

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 176 6th February 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Dame Jean Conan Doyle has left three Sherlock Holmes MSS to the British Library, a museum in Edinburgh and a museum in Portsmouth or Southsea; six more Conan Doyle MSS will be sold and the proceeds shared among her chosen charities; letters and other papers go to the British Library; her copyrights go to the Royal National Institute for the Blind; and £1,000.00 to Minstead Church. Those wishing to do something in her memory should send donations to the RNIB at 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA.

Our former President **Frank Allen** died in December. Born into a theatrical family, the godson of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, he became a major figure in the world of pharmacology and a learned and witty Holmesian scholar. Pilgrims to Switzerland will remember him as a magnificent Count Negretto Sylvius. Perhaps above all, he was a great conversationalist and grand company. His Chestertonian presence is much missed at our meetings.

The radio writer and producer **Glyn Dearman** died in November. His achievements were many (in recent years he worked with Kenneth Branagh's Renaissance Theatre Company on superb productions of Shakespeare), but I'll remember him especially for *Sherlock Holmes vs Dracula*, broadcast in 1981, in which he turned Loren D. Estleman's adequately good novel into a great radio play. In the same month we lost **Jeremy Potter**, who was among other things a distinguished historian and detective story writer. He combined the two in investigating the case of the Princes in the Tower (I recommend his novel *A Trail of Blood*), and he was a memorable Guest of Honour at our 1986 Annual Dinner. **Glenhall Taylor** who produced the excellent Rathbone-Bruce *Sherlock Holmes* radio series from 1943 to 1945 died on 28 December.

At the **Baker Street Irregulars'** Annual Dinner on 9 January, Michael Whelan awarded investitures to **John F. Baesch** ('State & Merton County Railroad'), **Susan Z. Diamond** ('The Great Mogul'), **Lou Lewis** ('William Whyte'), **Thierry Saint-Joanis** ('Monsieur Bertillon') and **James E. Smith II** ('Winner of the Jackson Prize'). **Pam Bruxner** received her investiture ('The British Government') from Mike on the day of our Society's dinner, 17 January. Congrats to all!

Recent catalogues are available from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk) (*Nigel Williams now has a website at <http://freespace.virgin.net/nw.books/>); **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, East Sussex. BN6 8JH; e-mail ralph@pmbooks.demon.co.uk) (*Post Mortem has a website as well, at <http://www.postmortembooks.co.uk>); and **Gravesend Books** (Box 235, Pocono Pines, PA 18350, USA; phone 1-717-646-3317). All three are full of interest, but be prepared for prices that reflect the specialist nature of the books offered.

Douglas Moreton follows his book *After You, Holmes*, reviewed in DM 167, with *The Papers in the Case*, containing 5 new tales. The author knows his Holmes and his period; he has an ingenious imagination, and he captures the style acceptably. The plots range from an investigation of the Whitechapel murders of 1888 to the kidnapping of Mycroft Holmes in 1902. The stories are graced with appropriate period illustrations, and Mr Moreton has provided

copious footnotes (so many as to be distracting: the information might have been better conveyed in an afterword to each story). The book is nicely presented - 100 pages in card covers - but there are several typos, which begin, alas, on the contents page: 'Mandarin' becomes 'Manadarin', and 'Cotswold' is 'Costwold'. The title of 'The Dedicated Dentist' seems to be a deliberate pun, but if so it's a bad one. *The Papers in the Case* (Cadds Printing Ltd, 59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) makes for an enjoyable couple of hours' reading at £9.50 inclusive (cheques to Cadds Printing Ltd) or \$18.00 payable to Hugh Scullion. (*Would a senior civil servant have been called a mandarin in 1902?*)

Geoffrey Stavert sends a flyer for two interesting books from Seymour/Kyper Productions (PO Box 1369, Sandwich, MA 02563). *The Great Suit Case Mystery* is a Holmes story by Jacques Futrelle, first published in *Hearst's Boston American* in 1905, in which Holmes correctly identified the culprit in a then current murder case. (\$5.00 inclusive; \$8.00 outside the USA). *The Thinking Machine: Jacques Futrelle* is the first biography of this major figure in detective literature, who died on the *Titanic*. It includes five of Futrelle's classic 'Thinking Machine' stories. (\$12.00 or \$15.00 outside the USA). Checks should be payable to Seymour/Kyper Productions.

The fourth and last volume of Kelvin Jones's biography *Sherlock Holmes - Consulting Detective* is out from Oakmagic Publications (2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB) at £3.95 inclusive. Volumes 1, 2 & 3 are still available, at £3.95, £4.75 and £4.50 respectively. Cheques should be payable to K.I. Jones.

A new catalogue is expected this year from Magico (PO Box 156, New York, NY 10002-0156, USA). Meantime you may like to know of *Holmes' Range*, a collection of essays by Walter P. Armstrong, Jr, BSI (\$19.95 + \$1.50 postage); *August Harvest: Essays Penned by Various Hands to Keep the Memory of August Derleth Green*, edited by Ely Liebow (\$25.00 + \$2.00); and *The Detective Business* by Robin Dunbar, a reprint of a 1909 volume, believed to be the first book of mainly non-fiction writings about Holmes (\$7.00 + \$100). Magico has a whole lot more besides.

Sigurdur Gustavsson (Vidihlid 33, 105 Reykjavik, Iceland) has about 40 Conan Doyle books to sell, mostly in Icelandic, but some in Swedish and a few in German. The asking prices seem rather high to me. Mr Gustavsson can be contacted by phone or fax on 354-5687312, or by e-mail at gussi@vortex.is.

Philip Attwell sends an ad for the Literary Guild (book club), which is offering all nine volumes of *The Oxford Sherlock Holmes* (hardback) at £4.99 + £2.95 postage as an introductory offer. If you're interested, contact The Literary Guild, FREEPOST, Swindon SN99 1BB.

Bert Coules sends news that the BBC Radio 4 Sherlock Holmes series now has its own (non-official) website: 'pictures and biographies of the stars, full cast lists, details of the cassettes, background information, photographs of the recording sessions, and - coming shortly, as they say - audio clips.' The address is: <http://freespace.virgin.net/bert.coules/sh-home.htm>. Bert notes that *The Valley of Fear* will be released by the BBC on cassette in March, followed by *The Sign of the Four* in June and *A Study in Scarlet* in August. Also that three episodes from *The Casebook* are scheduled for repeats on Wednesdays at 2.00 pm: *The Lion's Mane* on 18 February, *The Veiled Lodger* on 25 February and *Shoscombe Old Place* on 4 March.

Volume 3 of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* read by Douglas Wilmer is out this month from Penguin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ). These are among the best readings ever.

Can anyone please lend, sell, or provide me with a good photocopy of the article 'Step Inside the World of TV' (about Granada Studios Tour) from *TV Times* for 26 March - 1 April 1988?

On the net at <http://www.cyberhaven.com/trademarks/sherlock.html> Jean found a real stunner It's so extraordinary that I'll quote it in full. 'SloaneVision Unlimited, Inc. (formerly Pyramid Licensing Group) is proud to announce the addition of the most famous detective in the world - Sherlock Holmes - to its list of impressive clients. Through Sherlock Holmes Ltd., SloaneVision has acquired all licensing, promotional and advertising rights. "Sherlock Holmes fits into our overall plan of acquiring celebrity rights to merchandise products geared towards the adult market. His name has the status necessary to be of tremendous value in collectibles as well as promotional tie-ins and advertising," says Lois N. Sloane, chairman of SloaneVision Unlimited, Inc. Senior Vice President, Glenn R. Hendricks sees the potential of Sherlock Holmes catering to the many unique consumer interests surfacing today. "Sherlock Holmes has worldwide recognition and has great potential in the merchandising area. With niche markets being prevalent today and with the growing popularity of detectives and mysteries, we see Sherlock Holmes emerging as the leader. The obvious icons of Sherlock Holmes' hat, cape and pipe are a natural for the creation of apparel, accessories, small leather goods, home furnishings and jewelry geared to the discriminating consumer." SloaneVision Unlimited, Inc., 305 Madison Avenue, Suite 1337, New York, NY 10165. Telephone: (212) 922 0555. Fax: (212) 922 1306.'

