cenarth Fox's *Nicholas Twit. The Schoolboy Sherlock Holmes* no. 5 (Fox Plays, PO Box 2078, Richmond South, 3121, Victoria, Australia) is the last instalment in the adventures of Basket Case Investigations. Along with three amusing and exciting new cases for the young sleuths, there's one for Sherlock Holmes himself. Nick and his colleague, Felicity Heywood Jones, apply Holmes's techniques very successfully in 21st century Melbourne. And there

are word games and Sherlockian Snippets to keep the reader, young or old, engaged. But is this really the end? The conclusion is far from conclusive! This nice 32-page A4 booklet costs Aus\$9.00, NZ\$10.50, £4.50 or US\$7.00. It's available in the UK from Fox Plays UK, Gareth Bannister, 158 Blagdon Road, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4AL. The website is at <www.twit.biz>.

4 October was the 145th birthday of Sidney Paget, and Goode Press has published an attractive 32-page booklet: *A Scandal in Bohemia*, with all Paget's illustrations beautifully coloured, plus recently discovered biographical information about the artist, a previously unpublished photograph, and a portrait by the internationally acclaimed Philip Cornell. *A Scandal in Bohemia* is available in an edition of 222 copies from the publisher's eBay shop (go to <www.ebay.com> and search for Sherlock Holmes + Paget) for \$14.98 plus postage. If you're not electronically enabled, I can help.

Available from <www.lulu.com> at \$25.00 is *The Bartitsu Compendium, volume 1: History and the Canonical Syllabus* by Tony Wolf. This 'eclectic martial art founded by E W Barton-Wright in the year 1899' is what Conan Doyle had in mind when he had Holmes use 'baritsu', anachronistically, against Professor Moriarty in 1891. The book is 'the result of five years of research by members of the international Bartitsu Society' and proceeds from sales will go towards a London memorial for Barton-Wright.

Appetite for Murder: A Mystery Lover's Cookbook by Kathy Borich (Virtualbookworm.com Publishing Inc., PO Box 9949, College Station, TX 77842, USA; \$14.95) looks like fun.

Our Society's latest publication is *Colour It Prussian Blue*, edited by Pamela Bruxner and Bob Ellis for last month's day trip to 'Retired Colourman' and 'His Last Bow' country. There are illuminating essays by Guy Marriott, Catherine Cooke, John Hall and (in a supplement) Robert Peckitt, but Bernard Davies once again takes the cake — not for his definitive identification of Von Bork's house, which is reprinted from *An East Wind* (1997), but for his new and equally definitive identification of Josiah Amberley's house in Lewisham and of Mossmoor-cum-Little Purlington. Essential stuff, and available from our new Merchandising Officer, Judi Ellis, at 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

In March 2006 John Wiley & Sons (The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester PO19 8SQ) will publish *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* by E J Wagner, priced at £13.95. Check the author's website at <<http://home.att.net/~ejwagner/~SSH%20book%20completed>>. I have a good feeling about this book, but I'm not so sure about *Holmes on the Range* by Steve Hockensmith, due in February from Minotaur: St Martin's (16365 James Madison Highway, Gordonville, VA 22942-8501, USA; \$22.95) — 'A pair of cowboys with a Sherlock Holmes fetish kick up some dust and solve some murders in 1893 Montana.'

Nigel Williams Rare Books has issued two new catalogues since the last DM (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; 020 7836 7757; <nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk>).

Bradley Hodge (PO Box 8007, Huntsville, TX 77340, USA; e-mail <bradleysbk@gct21.net>) offers the first twenty-eight volumes of *The Strand Magazine* (to December 1904) in VG condition, quarter leather bound, for \$2,400 plus shipping & handling.

The November issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* (Room 101, 140 Wales Farm Road, London W3 6UG; £3.30) has a good article and price guide to *The Strand Magazine* by Mike Ashley, plus David Blake on Miss Marple and the Collins Crime Club, both 75 this year.

The Return of Sherlock Holmes III read by David Timson (Naxos AudioBooks, 18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) maintains the standard of a series that in scale and consistent quality looks set to outclass all its rivals. Mr Timson has completed two thirds of the Canon, and has just three books to go now. This set contains 'Black Peter', 'The Golden Pince-Nez', 'The Missing Three-Quarter', 'The Abbey Grange', and 'The Second Stain', all unabridged. As always, David Timson's characterisations are spot-on, his pacing is immaculate, his liner notes are thoughtful and perceptive, and the music (by Dvořák this time) enhances the atmosphere splendidly. Look, just buy *The Return of Sherlock Holmes III*, settle down in an armchair, and listen. You won't be disappointed!

Cenarth Fox's play *The Real Sherlock Holmes* begins touring Australia again next month — check <www.foxplays.com>. Meanwhile you can enjoy the author's excellent radio adaptation on CD. Arthur Conan Doyle, his mother, and Sherlock Holmes are unseen presences at the unveiling in 1999 of the London statue of Holmes, an event that prompts reminiscence, conversation and argument between them. The play has had enthusiastic reviews, and I can see why. The CD is available from Fox Plays UK (address above) at £11.00, as is the playscript, at £7.25. Prices include postage.

