

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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no. 314 1 August 2011

To mark the release on 4 August of *The Carleton Hobbs Sherlock Holmes Further Collection*, AudioGO, 'the home of BBC audiobooks', offers three copies of this six-CD set as prizes in a competition for DM readers. The great **Carleton Hobbs** and **Norman Shelley** play Holmes and Watson in twelve classic dramatisations by Michael Hardwick, with new introductions by our own Nicholas Utechin. The plays in this set are: *The Copper Beeches*, *Thor Bridge*, *The Three Garridebs*, *The Sussex Vampire*, *The Three Gables*, *The Retired Colourman*, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*, *The Crooked Man*, *The Cardboard Box*, *A Case of Identity*, *The Naval Treaty* and *The Noble Bachelor*.

To enter the contest, simply answer the following questions, and send your answers to me by 15 August.

1. Michael Hardwick wrote most of the scripts for the series, but who dramatised *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley?
2. Name one of Michael Hardwick's three well-regarded Sherlock Holmes novels.
3. Which two actors, unlike Hobbs and Shelley, played Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson in all sixty stories on BBC radio?

The winners will be drawn at random, and the names will be announced in the next issue. *The Carleton Hobbs Sherlock Holmes Further Collection* is available from the usual sources, including www.audiogo.co.uk.

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes is a hackneyed title, but it's doing Titan's series of pastiche novels no harm. The latest is *The Peerless Peer* (Titan Books, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP); £7.99, first published in 1974, by **Philip José Farmer**, whose concept of the 'Wold Newton family' was a major influence on *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. (In 1795 a meteorite fell near the village of Wold Newton in Yorkshire. 'Farmer posited that this event caused genetic mutation in some people who were passing by at the time. Their enhanced genes led to the extraordinary abilities of their descendants, who include: Tarzan, Sherlock Holmes, Doc Savage, Nero Wolfe, James Bond, Lord Peter Wimsey, Professor Moriarty, Philip Marlowe, Sam Spade, Kinsey Millhone, Richard Hannay, Charlie Chan, Ernst Stavro Blofeld, and John Shaft.' – *Wikipedia*.) In 1916 Holmes and Watson are sent to German East Africa, where Von Bork is reported to be creating a deadly biological weapon. After a journey that nearly costs them their lives, they are forced into an alliance with an improbable English peer – Lord Greystoke, better known as Tarzan of the Apes. *The Peerless Peer* is as much parody as pastiche: excitement gives way to slapstick, and there's plenty of vaudeville humour (Fokkers, anyone?). I like it, though I could wish that this British edition had dispensed with the phonetic spelling 'Leftenant'. (Right, Lootenant?) Farmer's novella is supplemented by an afterword by Win Scott Eckert and four chapters of Kim Newman's forthcoming *Moriarty: The Hound of the D'Urbervilles*.

Due on 26 August is *The Star of India* by **Carole Buggé** (Titan; £7.99). Once again we learn that Holmes was not the only survivor of the duel at Reichenbach. Moriarty is back in London, and Holmes must solve a complicated conundrum if he is to protect the Empire and save his own life. The Star of India is a precious stone, of course, a present to the Prince of Wales from an Indian prince, but it and he are under threat from Prince Rabarrath's rival, who has the support of the master-criminal. The problem is presented to Holmes in terms of a

game of chess, though the connection sometimes seems tenuous at best. The author is (or was in 1997) apparently unfamiliar with various aspects of British society a century ago. The Prince of Wales was, like his great-great-grandson, styled His Royal Highness, not His Majesty, and he was known as Prince Albert Edward, not Prince Edward. Likewise an Indian ruling prince would have been called Rajah, Maharajah or similar, and styled His Highness. The influence of W S Baring-Gould is unsurprisingly discernible, along with what William Hyder called 'the Martha myth', and the chronology in relationship to the established facts about Holmes and Watson is as puzzling as if the novel had been written by Conan Doyle himself. None the less, the exciting plot, the atmospheric descriptions, and the well-drawn characters make for an enjoyable read.

Vincent Delay (Chaumière 1, 1010 Lausanne, Switzerland) took part in our Society's Diamond Jubilation in May, and enjoyed the experience so much that he has recorded his impressions in a charming booklet, *Une Capitale Jubilation! Compte-rendu du voyage à Londres d'Imprimeur honorarire et du Président de la Société d'études holmesiennes de la Suisse romande du 18 au 23 mai 2011 à l'occasion des 60 ans de la Société Sherlock Holmes de Londres (1951-2011)*. My schoolboy French is put to shame by Vincent's excellent English, but because I was there for most of the weekend I was able to enjoy reading his account without turning too often to the French-English dictionary. (I don't know whether copies are available, but I want to say how pleased I am with this first published record of the Jubilation.)

