

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Details and booking form for the **Arthur Conan Doyle Weekend** at Haslemere (close to ACD's home at Hindhead) 15-17 June are accessible at www.haslemere.com/conandoyle/home.html. Highlights include **Roger Llewellyn** in *Sherlock Holmes – The Last Act!*, the *Hammer Hound* introduced by **Alistair Duncan**, a murder mystery evening with **The Irregular Special Players**, a musical matinee with **Catherine Cooke** and local musicians, and talks by **Andrew Lane**, **Andrew Lycett** and me. The organisers recommend the Georgian House Hotel (High Street, Haslemere GU27 2JY; 01428 656644; website www.georgianhousehotel.com).

Next Sunday, 18 March, the second **Great Sherlock Holmes Debate** will be held in London. Writers, editors, actors and other devotees will discuss the relative merits of *Sherlock*, the Guy Ritchie films, and the wholly traditional approach to the canon. There's a page on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GreatSherlockHolmesDebate. The debate, organised by MX Publishing, supports the campaign to save Undershaw, Conan Doyle's house at Hindhead. It will be recorded and broadcast on-line.

AudioGO offers four sets of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, read unabridged by the wonderful **Derek Jacobi** and reviewed enthusiastically in the last DM. For the chance of winning a set, just tell me which stories in the book are not narrated by Dr Watson. Answers to me, please, by 31 March. And do check the AudioGO website at www.audiogo.co.uk.

A reminder that Big Finish offers a generous discount on its excellent Sherlock Holmes audio dramas, with **Nicholas Briggs** and **Richard Earl** as Holmes and Watson. Details were in the recent Society mailing.

For compiling the two magnificent volumes of *The Grand Game* **Laurie R King & Leslie S Klinger** surely deserve Sir James Damery's encomium: 'You have done wonders – wonders!' *Volume Two: 1960-2010* (The Baker Street Irregulars, Michael H Kean, 3040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953-2837, USA; www.bakerstreetjournal.com/; \$39.95 plus postage in USA, \$49.95 plus postage elsewhere) includes sixty-one essays in its 400-plus pages, all instructive, enlightening and entertaining. Among the legendary names – Poul Anderson, S Tupper Bigelow, Bernard Davies, W S Baring-Gould, Michael Harrison, et al – it's a delight to find articles by William Hyder, Grant Eustace, John Hall, Reggie Musgrave, Rosane McNamara, Nicholas Utechin and Guy Marriott. (And, believe it or not, a shock to see something of mine as well.) No such anthology can be definitive, but it's no exaggeration to call *The Grand Game* essential.

Not only are we not alone in our acceptance of a fictional creation as real, but we have an intellectually respectable pedigree. You knew that instinctively, of course, and *As If: Modern Enchantment and the Literary Prehistory of Virtual Reality* by **Michael Saler** (Oxford University Press; www.oup.com; £60.00/ \$99.00 hbk, £17.99/ \$27.95 pbk) charts the development of imaginative reality and explores the psychological and social reasons for its success, concentrating on the creations of Conan Doyle, H P Lovecraft and J R R Tolkien. By exercising what Professor Saler calls ironic imagination, we can live for a while in a different world, sharing it with kinsprits, but we never actually disconnect ourselves from mundane reality. It's little wonder, really, that so many writers of fantasy and science fiction – Poul Anderson, Isaac Asimov, Neil Gaiman, August Derleth, Robert Bloch and others – have been enthusiastic players of the Holmesian game.

It's a pleasure to recommend *Beaten's Christmas Annual* for 2011 (Terri Haugen, c/o The Sound of the Baskervilles, 3606 Harborcrest Court NE, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA; \$18.00 postpaid to UK, \$13.00 postpaid to USA – checks marked 'in US funds' should be payable to The Sound of the Baskervilles). In these 64 pages are a study of Holmes's drug use, a pastiche or two, a report on our own Society's October meeting, recipes for a Victorian Christmas dinner, a look at Denis O Smith's Sherlockian stories, an analysis of 'The Resident Patient', and much more. Capital stuff, as always from this lively, intelligent group.

