

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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A couple of days after sending out the last issue of the DM, I learned that our old friend **G W Welch** had died on 14 December. Active in our Society, which he joined more than half a century ago, in the Northern Musgraves, the Poor Folk Upon the Moors and the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, George Welch was a valued contributor to the literature of Sherlock Holmes, but he is likely to be best remembered, with a smile, for his polite good nature and his characterisation of Cardinal Tosca.

Lord Merlyn-Rees, who died on 5 January aged eighty-five, was a politician of integrity, summed up by the Daily Telegraph as 'Minister who handled the Northern Ireland Office with aplomb and became a stern but diligent Home Secretary.' As guest of honour at our Society's 1987 annual dinner he gave a witty and thought-provoking address.

At the annual dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** on 13 January, Shillings were awarded to: Richard M Olken ('Bob Carruthers'), Regina Stinson ('A Little Ribston Pippin'), Curtis Armstrong ('An Actor and a Rare One'), Paul Churchill ('Corot'), Jerry Kegley ('Nathan Garrideb'), Trevor S Raymond ('Horace Harker'), and Jennie C Paton ('Laura Lyons'). Last year Donald J Terras was invested as 'The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant'. And the winner of the 2005 Morley-Montgomery Prize for the best contribution to *The Baker Street Journal* was Catherine Cooke. Congratulations to all!

In DM 257 I gave a brief review of *The League of Heroes*. From the same publisher comes *Tales of the Shadowmen: Gentlemen of the Night* edited by Jean-Marc and Randy Lofficier (Black Coat Press, Hollywood Comics.com, LLC, PO Box 17270, Encino, CA 91416, USA; £14.99 or \$22.95), an anthology of new stories about old favourites from French, British and American popular fiction. The authors reflect this wonderful mixed heritage, including as they do Philippe Ward, Sylvie Miller, Kim Newman, Brian M Stableford, Rick Lai and Win Scott Eckert (that's not all of them, and in any case I shouldn't omit Jean-Louis Trudel from Canada). It's many decades since Maurice Leblanc decided to pit Arsène Lupin against Sherlock Holmes, and the years since then have seen many such matches. Batman has encountered Sherlock Holmes and Judge Dredd. At least four writers have had Holmes meet Count Dracula — one has even posited a blood relationship [sic]. And Philip Jose Farmer devised a complex and almost convincing connection between just about all the popular heroes you can think of, including of course Sherlock Holmes. Several of the authors represented in *Gentlemen of the Night* have consciously drawn on Farmer's 'Wold Newton Universe'. The range of sources represented in these stories is extraordinary. Besides Leblanc and Conan Doyle, you'll find the creations of Georges Simenon, Sax Rohmer, Gaston Leroux, Dashiell Hammett, Alexandre Dumas, Grant Allen, Jules Verne — and so the list goes on. The temporal settings generally range from the 1870s to the 1920s, though as at least one adventure involves H G Wells's Time Traveller, you'll appreciate that there are exceptions. Holmes is in there, of course, in a neat little tale called 'Be Seeing You!' by Xavier Mauméjean, which suggests an even more intriguing background to Patrick McGoohan's extraordinary

1960s television series *The Prisoner*. As always from Black Coat Press, the book is attractive and enticing, and these Tales of the Shadowmen are deliriously exciting. The publisher's website is at www.blackcoatpress.com.

(Due on 20 February is a restored print on DVD of the five-episode silent serial *Fantômas*, directed by Louis Feuillade. Special features include a documentary by Kim Newman, *Who Is Fantômas?* Play.com is offering the two-disc set at £23.99.)

The Secret Policeman by Rafe McGregor (Classic Mysteries, 78 Byron Gardens, Tilbury, Essex RM18 8BD; £6.25) is not a Sherlock Holmes story. It's an authentic and gripping narrative of a murder investigation in 1990s South Africa. Superintendent Jack Forrester of the Durban Police is reluctant to take it on, because his Special Investigations Unit is already working on two top priority cases — and because the murdered man was a member of the Criminal Intelligence Service, the successor to the feared Security Branch of the apartheid era. His superiors give him no choice, and such information as he is allowed is severely restricted. The case involves him with terrorists, drug traffickers, Muslim vigilantes and all the dangers of that volatile time. Maybe it's because I've been watching the *Maigret* series on television, but *The Secret Policeman* seems to me to have some of the qualities of Simenon's short novels. It's exciting and thought-provoking. Worth a read. Check the website at www.lulu.com/classicmysteries.