Our Webmaster **Jonny Hough** has posted a lot of photos of that weekend in our Flickr photostream at www.flickr.com/photos/shsl. (This is quicker and more direct than going via our own website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.) The photographers are Dena Howlett, Jean Upton, Alan Rettig and me.

Peter Blau notes that Easton Press (47 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06857, USA) has published a deluxe edition of *London: A Pilgrimage* by **Gustave Doré** and **Blanchard Jerrold**, first published in 1872. 'Doré provided 180 engravings for Jerrold's portrait of London that was published only a few years before Conan Doyle's first visit to the city at the end of 1874. It's a leather-bound limited edition that costs \$496.00 postpaid.'

In November Bantam Books (Random House, 1745 Broadway, New York, NY 10019) will publish *A Study in Sherlock: Stories Inspired by the Holmes Canon*, edited by **Laurie R King** and **Leslie S Klinger**. The contributors' names are mostly unfamiliar to me, but the presence of Neil Gaiman and Lee Child is encouraging, and I expect something of interest from the well-known Sherlockian collector Jerry Margolin.

Barbara Roden reports that she and **Christopher Roden** are writing the supplementary material for a two-volume *Complete Sherlock Holmes* to be published by Barnes & Noble next March under the B&N Classics imprint (P.O. Box 111, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071, USA; www.barnesandnoble.com).

Mr Richard A Velting writes: 'I have a first edition of *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* by William S. Baring-Gould - printed in 1967. The two volumes are in pristine condition except for some streaks of discoloration on the cover of volume 2. If you or any of your members would be interested in purchasing these volumes - please reply.' Mr Velting's e-mail address is rvelting@optonline.net. Note that he lives in the USA.

From 15 to 20 August, at Theatro Technis (26 Crowndale Road, Camden, London NW1 1TT), **Veno Vidi Theatre Company** will perform *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Simon Williams – adapted as a radio play in the style of the 1930s. It sounds fascinating! All the information, plus online booking, is at www.venividitheatre.com/.

Not far away, on 16 August, you can see **The Wireless Theatre Company in Sherlock Holmes Strikes Back** by Peter Davis and Matthew Woodcock, at the Etcetera Theatre, above the Oxford Arms (265 Camden High Street, Camden, London NW1 7BU). This is part of the Camden Fringe, and details, plus online booking, are at www.etceteratheatre.com/details.php?show_id=1125.

Geoff Bradley has found that from 11.00am to 3.00pm on 28 August the village of **Acle**, between Norwich and Great Yarmouth, will host a *Victorian Village Mystery*. ‘Sherlock Holmes has received a mysterious wedding invitation, the groom, none other than himself. He’s never heard of the bride or the village where the wedding is to be held. When he and Watson arrive in Acle they find the mysterious bride comatose and the village terrified. It seems that it’s not the first time an unconscious bride has been seen there. They discover that there’s a curse in this quaint little Victorian village, and that there hasn’t been a wedding in the village for the past 40 years. Who is the bride? Why has someone attacked her? And could there be a link to the curse or is it pure coincidence?’ All the information is at www.villagemystery.com/menu.html. The website looks impressive!

They’re understandably pretty rough after ninety years, but you can now enjoy three of **Eille Norwood’s** silent two-reelers, thanks to Mysterious Angel Archive [**sic**], which has posted them on YouTube. At www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQ3EmbS2IfY is *The Dying Detective*, at www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhpnHLt9yWk, *The Devil’s Foot*, and at www.youtube.com/watch?v=kY-K_LAPWgA *The Man with the Twisted Lip*. See for yourself why Conan Doyle thought so highly of Norwood’s performance.

Rather far in advance, but... Next summer, Gresham College, which has provided free public talks within the City of London for more than 400 years, will give a series of lunchtime lectures on *Literary London Crime* at the Museum of London. The fourth, on 2 July, will be ‘*A Stout Heart in the Great Cesspool: Arthur Conan Doyle and London*, and the speaker will be our member **Richard Burnip**. Information is at www.gresham.ac.uk/search/node/Literary%20London%20Crime. (Richard Burnip is, as Richard IV, a guide for London Walks. See www.walks.com/London_Walks/Home/Londons_Best_Guides/default.aspx.)

The future of **Undershaw**, Conan Doyle house at Hindhead, is still uncertain. No date has yet been set, I understand, for the judicial review instigated by John Gibson. If you don’t already check it regularly, do take a look at the Undershaw Preservation Trust’s website at www.saveundershaw.com/ and check the Facebook page. If you work in education, consider joining **Academics for Undershaw** and help challenge the official view that the house has no cultural significance. Contact David Charles Rose at oscholars@gmail.com.