It's been a while since **Anthony Read's** last novel of the Baker Street Boys, and I'm very pleased to welcome *The Case of the Racehorse Ringer* (Walker Books Ltd; www.walker.co.uk; 5 April, £4.99). Why not 'the Baker Street irregulars'? Well, in the entire canon that phrase is used only once, and Mr Read very reasonably assumes that the youngsters are more likely to call themselves simply 'boys'. All right, two of them are girls – or rather, three. Gertie has come back to Baker Street desperate for help because her father has been wrongly arrested for murder. Holmes abroad, Watson is sympathetic but powerless, so it's up to the Baker Street Boys to investigate. The title gives a pretty strong clue as to what they discover. I suppose these books are aimed at sub-teens, but they should appeal to intelligent readers of almost any age. I love 'em!

The Fairy Ring, or Elsie and Frances Fool the World by **Mary Losure** (Candlewick Press; www.candlewick.com; \$16.99) is a remarkably good account of the Cottingley fairies. In a style that's straightforward, elegant and sympathetic, Ms Losure tells the story as each of the two girls saw it – but this exercise in imagination is based entirely on first-hand sources, and illustrated with high-definition prints of the notorious photographs.

I had my doubts about *Sherlock Holmes and the Queen of Diamonds* by **Steve Hayes & David Whitehead** (Robert Hale; www.halebooks.com; £18.99) as the authors are most noted for their Westerns. In fact it's a rattling good yarn, well-written and thoroughly engaging – and written in the third person, which is often a wise ploy. A baffling series of jewel robberies is somehow connected with the Music Hall, but Holmes's investigation is interrupted when the beautiful Countess Elaina Montague introduces him to Thomas Howard of Missouri, in London on a deadly mission. Those who know something of the Wild West will easily guess the true identity of 'Mr Howard'...

Forthcoming from Hale is *Sherlock Holmes at the Breakfast Table*, thirteen new stories by **Leslie F E Coombs**.

Among the rapidly growing number of e-book publishers Endeavour Press (www.endeavourpress.com) is a name to look out for. In *Dr Watson's War*, military historian **Patrick Mercer** gives us the full story of the perilous retreat from Maiwand, made more so by an encounter with Colonel George Moriarty. Watson's life, as we know, was saved by his orderly – whose name, it appears, was actually Bowler. He saved another important life as well. The style is rougher and more forceful than we're used to, being untouched by Conan Doyle's editorial hand, but it suits the subject matter admirably. You just know that this is what it was like.

Also from Endeavour come two novellas by **David Dickinson**, author of the Lord Francis Powerscourt novels, who follows Glen Petrie, Quinn Fawcett and others in devising new exploits for Sherlock's brother. *Mycroft Holmes and the Adventure of the Silver Birches* sees Inspector Lestrade faced with a plan to debase the British currency by flooding the country with forged banknotes. His old sparring-partner has retired, so he turns to the Government Auditor, Mycroft Holmes, for help. Mycroft's brain and Lestrade's practicality prove a very successful combination. In *Mycroft Holmes and the Adventure of the Naval Engineer*, a man is murdered in Mycroft's rooms and he is arrested for murder. The man behind the forged money, Graf von der Stoltenberg, is still at large. Was he responsible for this atrocity? The stories are atmospheric, fast-moving, ingenious and very enjoyable.

Sherlock Holmes also features in two entertaining novellas by **Richard Foreman** – *Raffles: The Gentleman Thief* and *Raffles: Bowled Over*. All these Endeavour Press titles are available as Kindle e-books for £1.99 each from Amazon.

Calabash Press has added to its e-books programme with *The Adventure of the Maiden Voyage* by **Alexander E Braun** (Kindle \$5.99 from Amazon or from www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabashebooks.htm) – timely, as the voyage

is that of the ill-fated *Titanic*, just a century ago. Also available are **David Stuart Davies**'s excellent *Bending the Willow: Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* (\$9.99), *Scream for Jeeves* by **P H Cannon** (\$4.99), and *The Canonical Compendium* by **Stephen Clarkson** (\$7.99, as a pdf file).