(*Who is Sherlock Holmes Ltd? All I know is that the registered address is 5 Parkgate Road, Battersea, London SW11 4NL; and that the company was incorporated in 1993 when the works of Conan Doyle were out of copyright in Britain.*)

Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; phone 513 281 4757; e-mail <sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com>) deal in all sorts of Sherlockiana and act as a focal point for North American Sherlockians. Their publication *The Formidable Scrap-Book of Baker Street* (\$32.50) is an eclectic assembly of letters, articles, photos, cartoons and all sorts, reflecting the world of - well, people like us. Due shortly is *Old Bibliophile's Book Shelf*. There's a website at <http://www.sherlockholmes.com>.

Conways' Miniatures (Bill & Lynda Conway, 2330 Benson Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216-3444, USA; e-mail 76241.3027@compuserve.com) specialise in hand-painted miniature figures, mostly 54mm high. They have a wide range of Sherlockian figures.

There's a *Sherlock Holmes Pub-Restaurant* at 3772 The Barnyard, Carmel, California 93923, USA (phone 408 625-0340) - see the homepage at <http://pw1.netcom.com/~sh-pub/mainf.html>.

The June/July issue of *British Heritage* ('North America's leading magazine of English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh history, travel and culture') will feature a major article on Arthur Conan Doyle. Single copies can be ordered by phone on 800-358-6327 (USA & Canada) or 413-622-2610 (elsewhere). There's a website at www.thehistorynet.com/britishheritage.

Admirers of 'the Sherlock Holmes of Praed Street' should check out Ralph Smith's *Annotated Solar Pons Biography* on the Internet at <http://www.clysmic.com/pons/pons.html>.

The William Le Queux Society was formed last year to celebrate the life and work of perhaps the most popular writer of *fin-de-siècle* thrillers. Donald V. Campbell is the current Editor of the Society's (un-named) Magazine, and welcomes enquiries at Woodlawn Cottage, Apperley Lane, Apperley Bridge, West Yorks. BD10 0PH.

The 2nd *Sherlock Holmes Festival* will be held at Crowborough, 3 - 10 July. **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, has details (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN).

The Beryl Coronet Society, based in the United Nations community in New York, is open to all interested parties. Contact Dr Thomas Cynkin, 245 East 40th Street, Apt. 11F, New York, NY 10016, USA.

The 8th "Wessex Cup" of **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will be run at Tampa Bay Downs on 14 February. (Details from David McAllister, 8142 Quail Hollow Boulevard, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544, USA.) **The Red Circle** meet on 20 February at the National Press Club, Washington, DC; the speaker is Marilyn MacGregor, expert on Wodehouse and Conan Doyle (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830). **The Irregular Special Railway Company's** AGM on 21 February is just part of a packed day (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DZ; phone 01233 833418). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Glades of the New Forest** plan a Winter Wander in Hampshire on 23 February (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU). On 7 March, **The Pleasant Places of Florida** visit *Titanic: The Exhibition* in St Petersburg. (Carl Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA.) **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** holds a medical panel discussion on 17 March at the Royal Society of Medicine. (Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.) **The Japan Sherlock Holmes Club** celebrates its 21st birthday on 21 March 1998 in Kamakura and on 22 March in Tokyo (Mitch Higurashi at 3-13-7-305 Nishikubo, Musashino, Tokyo 180, Japan; e-mail hgd02506@niftyserve.or.jp). At about the same time **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Japanese Cabinet** have an "East Wind" gathering in Tokyo. **The Priory Scholars** present papers on "Shoscombe Old Place" at their Annual Case Study Day at the Guild Hall in Leicester on 22 March (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

Periodicals received. *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Winter 1997 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU). *The Baker Street Journal*, December 1997 (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*the *BSJ* is published by **The Baker Street Irregulars** but it should be a must for any Holmesian or Sherlockian; correspondence for the *BSJ* should go to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', PO Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA*). *The Cormorant's Ring*, December 1997 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA). *The Serpentine Muse*, Winter 1997 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). *The Petrel Flyer*, November-December 1997 and January-February 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada). *The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*, no. 22 & no. 23 (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). *Communication*, December 1997 and January-February 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The Devon County Chronicle*, November 1997 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, 2707 S. 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA). *The Parallelogram*, January 1998 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). *3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles* Nov. 1997-Jan. 1998 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, December 1997 and January 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830; e-mail: <pblau@capaccess.org>). The following are from *Scuttlebutt*. Brilliance Audio (Box 481, Grand Haven, MI 49417) has released a twin cassette read by Michael Page, 'The Darkwater Hall Mystery' by Kingsley Amis, and *Other Stories*, at \$16.95. The title story is based on Amis's 1974 TV play starring Edward Fox as Dr Watson. Gary F. Boothe's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes* has Holmes foiling a threat to the US economy in 1907 (G.F. Boothe, 3909 Meadow Beauty Drive, Pasco, WA 99301; \$13.00 post-paid). (*No connection with Jeremy Paul's play, then?*)

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 177 9th March 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Henry W. Enberg ('John Garrideb', BSI) died last month. Peter Blau notes that he was the poet laureate of The Friends of Bogie's, contributing to many of their performances as well as to Sherlockian meetings in New York. Though seriously ill, Henry attended and enjoyed the January festivities in NYC.

Congratulations to **Sir John Mills**, who recently turned 90. His sole contribution to the world of Sherlock Holmes is a very memorable one: in the 1984 film *The Masks of Death* he played the elderly Watson, superbly matching Peter Cushing's Holmes.

I've now read the two books from Seymour/Kyper Productions (P.O. Box 1369, Sandwich, MA 02563, USA) mentioned in DM 176. Very engaging they are, too. *The Thinking Machine: Jacques Futrelle* by Freddie Seymour and Bettina Kyper is, surprisingly, the first biography of a very important writer of detective stories. This American author, a great admirer of Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes, created one of the most purely cerebral of all sleuths, Professor Augustus S.F.X. Van Dusen, dubbed 'The Thinking Machine'. Futrelle's astonishing ingenuity and logical creativity pitted the professor against all manner of extraordinary problems. (A classic is the case of the elegant woman who instructed a surgeon to amputate one of her — perfectly healthy — fingers. Only the Thinking Machine can deduce her sinister reason.) Between 1905 and 1912, he wrote 48 short stories and seven novels. The stories are witty, challenging and stimulating. A complete edition is long overdue; fortunately this book includes five of the best as a bonus, among them the professor's first appearance in 'The Problem of Cell 13', in which he makes good his bet that he can think himself out of the condemned cell of a prison. *The Thinking Machine: Jacques Futrelle* isn't a deep and scholarly biography; rather it's an affectionate sketch of a charming and intelligent man, who died long before his time when the R.M.S. *Titanic* went down in 1912. This sturdy 294-page paperback is very reasonably priced at \$12.00, plus \$3.00 postage outside the USA. (Overseas, international cheque or postal money order in US dollars only, payable to Seymour/Kyper Productions.)