In Regents Park a few days ago I spotted a poster: ‘Introducing a New Central London Astronomical Society: **The Baker Street Irregular Astronomers**, meeting one Wednesday each month from 7pm at The Hub, Regents Park. Contact mikepoole1965@live.co.uk or find us on Facebook.’ There’s a website at www.bakerstreetastro.org.uk.

Last Tuesday, Resonance 104.4 FM, an independent London-based community radio station, broadcast a first-rate 55-minute documentary, *The Legacy of Sherlock Holmes*, written and produced by **James Hodder**. A stellar cast of contributors comprised Andrew Lycett, Mark Campbell, Alistair Duncan, Daniel Smith, Bert Coules, Nick Utechin, David Sinclair, Guy Adams and David Stuart Davies, with guest appearances by Roger Llewellyn. The presenter was Karl Carpani. Not many of us will have heard the broadcast, but you can listen on-line at <http://soundcloud.com/radiohodder/the-legacy-of-sherlock-holmes>, or download the recording.

The Sussex Courier reports that **David Cornell** has accused Crowborough town council of ruining his statue of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with sloppy cleaning methods. He said, ‘I think they have used an industrial cleaner. All it needed was a wash with soapy water, then

waxed and polished up the following day.’ The council will decide soon whether to spend £450 to restore the statue, which originally cost £48,000. [**Thanks to Peter Blau and Al Gregory.**]

There seem to be more Holmesian websites and blogs every week, many of them worth checking, and some very impressive indeed. Try these, for information, amusement, or simple pleasure: **The Diogenes Club** at <http://thenewdiogenesclub.blogspot.com/>. **Elementary: The Sherlock Holmes Fanlisting** at www.jordanna.net/fan/holmes/. **John H Watson, MD** at www.johnhwatsonmd.com/. **The Strand Magazine 1891-1930** at www.studium.com/holmes/strand01.html. **The Crew of the S S May Day** at www.thessmayday.org.uk/. **The Reichenbach Irregulars** at www.221b.ch/index_e.html. **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** at www.221b.ch/index_e.html. **Société Sherlock Holmes de France** at www.sshf.com. **The Umbrella Organization** at <http://mycroft-brolly.livejournal.com/92193.html>. **The Ocular Helmsman: A Vade Mecum Upon the Personal Effects & Environs of Sherlock Holmes & John H. Watson of 221B Baker Street for the Victorian Layman** at www.jadedcompass.com/ocular_helmsman.

Finally two essential sites: **The Best of Sherlock Holmes** by Randall Stock at www.bestofsherlock.com/index.htm. And **Sherlockian.Net** by Chris Redmond at www.sherlockian.net.

The actor **Billy Beck**, born Frank Billerbeck, died on 29 June, aged ninety-one. His first television credits in a long and varied career were for Sheldon Reynolds’ series *Sherlock Holmes*, filmed in Paris in 1954. He was in three episodes, alongside Ronald Howard and Howard Marion Crawford: *The Mother Hubbard Case*, *The Case of the Tyrant’s Daughter* and *The Night Train Riddle*. His last appearance on screen was in 2009 in *Dollhouse*.

Nick Utechin passes on news of the death on 7 July of **Bill Boddy**, a long-time member of our Society, at the age of ninety-eight. He edited *Motor Sport* magazine from 1936 to 1991, and continued writing for every issue after his retirement. His particular passion was Brooklands, which he first visited in 1927. In 1946 he published a four-page ‘obituary’ of the racetrack: ‘Built at his own expense for the nation’s good, by the late Mr H F Locke King - 1906. Betrayed by bureaucracy and declared an industrial area - 1946.’ Bill Boddy contributed three articles and the occasional letter to *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*.

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, June 2011 and July 2011 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, June 2011 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *The Illustrious Clients News*, July 2011 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, August 2011 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *The Petrel Flyer*, June 2011 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6).

Practice Notes, July 2011 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Highcroft Cottage, 14 Totteridge Common, London N20 8NL). *Prescott’s Press*, December 2010 [**sic**] (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). *Sherlockiana*, Nr 2 2011 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark**, Bjarne Rother Jensen, Højbovang 24, 9200 Aalborg SV, Denmark). *3-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, June 2011 and July 2011 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net) [**a welcome return after far too long an absence**]. *The Torr*, Summer 2011 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Reggie Musgrave, Drummond Cottage, Old Tavern Yard, Westbourne, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8TA).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, June 2011 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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