The Art of Deduction by **Taz Rai** is available as a 102-page pdf file from the author at www.artofdeduction.com/ (\$17.97). Don't be put off by the fact that it's self-published. This is a very intelligent, sensible and well-argued analysis of Holmes's method of observation and deduction, presented in four chapters: 'A Study in Sherlock', 'A Case in Logic', 'The Observation Ritual', and 'The Sign of Holmesian Deduction'.

Kelvin Jones has several titles out on Kindle, all, I think, first published in hard copy: *Sherlock Holmes and Poisons* (£2.01), *Sherlock's Hound* (£2.00), *Sherlock Holmes & CSI* (£1.67), plus at least seven others, all worth your consideration.

At <http://robmdavis.com/Airship27Hangar/airship27hangar.html> or at www.amazon.com you can buy *Sherlock Holmes: The Baron's Revenge* – Baron Gruner, that is – by **Gary Lovisi**. Spanish speakers may be interested in *La muerte de Acuario (Sherlock Holmes a la caza de Jack El Destripador)* by **Arquímides González**, available on Kindle for 77p.

Personally I'm more excited by the news that **June Thomson**, one of the very few writers who have truly mastered the Watson/Doyle style, has a new collection, *The Secret Archives of Sherlock Holmes*, due from Allison & Busby (www.allisonandbusby.com) at £19.99. And in July the History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk) will publish *The Sherlock Holmes Miscellany* by [*ahem!*] **Jean Upton** and **Roger Johnson** at £9.99.

At www.bestofsherlock.com/ref/diary-arctic-adventure.htm, on **Randall Scott**'s invaluable website you'll find information about the forthcoming publication by the British Library and Chicago University Press of 'Dangerous Work', the diary that Arthur Conan Doyle kept of his six months as medical officer on an Arctic whaler, together with related fiction ('The Captain of the *Pole Star*' and 'Black Peter') and non-fiction. The book is edited and introduced by **Jon Lellenberg** and **Daniel Stashower**, who report that 'near the end of the diary, there is a surprising direct link to the first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, which Conan Doyle would write six years later.'

Carrie Chandler notes that **Andrew Lane**, author of the splendid Young Sherlock Holmes books, will be one of the featured writers at the Norwich Crime Festival, 21-31 March. Details at <http://norwichcrimefestival.com/>, where you can also download a brochure.

At www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times12-2.html is the February issue of *The Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-magazine of **Classic Specialties** (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH, 45219, USA; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com). It's full of good things, as always.

Kevin Jacklin has alerted me to the Forgotten Futures gaming website, where you can download the 1912 edition of *The Police Code and General Manual of the Criminal Law* by **Sir Howard Vincent** – the man who founded the CID. Marcus L Rowland, who provided it, has expanded and adapted the index. www.forgottenfutures.co.uk/policecode/code0.htm.

Br Innocent Smith writes from Washington, DC: Your readers may enjoy the following post about Sherlock Holmes and Catholic Theology: <http://www.dominicanablog.com/2012/02/17/sherlock-holmes-and-the-mystery-of-the-body/>.

On 10 February, the internet broadcaster Radio Litopia transmitted a lively discussion about *The Man Behind Sherlock Holmes*, in which **Bert Coules** was the featured guest. You can listen to the programme or download it at <http://litopia.tv/m1>.

Since the last DM it's been announced that **Jonny Lee Miller** will play the twenty-first century Sherlock Holmes in *Elementary*, the CBS TV pilot set in New York, with **Lucy Liu** as Dr Joan Watson and **Aidan Quinn** as NYPD Captain Gregson. I still can't see it being a serious rival to *Sherlock*, but I'm beginning to suspect that it will at least be entertaining.