Jacques Futrelle's delight in Sherlock Holmes led him to write a story in which the great detective investigated an actual murder committed near Boston, MA, in 1905. What Mesdames Seymour and Kyper call the author's 'gift of psychic intuition' (actually relentless logic) led him to a correct identification of the guilty parties some weeks before the police arrested them. *The Great Suit Case Mystery* was serialised in *The Boston American* and has never been reprinted until now. Production standards aren't top-notch, but this 60-page booklet deserves a place on the shelves of anyone seriously interested in the phenomenon that is Sherlock Holmes, as an instance of a brilliant writer using the character to explain his own logical reasoning. *The Great Suit Case Mystery* costs a very reasonable \$5.00, plus \$3.00 outside the USA.

Due shortly is Eddie Maguire's fourth Sherlock Holmes story, *A Voice from the Ether*, which finds Holmes trapped on Osea Island near Maldon. (Big House Books, 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ). More details as they reach me.

Kelvin Jones's Oakmagic Publications have just issued what must be something of a rarity: *A Study of the Chaldean Roots in the Ancient Cornish Language, with Observations on the Early Tin Trade in West Cornwall*, 'by Sherlock Holmes'. This booklet purports to be a reprint of a monograph originally published by Bell and Brown of Truro in 1898. Copies cost £3.50 each from Oakmagic (2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB). Cheques should be payable to K. & D. Jones.

More recent publications. *The Crime and Mystery Book* by Ian Ousby (Thames & Hudson Ltd, 30 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QP; £12.95). *The Travels of Sherlock Holmes and Sherlock Holmes and the Telephone Murder Mystery*, both by John Hall (Breese Books Ltd, 164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER; e-mail MBreese999@aol.com; both £6.99). (*A catalogue is in preparation. Send your name and address to Breese Books to reserve a copy.*) John Hall's *Sidelights on Holmes* has been published by Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., Canada V0K 1A0). Post-inclusive prices are: USA \$24.75; Canada Cdn\$35.00; rest of world (airmail) £17.85 or US\$28.00, (surface) £16.00 or US\$25.15.

From St Martin's Press (175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010) come *The Confidential Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Marvin Kaye (£16.00), and *The Moor*, the fourth Mary Russell adventure by Laurie King (£16.00). The third Mary Russell book, *A Letter of Mary* is now out in paperback in America from Bantam Books (£5.99). (*The prices given are those in the current **Post Mortem Books** catalogue, available from 58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, East Sussex BN6 8JH.*)

The Danish company Antikvariat Pinkerton has published *Great Northern Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* by Bjarne Nielsen — in English! This survey of the Holmes films produced in Denmark between 1908 and 1911 features over 80 stills, most of them never reprinted before. Copies are available at £18.00 each from **Rupert Books**, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE. The 5th and 6th Rupert Books Monographs are *Our Reply to the Cleric*, a 32-page facsimile of a 1920 Spiritualist pamphlet by Arthur Conan Doyle, and *Jeremy Brett and David Burke: An Adventure in Canonical Fidelity*, a new 40-page edition of R. Dixon Smith's 1986 study of the early years of the Granada series. Each monograph costs £10.00 from Rupert Books. There's a new catalogue out as well. Rupert's e-mail address is rupert_books@compuserve.com. The homepage is at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/rupert_books.

The Bibliophile's Book Shelf & Miscellanea is the new catalogue from **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA), and as usual there are personal recommendations, a puzzle and pleasant chat. With Classic Specialties you feel you're with friends. (I made an error in the

last DM: the correct address for the homepage is <http://www.sherlock-holmes.com>. The e-mail address is: sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com.)

The Mysterious Bookshop (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA; e-mail mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net) has issued a *Sherlock Holmes Catalogue*. (**The London shop doesn't seem to have the same range. The address is 82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE.**) There's also a new catalogue, no. 53, from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk.)

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine no. 23 is a Special Ladies Issue. It features a moving obituary of Dame Jean Conan Doyle by our President, Tony Howlett, to whom she was a friend for over 40 years. John Curran turns his lens on Miss Marple. David Stuart Davies interviews P.D. James, and Gaynor Coules examines her novels. Catherine Cooke continues her Musical Tour of Sherlockian London. Kathryn White asks if Sherlock Holmes is a Romantic Hero. Barbara Roden looks at the feminist Mrs Westmacott in Conan Doyle's *Beyond the City*. Michael Cox continues his engrossing account of the Granada TV series, now in the hands of June Wyndham Davies. There's a new Sherlock Holmes story by A.L. Blake. Paul Chapman finishes his look at the early publishing history of Holmes. Thom Utecht tells of **The Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn**. John Hall observes Dr Watson. Moriarty mutters. It's a jolly good read, and the standard of presentation continues to improve. The magazine is now published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties.

The British Philatelic Bulletin for January and February featured a two-part article on 'The Philatelic Hound of the Baskervilles'. John Hoath can provide photocopies if you send a stamped & self-addressed envelope to him at Randalls, Lodge Road, Hazeleigh, Chelmsford CM3 6QX.

Geoff Bradley's *CADS* no. 32, featuring a piece on the Solar Pons canon, among much else, is available from 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA, at £5.00. Another British magazine for crime & detective story lovers is *Tangled Web*. Issue no. 6 is now available at £2.95 from Andrew Osmond (69 Holm Oak Park, Watford, Herts. WD1 8TH).

Look out for any local production of Chris Bond's play *The Mystere of Maria Marten and the Murder in the Red Barn*, which gives the old melodrama several entertaining and intriguing new twists (and don't think that knowing the facts of the actual murder will help you solve the mystery). The sleuthing is done by a strong-willed bluestocking named Lady Augusta Holmes.

Patrick Kirkby tells me that plans are nearly complete for the Netley Veterans Reunion and Display at the Royal Victoria Military Hospital on 14 May. This was where Dr Watson trained as a military surgeon, of course, and it's expected that he'll put in an appearance. Exactly 100 years ago, Queen Victoria visited Netley to present the Victoria Cross to Piper Findlater of the Gordon Highlanders and Private Vickery of the Dorset Regiment. Information about the event can be had from the Reunion Office, Royal British Legion Netley, 100 Station Road, Netley Abbey, Southampton (phone 01703 452996).

Nuneaton & Bedworth Council has issued leaflets listing guided tours and events in 'George Eliot Country'. They're available from the Chief Executive's Department, Town Hall, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5AA (01203 376490).

The 2nd Daphne du Maurier Festival of Arts & Literature will be held at Fowey in Cornwall from 8 to 17 May. For a brochure, phone the information line on 01726 74324 or 01726 74466.

Phil Attwell sends news of a major crime fiction convention, *Dead on Deansgate*, to be held at Waterstone's in Deansgate and the Ramada International Hotel in Manchester, 23-25 October. Tickets are priced at £55.00 (£50.00 if booked before 31 March), or £45.00 if you're a published author, from *Dead on Deansgate*, Waterstone's, 91 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2BW. (**Shouldn't that be Dead IN Deansgate?**)

The Reichenbach Irregulars and **The Société Sherlock Holmes de France** will host *The Sherlock Holmes Worldwide Congress of the Holmesian Societies* in Meiringen from 30 April to 4 May. One aim is to create a federation of Sherlock Holmes societies. Information can be had from Joaquim Vergés, Services Touristiques, Hauptstrasse 8 Postfach 700, CH-3860 Meiringen, Switzerland.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London meets on 17 March at the Royal Society of Medicine, for *Materia Medica Canonica* (Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.) **The Japan Sherlock Holmes Club** celebrates its 21st birthday on 21 March 1998 in Kamakura and on 22 March in Tokyo (Mitch Higurashi at 3-13-7-305 Nishikubo, Musashino, Tokyo 180, Japan; e-mail hgd02506@niftyserve.or.jp). On 21 March **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Japanese Cabinet** have an "East Wind" gathering in Tokyo (Hirayama Yuichi, 2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, 181 Tokyo, Japan). **The Priory Scholars** present papers on "Shoscombe Old Place" at their Annual Case Study Day at the Guild Hall in Leicester on 22 March (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, **The Baskerville Hounds** and **The Baker Street Branch Lines** will explore Dartmoor between 10 and 13 April (all three societies have the same address: 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

Our Society's AGM on 12 May will precede a talk by Nicholas Utechin on *Holmes and the BBC*. **The Northern Musgraves** plan the second Mini Tonga Cruise — on the River Ouse in York — for 16 May (Mark Hunter-Purvis, 6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD).