(Rafe McGregor is looking for contributors for an anthology of Sherlock Holmes pastiches to be published by Classic Mysteries. You can get information from him at classicmysteries@aol.com.)

The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual 2005 is a quite fascinating survey of a period of just over two years in the history of the Sherlock Holmes radio series in the United States. H Paul Jeffers, the author of *Once a Week in Baker Street: The Boucher-Green Years*, is also responsible for the recently published *The Forgotten Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, the second book of adaptations from the classic scripts by Anthony Boucher and Denis Green (Carroll & Graf, 245 West 17th Street, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10011, USA; \$14.95). He grew up with the radio series and has made good use of the correspondence between two writers, now held at the Lilly Library at Indiana University in Bloomington, and of the memories of many who took part in the shows, recorded by 221A Baker Street Associates as introductions to their commercial releases. *Once a Week in Baker Street* makes a good companion to *Edith Meiser and Her Adventures with Sherlock Holmes*, published by the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota in 1999. It's available from The Baker Street Journal (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) post-paid for \$11.00 (US orders) or \$12.00 (international orders). You can buy it on-line at www.bakerstreetjournal.com.

Editions MacGuffin have published a new adventure of Hergé's famous comic-strip character, *Tintin à Baker Street* by Bob Garcia. The cover illustration by Harry Edwood is a superb fusion of Tintin and Sherlock Holmes. I've no other details at present, but you can get them from editions.macguffin@tiscali.fr.

Published this month by Sleuth/Philomel at \$10.99 is *The Case of the Missing Marquess: An Enola Holmes Mystery* by Nancy Springer. This adventure of Sherlock and Mycroft's fourteen-year-old sister was favourably mentioned in *Kirkus Reviews*. [Could this be a tribute to the great Sherlockian book dealer Enola Stewart, I wonder?*

Due on 6 March is *The Baker Street Boys: The Case of the Captive Clairvoyant*, the second in Anthony Read's series about Holmes's band of street urchins (Walker Books Ltd, 87 Vauxhall Walk, London SE11 5HJ; £4.99). [*Super cover pictures on these books.*] It was recently announced that HarperCollins has bought the UK and Commonwealth to *Just a Line, Dearest*, letters from Arthur Conan Doyle to his mother, due for publication in 2007.

Catalogue 131 is available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Rodger Garrick-Steele's accusation of murder and adultery against Arthur Conan Doyle is indeed vicious nonsense. Forensic scientist Paul Spiring says, 'We're on the verge of drawing some conclusions which categorically refute the allegations that Conan Doyle stole the plot of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* from Fletcher Robinson.[...] We have new evidence from eye-witness statements that Fletcher Robinson was content with Doyle's published acknowledgements of his contribution. [...] It would appear that Conan Doyle never met Gladys Fletcher Robinson. If we accept that there was no adulterous relationship or conflict about authorship, then there is no motive and the theory of murder must be dismissed.' (*Western Morning News*, 20 December 2005.)

On Tuesday 31 January viewers in the Tyne-Tees region will be able to see a programme in the new series *G P Taylor's Uninvited Guests*, in which the priest-turned-author claims that the Hound of the Baskervilles is really the Barguest, the phantom Black Dog of the Yorkshire Moors! [**The Black Dog is known all down the east coast and is particularly notable around Cromer, where Conan Doyle and Fletcher Robinson first discussed what was to become The Hound of the Baskervilles. Just thought I'd mention it.**]

Ludovic Debono has sent the address of a website listing 'all the 126 (annotated) places where Watson & Sherlock Holmes go in their adventures:

<http://bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/showthreaded.php/Cat/0/Number/33887/0/an/0/page/0/#238870>. I haven't been able to access the site, but perhaps you can.

The Principal Planning Officer of Waverley Borough Council has informed Heather Owen that Undershaw, ACD's former home at Hindhead, has been bought by a developer who wants to turn it into flats. Well, it's a better fate than demolition.