On 26 October the British Library (96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB; <www.bl.uk/bookshop>) issues *Voices of History 2*, a double CD with booklet, featuring the voices of HM Stanley, Arthur Sullivan, PT Barnum, and Arthur Conan Doyle among others (£15.95).

The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes by David Belke is at the **Mayfield Dinner Theatre** in Edmonton, Alberta until 30 October (phone 800-661-9804; <www.mayfielddinnermonton.com>). From 24 to 29 October **Salford Playhouse** in Pendleton has *Mrs H of Baker Street* by Peter Tong (0161 925 0111). Thursday to Sunday, from 10 to 26 November, Tim Evers presents his one-man play *The Demons of Sherlock Holmes* at **The Bayou Theatre** at the University of Houston/Clear Lake (281-283-2560). On 18 November, Roger Llewellyn brings *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to the **Friends' Meeting House** in Pickering (01751 472827), and on 30 November he's at the **Lakeside Theatre** at the University of Essex at Colchester (01206 873261; <arts@essex.ac.uk>).

The Players' Theatre season of Victorian Music Hall is running at **The Venue** in Leicester Place, off Leicester Square on Sundays at 4.00 pm. Doors open at 3.30 pm, and there's no need to book. Two hours of variety, comedy and song for £15.00. Phone 020 7839 1134 or check the website at <www.playerstheatre.co.uk>.

TMC Monte Carlo has released a French DVD set of the complete season *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, with Jeremy Brett and David Burke. These are evidently remastered prints, clear and crisp, and you can choose to watch in English, with or without French subtitles, or in well dubbed French. Besides the thirteen films, the five discs include some nice bonus material provided by the **Jeremy Brett Society of France** and **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, with contributions by notable French, British and American Holmesians. It's an excellent set, and a very welcome replacement on my shelf for the earlier, rather lacklustre DVDs and videos.

Julia Huggins aims to persuade Granada TV to release on DVD or video deleted scenes, promotional materials and out-takes from the *Sherlock Holmes* series. The American and French distributors are keen on the idea, and **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France** are strong supporters. There's an on-line petition, which you can sign at <www.petitiononline.com/gtiitv/petition.html>. You can e-mail Ms Huggins — who is not related to Jeremy Brett — at <juliahuggins@netscape.net>. [**This is a serious and worthwhile proposal. Ms Huggins has, by invitation, addressed a meeting of The Red Circle of Washington, DC about the project.**]

In a couple of days we'll find out who has won this year's Man Booker Prize for fiction. Julian Barnes's *Arthur & George* (reviewed in DM 254) is a favourite. [**One or two Sherlockians seem surprised that the book should be eligible for a fiction prize, but fiction is what it is, even though it's based on fact. Not exactly a new idea.**]

Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, will hold a Literary Festival next May, with one of the afternoons having an Edwardian slant — and naturally featuring Sherlock Holmes. For more information contact Neil Scott at <scott.media@hotmail.co.uk>.

High Moorland Community Action trust is developing a community centre in Princetown, a short walk from the old Duchy Hotel (now the High Moorland Visitor Centre). Although it's a rural settlement, Princetown is in many ways more like a deprived urban area, the problems being exacerbated by its isolated position on Dartmoor and the extreme climate. The trust is keen to attract sponsorship from companies and individuals. If you'd like to be a part of an important project in Baskerville country, contact Jenny Coleman, Community Development Manager, High Moorland Community Action Ltd, Wesley House, Two Bridges Road, Princetown, Devon County Council PL20 6QS (<jenny@hmca.org.uk>).

Some time this month **Imagination Theatre** broadcasts its 500th radio play, jointly written by the founder, Jim French, and our own MJ Elliott. *The Third Gate* features all the company's well-known protagonists, including Sherlock Holmes and AJ Raffles. After the broadcast it will be available on CD from the Imagination Theatre website at <www.harrynile.com>. Matthew Elliott tells me that the company has accepted a script involving his own creation, a barrister named Anthony Rathe. A sequel and series may follow.

Autografica of 1951 City Way, Rochester ME1 2TJ is selling facsimiles of Arthur Conan Doyle's holograph will at £3.99 plus postage. Very interesting it is too.

On 29 October, **The Musgraves** will look at *a Study in Scarlet* in the media. Get details from Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP. Our Society's meeting on 19 November will be a Pub Quiz Night at the Old Dr Butler's Head (Catherine Cooke, 15 Copperfield Court, 146 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London SW20 8QA). Also on 19 November **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will hold their AGM and Festive Luncheon at the Two Bridges Hotel (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR), and **The Friends of Dr Watson** will hold their AGM over lunch at the Sherlock Holmes pub in London (Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, September 2005 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Canadian Holmes*, Michaelmas (Autumn) 2005 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). *The Illustrious Clients News*, August 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, October 2005 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *The Magic Door*, Fall 2005 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). *Mayday Mayday*, September 2005, and *Chronicler*, September 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcaran Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *Quivers on the Web*, September 2005 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). *The School Report*, Autumn Term 2005 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Serpentine Muse*, Fall 2005 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, July-September 2005 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA <pkblocker@comcast.net>). *Tonga Times*, Summer 2005 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E. 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229, USA).

And not least *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, August 2005 and September 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; <blau7103@comcast.net>).

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