Periodicals received. *Communication* Special Valentine Issue 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**features some charming whimsy on the Valentine theme, and Linda Anderson's report on the January weekend in New York**). *The New Baker Street Pillar Box* no. 31 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) (**includes a grand essay on jezails and wounds by Michael Higgs, with some interesting addenda by Philip Weller; good material on Conan Doyle's use of American slang by Peter Calamai and Michael Duke; and Dame Jean Conan Doyle's correction of some points about her father raised in Malcolm Payne's last article**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, February 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgssys.com) (**the indispensable Sherlockian newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 178 16th April 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

That fine actor **Daniel Massey** died on 25 March. He never played Sherlock Holmes, though his father Raymond did — in the 1931 movie *The Speckled Band*, opposite Lyn Harding's Dr Grimesby Rylott (*sic*). He did, however, make a very distinguished J. Neil Gibson, in Granada's 'Thor Bridge' in 1991, to Jeremy Brett's Holmes. There's a third connection too: Daniel's sister Anna Massey was Brett's first wife.

I'm fed up with *pastiche*. With the word 'pastiche', I mean. It once, rightly, bore the meaning of affectionate and sincere imitation, but in recent years it's acquired unnecessarily pejorative associations, and some people have taken to coining perversely mis-spelt neologisms ('pastichestes' and the like). We're actually talking about *new Sherlock Holmes stories*, and (when I remember) that's the sort of term that I shall use in this newsletter.

John Hall has kindly sent a review copy of his novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Telephone Murder Mystery* (Breese Books Ltd, 164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER; £6.99). As you'd expect from one so thoroughly conversant with the Canon, the author captures the Watsonian style admirably (though his Holmes does say 'think you?' rather a lot), and his characterisations ring true. The murder of a photographer at Belmont, an artists' retreat in Surrey, is brought to Holmes's attention by Dr Watson, himself a guest at the establishment. Yes, Watson once said that he introduced only two cases to his friend — those of the Engineer's Thumb and Colonel Warburton's Madness — but that statement appeared in 1891, and the Belmont affair is dated to 1899. As in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Watson does a good deal of the preliminary investigation, and acquits himself well, but it takes Sherlock Holmes to unravel the complex tangle of passionate relationships — and then he gets his man as much by luck as by wit! This is Conan Doyle's Holmes, a brilliant but fallible figure. The book is handsomely produced to Breese's usual high standards, and I'm happy to recommend it as a jolly good read. (*The Travels of Sherlock Holmes* by John Hall is also available from Breese Books at £6.99.)

John Hall is probably best known as one of the most scrupulous and perceptive Holmesian scholars currently active. His third new book should please even those who dislike new Sherlock Holmes stories. I'd assumed that *Sidelights on Holmes* (Calabash Press, P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., Canada V0K 1A0) would be a biography of the detective, following up the author's lives of Dr Watson and Professor Moriarty. Instead, it's a story-by-story commentary, evidently inspired by, and complementing, Martin Dakin's 1972 classic. Whereas Dakin treats the Canon in published order (and refuses to recognise *The Case Book* as authentic) John Hall adheres to his own chronology, established in his still-available *I Remember the Date Very Well* (Ian Henry; 1993; £6.25). He has a way of spotting obvious facts which most of us miss; for example, that cryptic message in 'The Gloria Scott': *The game is up. Hudson has told all. Fly for your life.* Read the story again, and you'll find that Hudson had done no such thing! The author's statements can be unnecessarily sweeping (is it really true that the 19th century working class

'seldom bothered with the formalities of . . . marriage?'), but he has a nice way with words, and he does pick up on a great many oddities and inconsistencies that seem to have escaped his predecessors. Just one thing troubles me: I like the idea that Moriarty was behind the business of the Red-Headed League, but it should be pointed out that John Hawkesworth came up with that notion first, in his script for the Granada TV series! Hall's *Sidelights on Holmes* will certainly establish itself as a standard work, to which future scholars will regularly refer. This 190-page paperback is as sturdy and handsome as we've come to expect from Calabash Press. Post-inclusive prices are: USA \$24.75; Canada Cdn\$35.00; rest of world (airmail) £17.85 or US\$28.00, (surface) £16.00 or US\$25.15.

Published in February was *The Adventure of the Detected Detective: Sherlock Holmes in James Joyce's Finnegans Wake* by William D. Jenkins (Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881, USA; £36.50). Out this month from Carlton Books (no address to hand) is *The World of Sherlock Holmes* by Martin Fido (£14.99). This month too, Wordsworth Editions Ltd (Cumberland House, Crib Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9ET) issue David Stuart Davies's *Shadows of Sherlock Holmes* (£1.00), while *The Best of Sherlock Holmes* (£1.00), also edited by David, is due from Wordsworth in June. In May, HarperCollins Publishers (77-85 Fulham Palace Road, Hammersmith, London W6 8JB) will publish four 'Adventures of Shirley Holmes' at £3.99 each: *The Case of the Burning Building*, *The Case of the Alien Abductions*, *The Case of the Blazing Star*, *The Case of the Disappearing Dragon*, together with 'Adventures of Shirley Holmes': *The Essential Casefile* (£2.99). These books seem to have some connection with a children's television series.

Joseph J. Eckrich (914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA; e-mail jeckrich@aol.com) has an extensive list of Sherlockiana for sale. US enquirers should send a stamped & self-addressed envelope; those overseas send two International Reply Coupons or a \$1.00 bill. New catalogues are available from **Christopher Heppa** (48 Pentland Avenue, Chelmsford CM1 4AZ; phone 01245 267679); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE; e-mail MysteriousLON@compuserve.com); and **Forbes Gibb** (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ; e-mail forbes@dis.strath.ac.uk). (*Only the last is wholly devoted to Holmes and Conan Doyle.*)

A twin-cassette called *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, read by Christopher Lee, was released in February by HarperCollins Audio at £8.99. From the same company in June comes Lee's reading of *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire and Other Stories* (£8.99). Also in June there's Douglas Wilmer's abridged reading of *The Sign of Four* (Penguin Audiobooks, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £7.99). Bert Coules's dramatisation of *The Valley of Fear*, with Merrison & Williams, was released on cassette last month by BBC Worldwide Ltd in the BBC Radio Collection. It's to be followed by *The Sign of the Four* in June and *A Study in Scarlet* in August. Look for Bert's home-page at <http://freespace.virgin.net/bert.coules/shhome.htm>.

Allan Smith has spotted a couple of welcome re-releases in his local video store: *The Masks of Death* (The Tyburn Collection, Encore Entertainment Ltd, Cottespool Mill, Stoney Lane, Tardebigge, Bromsgrove, Worcs. B60 1LZ) and *Murder by*

Decree (BMG Video, P.O. Box 607, London SW6 4YY). Peter Blau notes that Scott Price's *The World of Sherlock Holmes* Mystery Shop (3957-A Grahamdale Circle, Memphis, TN 38122, USA) has issued a new illustrated mail-order catalogue of Sherlockiana.