Hirayama Yuichi BSI has set up a weblog, *Sherlockiana in Japan*, with material in Japanese and English. Worth a look! You'll find it at <http://shinjapan.blogspot.com/>.

David Stuart Davies sends word that *Sherlock* is to rise from the ashes. The magazine has a new, experienced publisher, and an old, experienced editor — none other than DSD himself. There will certainly be some changes, but when it's relaunched in early April *Sherlock* will be firmly back on course.

More good news! Bert Coules has been commissioned to write a third series of *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* to be recorded for transmission on Radio 4, probably early in 2007. Take a look at Bert's website, www.bertcoules.co.uk. (*The Complete Sherlock Holmes Box Set* — the Radio 4 recordings of the whole Canon on CD — is currently offered by the BBC Shop at £115.00. Check www.bbcshop.com.)

More Deaths than One Must Die, the first episode of Matthew Booth's detective series *The Anthony Rathe Chronicles* will be broadcast on 12 February. Terry Edward Moore, who plays Rathe, has appeared on stage as Sherlock Holmes and as Lord Peter Wimsey. As Matthew says, Rathe is in exalted company! You can hear the play on-line at www.transmediasf.com/imag.html.

MC Black notes that **Bibliophile Books** (5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN) offer a large selection of Sherlock Holmes audiobooks on cassette, readings by Douglas Wilmer and by David Timson, at rock-bottom prices. If you place an order or ask for a free catalogue, MC asks you please to quote reference 1045.

Roger Llewellyn brings *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* to **The Byre Theatre**, St Andrews (01334 475000) 1 February, **Carnegie Hall**, Dunfermline (01383 314000) 3 February, **Eastgate Theatre**,

Peebles (01721 725777) 4 February, **Yvonne Arnaud Theatre Mill Studio**, Guildford (01483 440000) 23-25 February, **Tamworth Castle**, Tamworth (01827 709581) 11 March, and **The Clocktower**, Croydon (020 8253 1027) 23 & 24 March.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has published an attractive set of Sherlock Holmes postcards, full-colour cartoon paintings by Edinburgh artist Ian M Fraser. A pack of twelve costs £6.50, including postage.

For last year's Swiss trip Guy Marriott produced a nice facsimile reprint of pages from an 1895 Foreign Office paper, *Report on Apiculture in Serbia*, which Guy maintains was actually private information intended for Sherlock Holmes. He has extra copies, available to anyone who e-mails him at guiy@angloinfo.com. Remember to give your address.

There have been changes in the Committee of **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors**, with David Guest, Vosper Arthur and Cherry Arthur all standing down. The new Chairman is Shirley Purves, the Secretary is Jenny Phillips, and the Treasurer & Membership Secretary Judy Marshall. Reggie Musgrave still edits *The Torr*. A full year of activities is planned, in London, Devon, Cornwall and Somerset.

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Winter 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). *The Camden House Journal*,

January 2006 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Canadian Holmes*, Christmas (Winter) 2005 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada).

The Collected Essays: The Dr John H Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition 2004/5 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, 31 Muswell Avenue, Flat 2, London N10 2EB). *Communication*, Special Romance Issue 2005 and January/February 2006 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) [**the former is another of the PPOF's grand parody issues**]. *For the Sake of the Trust*, Fall 2005 (**The Baker Street Irregulars Trust**, Julie McKuras, 13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124, USA) [**the first issue of the newsletter of the Trust, which administers the BSI Archives**].

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, December 2005 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

The Illustrious Clients News, December 2005 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, January 2006 and February 2006 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *Irregular Newsletter*,

January 2006 (**The Conan Doyle [Crowborough] Establishment**, Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). *The Magic Door*, Winter 2005 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4) [**regrettably, Peter Wood has resigned as editor, because of failing eyesight**]. *Mayday Mayday*,

January 2006, and *C-Extra*, 27 December 2005 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Petrel Flyer*, January/February 2006 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Prescott's Press*, June and December 2005 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). *Quivers on the Web*, January 2006 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). *The Serpentine Muse*, Winter 2005 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog,

301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Winter 2005 [**you should already know about this!**]. *Tonga Times*, Fall 2005 (**The Mini-Tonga Society**, Trish & Jay Pearlman, 1656 E. 19th Street, #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229,

USA). *The Whaling News*, November and December 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*, December 2005 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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