Having rewritten Shakespeare for garden gnomes, Rocket Pictures, makers of *Gnomeo and Juliet* are preparing a sequel. Producer Steve Hamilton Shaw said: 'Action detective stories need some gnomes to liven them up, I'm sure Arthur Conan Doyle would agree.' *Gnomeo & Juliet: Sherlock Gnomes* follows the porcelain detective as he joins up with the cast of the original film to investigate a wave of gnome disappearances from England's suburbs.

Roman Stus reports: 'I have a set of Holmes and Watson posters issued on behalf I think of consumers rights. It is a caricature series of 5 posters

in excellent condition. As it is a complete set in excellent condition and fairly rare I was looking for about £75 ono. If you could ask interested parties to contact me via e-mail that would be brilliant.' rom.stussy@virgin.net

I didn't know there was such a place, but for £195,000 plus VAT you can buy the freehold of the Sherlock Holmes Inn at Pembroke Dock, Dyfed: www.pembrokedockchamberoftrade.co.uk/property_available_in_pembroke_d.htm.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's annual **Victorian Cricket Match** against the P G Wodehouse Society will be held as usual at the beautiful West Wycombe ground on 24 June. Members and their guests should bring their own picnics, and costume is very much welcomed. This is an excellent social occasion and free of charge. Do please come and give our players your support. And there'll be another match this year! On 26 May our chaps will face a team from Eton College. Details will be sent out with the April mailing.

Gerald Laing, pop artist, former officer in Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, and sculptor of the superb Sherlock Holmes statue formerly to be seen in Picardy Place, Edinburgh, died on 23 November, aged seventy-five. I first met **Bruce Holmes** at the 1990 Bimetallic Colloquium in Montréal. Bruce, who died on 21 December, aged sixty-nine, was one of the few great Sherlockian philatelists and a truly nice guy. **Ian Abercrombie**, best known as Mr Pitt in *Seinfeld*, died on 26 January 2012, aged seventy-seven. His many rôles included an uncredited appearance in the 1972 TV film *The Hound of the Baskervilles* with Stewart Granger, and Inspector Lestrade in *The Crucifer of Blood* in Los Angeles, 1980-81, with Charlton Heston and Jeremy Brett. **Frederick Treves** who died on 30 January, aged eighty-six, was prolific on stage, screen and radio. With Carleton Hobbs he played Hugh Boone, Arthur Holder, James M Dodd, Jephro Rucastle, Inspector Lestrade and John Mason; with Robert Powell he was Inspector Gregson; and with Clive Merrison he was Colonel Moran. His great-uncle was the surgeon Sir Frederick Treves, who discovered Joseph Merrick 'the Elephant Man'. **Lady Gore-Booth**, whose late husband Lord Gore-Booth was our Society's President 1966-78, was born in Japan and maintained her connections with the Far East, particularly through Prospect Burma. Pat Gore-Booth died on 2 February, in her ninetieth year. **Martin Breese**, who died on 23 February, was a magician and a leading publisher in the field. His Sherlock Holmes titles, which he sold some years ago to Antony Richards, were a sideline that began with his friend Val Andrews' early pastiches.

Periodicals received. *Canadian Holmes*, Winter 2011/2012 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark & JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada). *The Cri Bar Crier*, February 2012 (**The Criterion Bar Association**, Susan Z. Diamond, 16W603 3rd Ave., Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). *Elementary My Dear Victoria*, Late Summer 2012 (**The Elementary Victorians**, Steve Duke, PO Box 340, Reservoir, 3073 Victoria, Australia). *The Illustrious Clients News*, February 2012 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, February 2012 and March 2012 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

More issues of the *Ironmongers Daily News* than I can count (**Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, 15, rue Grande 03370 Saint-Sauvier, France). *The Magic Door*, Winter 2012 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). *Mayday Mayday*, February 2012 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Petrel Flyer*, Spring 2012 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Prescott's Press*, March 2011 (**The Three Garridebs**, Warren Randall, 15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720-1346, USA). *3-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, January 2012 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem**, Kay Blocker, 5017 Maywood Drive, Nashville, TN 37211, USA pkblocker@comcast.net).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, February 2012 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

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