There was a report in *The Sunday Times* of 15 March that Andrea Plunket has been recognised by the New York State Supreme Court as the controller of the Conan Doyle copyrights in the European Union, which are owned by her mother. This should be taken with a certain amount of salt. To begin with, a judge in the USA can hardly decide that a Brazilian resident owns European copyrights... What is certain is that the Conan Doyle copyrights in America remain unaffected. (*You can judge the accuracy of the *Sunday Times* report by the fact that Granada's TV series with Jeremy Brett is credited to the BBC.*)

Our member Geraldine Beare, compiler of the standard index to *The Strand Magazine*, will be one of the speakers at a full-day seminar on 16 May at The Artworkers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1. The seminar is called *An Introduction to Magazine Illustration, 1860-1960*, and Geraldine's subject will be 'A Picture on Every Page: *The Strand Magazine*, 1891-1950'. The cost of the seminar is £15.00, including morning & afternoon refreshments. Cheques should be payable to IBIS, and sent with a stamped & self-addressed envelope to Geraldine Beare, 39 Victoria Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 2AH.

Essex Police have added two bloodhounds to the strength, currently the only ones in a British police force. Their names are Sherlock and Morse!

Peter Blau notes that the Sherlock Holmes Museum at 239 Baker Street has been advertising for a new 'Sherlock Holmes'. The Museum has issued a 36-page catalogue of souvenirs, 'plus a flier for their solid silver heraldic badge (£60.00) for their new **Sherlock Holmes Worldwide Friendship Society**'. (*This is information, not recommendation. And whatever became of the Museum's **'Sherlock Holmes International Society'**, I wonder?*)

A reminder of the Netley Veterans Reunion and Display at the Royal Victoria Military Hospital on 14 May. It's expected that John H. Watson will put in an appearance. Exactly 100 years ago, Queen Victoria visited Netley to present the Victoria Cross to Piper Findlater of the Gordon Highlanders and Private Vickery of the Dorset Regiment. Information about the event can be had from the Reunion Office, Royal British Legion Netley, 100 Station Road, Netley Abbey, Southampton (phone 01703 452996).

Our Society's Annual General Meeting at Over-Seas House on 12 May will precede a talk by Nicholas Utechin on 'Holmes and the BBC'.

It's too late now to book for the *Festival Sherlock Holmes à Douai*, organised by the **Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, but if you're in that lovely French city on the 18-19 April you may want to look out for the pilgrims. The next meeting of **The Parallel Case of St Louis** will be on 20 April at The Big Sleep Bookstore, to discuss 'The Bruce-Partington Plans' (details from Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). The Annual Spring Gathering of **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will take place on 2 May in St Petersburg. The theme is 'The Mazarin Stone' (Dr Mike Carroll, at 1701 80th Street North, St Petersburg, FL 33710, USA).

The Annual Auction Meeting of **The Stormy Petrels of B.C.** will be held on 5 May (Fran Martin, 10662 129 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3T 3H4 Canada). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **Gerard's Hussars** will explore Canonical East Sussex on 10 May ('The Stock-broker's Clerk', 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 16 May **The Northern Musgraves** will hold their second 'Mini-Tonga Cruise' on the River Ouse in York, where the society was founded (Mark

Hunter-Purvis, 6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD). **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** will meet on 23 May to study 'The Copper Beeches' (Billy W. Fields, 902 Boscobel Street, Nashville, TN 37206, USA).

Periodicals received. **The Baker Street Journal**, December 1997 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (**The BSJ* is one of the essentials for Sherlockians; this issue covers an 1866 predecessor of Holmes, a detailed examination of 'The Bruce-Partington Plans', Petrarch and Meredith in 'The Boscombe Valley Mystery', and lots more*). ***Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser***, Monday February 9th, 1898 (*sic*) (**Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Grand Dépôt de Paris, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France) (*another superb broadsheet, compiled by Thierry Saint-Joanis and designed by Jean-Pierre Cagnat; contains a good deal about RMS Titanic — original and reprint — and a new story, 'Les Vacances de Sherlock Holmes' by Martine Ruzé Moëns*).

The Serpentine Muse, Spring 1998 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (*Jean Upton movingly remembers her namesake, Jean Conan Doyle; Susan Vizoskie writes effervescingly about Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire; and Alfred A. Levin scurrilously claims that Holmes died at Reichenbach, and that the later adventures are fabrications*). **The Devon County Chronicle**, February 1998 (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn, 2707 S. 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA) (*Bob Hahn notes the many Sherlockian references in Amanda Cross's detective novel **No Word from Winifred***). **The Parallelogram**, January 1998 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) (*Pasquale Accardo postulates a Dantean influence on 'The Red Circle'*). **The School Report**, Spring Term 1998 (**The Priory Scholars of Leicester**, Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (*an unusually brief issue, due to computer problems*).

3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles, March 1998 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (*among much else, contains most interesting interviews with Christopher & Barbara Roden of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society and Calabash Press, and with Donald Izban, founder of the annual Canonical Convocation and Caper*). **Communication**, March-April 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (*includes an intriguing speculation by Thomas Andrew as to just why Holmes chose the name 'Altamont'*). **noitacinummoC**, Special April Fool's Edition (also from the PPoF) (*a spoof from beginning to end — I love it*). **The Log of the Canonical Hams**, July-December 1997 (**The Sherlock Holmes Wireless Society**, Ron Fish, P.O. Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919-0004, USA) (*interesting newspaper articles on the writing of **The Sign of Four**, on the Algonquin Hotel, and on Joel Senter of *Classic Specialties**).

The Petrel Flyer, March-April 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of B.C.**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (*features an excellent piece by Michael Higgs on a likely inspiration for Black Peter Carey; someone should publish a collection of Michael Higgs's essays*). **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press**, March 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com) (*the great Sherlockian newsletter!*)

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 179 26th May 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. (I'm sorry for the increase from \$11 to \$12, but the charge for maintaining a US bank account has risen.) Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London now has its own website at <http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk>.

Eddie Maguire's fourth Sherlock Holmes story, *A Voice from the Ether*, has just been published. Holmes and Watson overhear an attempted murder — but before they can help the victim they must discover when and where the assault took place! Their journey takes them from Saxe-Coburg Square to the ancient port of Maldon in Essex. It's an ingenious and exciting tale that respects both Sherlock Holmes and history. The author has settled comfortably into the Watsonian style (though I think the phrase 'head-butt' is of the 1990s), and the result is a very enjoyable read. *A Voice from the Ether* is published with help from Maldon Town Council and Maldon District Council. The attractive 40-page booklet, with a nice cover illustration of the detective and the doctor in Maldon High Street, costs £3.50 post-paid from Big House Books at 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ. Cheques should be payable to E. Maguire.

Having published excellent cheap paperbacks of the complete Sherlock Holmes Canon (as well as *The Lost World*, *The White Company* and *Sir Nigel*), Wordsworth Editions have just issued a splendid volume of Victorian and Edwardian detective stories by writers other than Conan Doyle. *Shadows of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by the ubiquitous David Stuart Davies, begins appropriately with 'The Purloined Letter', the best of Poe's tales of C. Auguste Dupin — which had such a profound influence on the creation of Sherlock Holmes — and concludes with Baroness Orczy's roguish lawyer-detective Patrick Mulligan in 'The Great Pearl Mystery'. The stories include Bret Harte's devastating Holmesian parody 'The Stolen Cigar Case'; one of the best of Ernest Bramah's tales of the blind detective Max Carrados; an unexpected detective story by Anton Chekhov; a Raffles adventure by Conan Doyle's brother-in-law E.W. Hornung; an ingenious case for Prof. Van Dusen, by Jacques Futrelle (not one of those included in *The Thinking Machine: Jacques Futrelle* by Freddie Seymour & Bettina Kyper — see DM 177); a rare story of Malcolm Sage, by Herbert Jenkins; an early and anonymous Sexton Blake — and ten more, all well-chosen. There are only two stories shared with Hugh Greene's classic (and now out of print) series *The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*: Guy Boothby's 'The Duchess of Wiltshire's Diamond's', and 'The Absent-Minded Coterie', Robert Barr's brilliant account of an unprovable crime. The editor's introduction is both entertaining and informative; the production is up to Wordsworth's usual high standards (though I spotted a few minor typos); the cover reproduces a lovely painting called *Whose Tracks in the Snow?* by an artist unknown to me, Carl Kronberger; and this 380-page paperback is priced at just £1.00! Buy several copies — stock up for Christmas and birthday presents!

Next month, Wordsworth will publish *The Best of Sherlock Holmes*, also edited by David Stuart Davies and also priced at £1.00. The publisher's address is Cumberland House, Crib Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9ET. You can order Wordsworth publications

from Bibliophile Books, 5 Thomas Road, London E14 7BN — but note that Bibliophile charges £2.50 postage irrespective of the number of books you buy (that's within the UK; charges are different for overseas orders).

Rupert Books Monograph no. 7 is *Spiritualism and Rationalism: With a Drastic Examination of Mr Joseph M'Cabe*, a 50-page facsimile of Conan Doyle's 1920 pamphlet. Monograph no. 8 is *Spiritualism: Some Straight Questions and Direct Answers*, reproducing in 27 pages the pamphlets concerning what are now known as FAQs, distributed at Conan Doyle's lectures. Michael Homer contributes afterwords to the booklets. Each costs £10.00 + postage from Rupert Books, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE (e-mail rupert_books@compuserve.com).

Peter Blau reports that the latest 'round-robin pastiche' from the Pleasant Places of Florida is *The Adventure of the Yule Lantern Lost* — 16 pages for \$3.00 post-paid (\$4.00 outside the USA), from Carl Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34695, USA. Also available from Carl is *Happy 144th, Sherlock!*, a full 20-page report on the 1998 Annual Dinner of the PPOF (\$2.50 or \$3.50).

Other new and forthcoming books. New from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) is *The Scroll of the Dead* by David Stuart Davies — hardback £19.00/US\$30.00/ Cdn\$40.00; paperback £12.50/ US\$19.50/ Cdn\$23.50 (all prices exclude postage). In June, Oxford University Press (Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP) will reissue *The Hound of the Baskervilles* edited by W.W. Robson, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Richard Lancelyn Green, *Sherlock Holmes: Selected Stories* edited by S.C. Roberts, each at £3.99, and *The Lost World* edited by Ian Duncan, at £4.99. Also in June, *The World of Sherlock Holmes* by Martin Fido is due from Carlton Books at £14.99 (No address to hand). In August, Pan Books (Cavaye Place, London SW10 9PG) will publish *The Secret Cases of Sherlock Holmes* by Donald Thomas at £5.99.

The Naxos AudioBook catalogue is newly augmented by *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I*, comprising 'The Speckled Band', 'The Stock-broker's Clerk', 'The Copper Beeches' and 'The Red-Headed League'. The texts are expertly abridged by Heather Godwin, and the reading by David Timson is simply superb, matching Conan Doyle's narrative pace. Each character is defined as an individual, and each sounds *right*. The thoroughly appropriate incidental music is chosen from the works of Bridge, Grieg and others. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I* is available on three cassettes at £9.99 or three CDs at £14.99; the total running time is just over three and a half hours. I've heard Sherlock Holmes stories read by Basil Rathbone, Robert Hardy, Douglas Wilmer, Edward Hardwicke, John Wood and a lot of other fine actors; David Timson is right up there with the best of them. Highly recommended! (Naxos AudioBooks, Select Music & Video Distribution, 34A Holmethorpe Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2NN.)

Recently out from HarperCollins Audio Books (77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB) is a twin-cassette of readings by Christopher Lee: *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes: Four Stories*, featuring the unabridged texts of 'The Mazarin Stone', 'The Blanched Soldier', 'The Creeping Man' and 'The Three Gables'. Due next month is *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire*

and *Other Stories*, read by Christopher Lee, and also priced at £8.99.

Also due in June are Douglas Wilmer's abridged reading of *The Sign of Four* (Penguin Audiobooks, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £7.99), and Bert Coules' Radio 4 production of *A Study in Scarlet*, with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams (BBC Worldwide, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT; £8.99). The BBC will release *The Sign of the Four* in July.

Brian Pugh reminds me that there's a dramatised recording of *The Lost World* featuring Leonard Nimoy and John de Lancie (Simon & Schuster Audio, West Garden Place, Kendal Street, London W2 2AQ). Nathaniel Parker reads an abridged text of the same story for Puffin Audiobooks (27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £6.99).

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine no. 24 is another themed issue, concentrating on the supernatural. Toby Earnshaw examines Holmes and vampires. Ian Richardson talks about his 1982 film *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Barbara Roden considers supernatural sleuths, and Mark Valentine looks specifically at Carnacki the Ghost-Finder — whom we see in action in William Hope Hodgson's excellent story 'The Horse of the Invisible'. David Stuart Davies discusses his new novel, *The Scroll of the Dead*. John Hall observes Dr Watson's marriage. Gaynor Coules reads the novels of Ian Rankin. Moriarty thinks that Dickensians don't try to establish the original locations of the novels or dress up in funny clothes (he's wrong, of course). 'Societies Forum' casts the spotlight on **The Red Circle of Washington, D.C.** The highest of many high points, though, is the tenth chapter in Michael Cox's account of the Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com.)

New catalogues featuring Sherlockiana are available from **Adrian Harrington** (64A Kensington Church Street, London W8 4DB); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE); and **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE).

A new member of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, Diane Robinson, is looking for pen-pals. Diane is 48 years old and has enjoyed the Holmes books and films for years. She's learning French and German, and aims to be able to read Sherlock Holmes in both languages before too long. Write to Diane at 21 Kingsley Cove, Sandy Road, Porthtowan, Truro, Cornwall TR4 8UD.

The fine re-creation of the Baker Street sitting-room at *S. Holmes, Esq.* in San Francisco closed earlier this year. The owner, Willy Werby, is looking for a new home for it, preferably in the Bay area. She welcomes suggestions, at 2700 19th Street, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA (e-mail mycroft813@aol.com).

Brian Pugh, Curator of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, has produced the Establishment's fifth *Arthur Conan Doyle Research File*. Full membership is strictly limited, but all interested in the life and work of Arthur Conan Doyle are urged to become associate members of the Establishment. Contact Brian for details at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN17 1PN. There is a homepage at <http://webzone.ccacyber.com/www/conandoylecrowborough/>.

The main events of the Crowborough *Sherlock Holmes Festival* will include: a talk on *The World of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* by Philip Weller, at Winston Manor Hotel on Friday 3 July; a street market in the town on Saturday 4 July; the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Ceremony at Terrace Montargis, and a 5-mile 'Walk with Sir Arthur', both Sunday 5 July; a recital from Conan Doyle's writings, with music, at Groombridge Place on Friday 10

July. Get details from P.O. Box 17, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1WU.

On 6 June, **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** will hold their Second Annual Reichenbach Fall Picnic at Shannon Falls near Squamish. For details, contact Len Haffenden at 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6 (phone 604 985 4613). On the same day, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will meet at *The Nobody Inn* at Doddiscombsleigh in Devon to celebrate the centenary of the adventure of 'The Dancing Men' and the launch of the first two Poor Folk Pamphlets. The day will conclude with a visit to the Exeter & Teign Valley Railway at Christow Station (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). (**The Poor Folk have a new Secretary: our own Shirley Purves. Her address is Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL.**)

The Annual Spring Dinner of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** is scheduled for Friday 19 June in New York City (Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, Apt. 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). The *Fourth Occasional Sherlockian Cruise* sets sail for Bermuda the following day, aboard the cruise ship. From 26 to 28 June is *Watsonian Weekend VII*, which includes the 39th annual Chicago 'Silver Blaze' race (Susan Z. Diamond, 16 W 603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA).

Over the weekend of 3 - 5 July **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will be in Cornwall, investigating the sites of 'The Devil's Foot' This expedition is now fully booked, but the organisers are compiling a handbook with a good collection of relevant essays.

Periodicals received. *The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter*, no. 24 (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) (**contains a most interesting piece on the former Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station**). *The Torr* no. 12 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) (**among other good material, Anna Smyth looks at the events of 1889, Watson's date for The Hound of the Baskervilles, and Stephen Farrell salutes Shinwell Johnson and Kitty Winter**). *The Baker Street Journal*, March 1998 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (**the highlights are the obituary [by Jon Lellenberg?] of Dame Jean Conan Doyle, and the text of Nicholas Meyer's paper 'Sherlock Holmes, Wine Bottles and the Catholic Mass'; the BSI is published by The Baker Street Irregulars but it should be a must for any Holmesian or Sherlockian; correspondence for the BSI should go to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', PO Box 2189, Easton, MD 21601, USA**).

The Cormorant's Ring, April 1998 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA) (**outstanding are John Farrell's piece 'Who Killed Hilton Cubitt?' and Jim Coffin's on 'Tibet, Percussion and Holmes'**). *The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In* no. 24, and *The Striking (T)Rifles*, April 1998 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Postfach 83 01 25, D-51034 Köln, Germany) (**note the new address! I can't comment authoritatively on the content of these publications, as my German isn't up to it, but I'm very struck by the photograph of John H. ['Doc'] Holliday, who looks much as I picture John H. ['Doc'] Watson**). *Communication*, May-June 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**Thomas Dandrew speculates on the real reason why Holmes took up bee-keeping**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, April 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com) (**the original Sherlock Holmes newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 180 28th June 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Benny Green died last week, at the age of 70. A musician, journalist, broadcaster and cricket enthusiast, he was also a keen Holmesian — as he proved at our Society's annual dinner in 1982, when he was a witty and very likeable Guest of Honour. Earlier this year the actor **David King** died. He had played Professor Moriarty and John Scott Eccles on radio, and was preparing a solo show as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for the National Portrait Gallery.

Listeners to BBC Radio 4 will know that the great project has reached its triumphant conclusion. Today part 1 of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was broadcast (repeated Saturday 4 July at 9.00 pm; with part 2 following at 3.00 pm on 5 July, repeated at 9.00 pm on 11 July). Clive Merrison & Michael Williams have now played Holmes & Watson in every Canonical story - a record in any medium. Some sort of award is surely due to them and the others who have seen the project through from *A Study in Scarlet* in 1989 - producers Enyd Williams & Patrick Rayner, and chief scriptwriter Bert Coules. (Check the BBC Holmes website on <http://freespace.virgin.net/bert.coules/sh-home.htm>.)

Spike Milligan appropriated the name of Moriarty for a villainous character in *The Goon Show* (and acted in the awful 1978 movie parody *The Hound of the Baskervilles*) so it's appropriate that on his 80th birthday he's turned his hand to *The Hound of the Baskervilles according to Spike Milligan*. Virgin Publishing (332 Ladbrooke Grove, London W10 5AH) have issued it in a nice gold-stamped mock-leather binding. The illustrations by Rob Seabury are reminiscent of the author's own cartoons, and Milligan's admirers will rejoice in the fact that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is as outrageously funny as pretty well anything he's written. £15.99 is a trifle expensive, but worth it!

David Stuart Davies has written another gripping long story: *The Scroll of the Dead* (Calabash Press, PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada). Sherlock Holmes begins by exposing a fraudulent medium, but soon finds himself pursuing a ruthless fanatic who will not stop at murder to obtain the scroll which is the key to immortality. A decadent dandy, a vicious sprig of the aristocracy and the hot-headed daughter of an archaeologist lead the detective and the doctor to adventure in rural Norfolk and to mortal peril amid the lakes and mountains of Cumberland. It's a rattling good yarn, well told and well produced - though there are a couple of odd lapses, unexpected from this author and this publisher. (For instance, 'accusative' is a grammatical term; it does *not* mean the same as 'accusatory'.) That said, I'm very happy to recommend this latest novel from Calabash, with its grand cover design by Chris Senior. It's available in Britain from Rupert Books, Murder One and Crime In Store, or it can be had direct from Calabash at £19.00 hardback (postage £4.85 air, £3.95 surface) or £12.50 paperback (postage £4.35 air, £2.55 surface).

Forthcoming from Calabash is *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes: 'The Dying Detective'*, with contributions from Owen

Dudley Edwards, Richard Lancelyn Green, Sue Dahlinger, Chris Redmond and several others. Due for Christmas are *Canadians Suremock Holmes*; another volume of parodies compiled by Bob Adey; and *The Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes, vol. 2* by Denis O. Smith.

New this month from Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) are *Sherlock Holmes: The Chinese Junk Affair, and Other Stories* by Roy Templeman, and *Sherlock Holmes and the Sandringham House Mystery* by the prolific and ever-reliable Val Andrews - nicely produced paperbacks priced at £6.99 each.

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine continues to delight. For me, the high point of issue 25 is the latest chapter in Michael Cox's unique account of the Granada TV series, here covering *The Sign of Four* - probably the best feature-length Holmes film ever made. Linda Pritchard discusses her book, *The Jeremy Brett-Linda Pritchard Story*; Brian Faulkner writes about Conan Doyle, Bernard Shaw and the *Titanic*; David Stuart Davies surveys the movie *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*; John Hall contributes a new story, 'The Adventure of the Venomous Lizard'; Roger Forsdyke begins a new series about Victorian crime; Brian Adrian looks at John Dickson Carr's great detective, Dr Gideon Fell; Barbara Roden tells of Conan Doyle and the fairies; Gaynor Coules examines H.R.F. Keating's detective novels; Paul Chapman considers the parallels between 221B and 007; 'Societies Forum' puts **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** under the magnifying lens; Moriarty mutters - plus reviews, news, etc. It's published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com.)

The Jeremy Brett-Linda Pritchard Story, by Linda Pritchard with Mary Ann Warner, is due in August from Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; e-mail rupert.books@compuserve.com). No price yet, but they're taking orders now. **Rupert Books** have a new catalogue available, as have several other dealers. **Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB); **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH; ralph@pmbbooks.demon.co.uk) (*lists a few new Holmes titles I've not encountered elsewhere, including *The Star of India* by Carol Bugge, *Sherlock Holmes and the Royal Flush* by Barrie Roberts, and *The Problem of the Missing Miss* by Roberta Rogow*); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC1N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Catalogues are also available from **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE; MysteriousLON@compuserve.com) (*the first major list of *Sherlockiana* from the London shop*); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA; mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net); **Bibliotective** (P.O. Box 47347, Oak Park, Michigan 48237, USA); and **Sherlock in LA** (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA). (*Every item is from the collection of Ted Schulz, who's reducing the volume of

stuff that fills his house! This handsome 164-page book also contains numerous tributes to Ted, a true gentleman of the Sherlockian world.*)

Peter Blau notes that Carol Nelson Douglas's new Irene Adler story 'Mesmerizing Bertie' is in *Crime Through Time II*, edited by Grace Monfredo & Sharan Newman (September; Berkley; \$6.99).

Marion Smith (Waterhouse, Carbrooke, Norfolk IP25 6SF; phone 01953 881109) has a spare copy of *The Oxford Sherlock Holmes*, and wants to find a good home for it. This is the 9-volume hardback edition, new and still in its wrapper. At £25.00 (plus postage if necessary) it's a real bargain.

Ian Henry (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) has issued a summer catalogue of Sherlockian books, including Julian Harries's gorgeous comedy *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (reviewed in DM 175), *The Ultimate Sherlock Holmes Encyclopedia* (a reprint of an essential reference book, Jack Tracy's *Encyclopædia Sherlockiana*), and a forthcoming novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Lusitania* by Lorraine Daly.

Kelvin I. Jones (Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB) has put out a second edition of his booklet *The Obsidian, & Other Stories*, stories of the psychic detective Dr John Carter - who has a touch of Sherlock Holmes. The price is £3.95 post-free (cheques payable to K.I. Jones; no foreign currency or cheques).

'The magazine which sparked the Golden Age of the detective story is back' — or at any rate, a quarterly called *The Strand Magazine* has begun publication. The Managing Editor, A.F. Gulli, claims it as a revival of the original *Strand*. I hope he's right, but my heart sinks when I read that he 'grew up pouring over the works of Doyle, Christie, Chesterton, Bentley, Wodehouse and others...' ('Pouring' does *not* mean the same as 'poring'.) The annual subscription is \$24.95 in USA or Canada, or \$29.95 overseas. Send checks or money orders to PO Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48021-1418, USA.

The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota issue a newsletter, which anyone interested in studying or collecting Sherlock Holmes will find fascinating. The Collections undoubtedly constitute the biggest and most comprehensive Sherlockian archive in the world. The Friends can be contacted at 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA.

Peter Blau notes that **The Sons of the Copper Beeches** celebrated their 50th anniversary last month in Philadelphia, with a reception at the Athenæum and a dinner at the Down Town Club. 'It was a grand affair, marking the first time in the history of the society when ladies have been welcomed to dinner with the Sons.'

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London expedition to Cornwall is now fully booked, but the organisers are compiling a handbook with a good collection of relevant essays.

The Crowborough *Sherlock Holmes Festival*, running from 3 to 10 July, will include: a talk on *The World of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* by Philip Weller, at Winston Manor Hotel on Friday 3 July; a street market in the town on Saturday 4 July; the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Ceremony at Terrace Montargis, and a 5-mile 'Walk with Sir Arthur', both Sunday 5 July; a recital from Conan Doyle's writings, with music, at Groombridge Place on Friday 10 July. Get details from PO Box 17, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1WU.

The Stormy Petrels of B.C. plan their Annual Barbecue for 4 July at 'Toad Hall' in North Vancouver. (Contact Len Haffenden at 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6; phone 604 985 4613.) **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will

hold a 'Diogenes Meeting' on 11 July (Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA). On 25 July **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** will discuss 'The Boscombe Valley Mystery' (Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA; GBStahl@juno.com).

On the evening of 1 August **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will hold its Maiwand Memorial Dinner at Hudson's Restaurant in Baker Street. Over the next eight days the Company will make a coaching expedition to Holmesian and Doylean sites in England, Belgium and France (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota** will celebrate their 50th birthday with *Founders Footprints*, a conference at the Holiday Inn Metrodome in Minneapolis over the weekend of 7 - 9 August (Julie McKuras, 13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124, USA — or e-mail Bruce Southworth at Bruces1@mindspring.com).

Von Herder Airguns Ltd will hold their annual meeting in Bonn on the weekend of 4 - 6 September. This will be a special occasion to mark the group's tenth anniversary (Michael Ross, Postfach 83 01 25, 51034 Köln, Germany; phone/fax 0221 600 28 79). On Saturday 19 September, **The Irregular Special Railway Company** and **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will travel by train from London to Bletchley Park, the World War II cryptology centre — a chance to compare code-breaking 100 years ago, 50 years ago, and today (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX).

Periodicals received. **The Ritual**, Spring 1998 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) (*this 21st issue contains 76 pages of good material, including John Addy's paper 'Parliamentary, My Dear Watson'*). **The Parallelogram**, May 1998 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) (*accounts of the activities of a lively and likeable group, plus some remarkable thoughts on 'A Scandal in Bohemia' by Pasquale Accardo*). **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, May 1998 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (*includes Jim Hawkins' inspiring story of his visit to the Sherlock Holmes pub in London, and part 1 of an engrossing interview with the great Sherlockian topographer David Hammer - which ends, frustratingly, in the middle of a word!*).

The Serpentine Muse, Summer 1998 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (*a mixed group of writers offer suggestions, mostly humorous, for extra-Canonical episodes - the wittiest is Susan Diamond's 'The Lady and the Tiger'*). **The FMHC Memo**, May 1998 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) (*the Company newsletter, mainly dealing with its many activities*). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Annual Report 1998: The Engineer's Thumb Contract** (*half a dozen interesting essays, particularly those by Donald Redmond and Richard Stacpoole-Ryding; the fullest is Philip Weller's — possibly definitive study of the geography of the case*). **The Formulary**, June 1998 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ) (*lots of interest here, especially regarding 'The Blanched Soldier' — a case in which Watson took no part!*).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, May 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4803, USA) (*the original Sherlock Holmes newsletter*).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 181 1st August 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Over the past decade several illustrated books about Sherlock Holmes have appeared, some good and some poor. The latest is generally very good, but marred by some odd lapses. Martin Fido, author of *The World of Sherlock Holmes* (Carlton Books Ltd, 20 St Anne's Court, Wardour Street, London W1V 3AW; £14.99) is an authority on true crime, with a particular interest in the 19th century. He convincingly places the early stories in the tradition of the 'shilling shockers', with clear elements of the 'penny dreadfuls'. This is no slight to Conan Doyle; rather it shows how genius can transform unpromising material into something precious. By indicating how *A Study in Scarlet* would have appeared to its first readers, Mr Fido shows how much of the book's success did *not* depend on Sherlock Holmes. He brings a fresh eye to the subject, and so helps us to notice features that may have escaped our attention. His suggestion as to why Mrs Watson called her husband 'James' is masterly, and he has much of interest to say about Arthur Conan Doyle.

Mr Fido acknowledges help from Jon. L. Lellenberg, Catherine Cooke, Geoffrey Stavert and others; it would have helped if he'd had one of them proof-read his typescript. We'd have been spared such embarrassments as *John Crew* (for John Clay), *Major Sebastian Sholto* (for John), *Eugene Drebber* (for Enoch), and *Mary Ferguson* (for Mary Sutherland). There's a picture of the Lowther Arcade, with the note that Holmes bought his Stradivarius there (no: it was in the Tottenham Court Road). The author of *Cold Comfort Farm* is named as Flora Post, rather than Stella Gibbons. Arthur Twidle is credited with illustrating *The Sign of Four* before Sidney Paget began his illustrations for *The Strand Magazine* in 1891, but Twidle's work was actually for the 1903 Author's Edition. The Poor Folk Upon The Moors will be surprised to learn that they're a 'provincial branch' of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London called *The Poor People of the Moor*. And it was Edmund Wilson, not Raymond Chandler, who famously asked, 'Who cares who killed Roger Ackroyd?' This is rank and regrettable carelessness that spoils a generally very worthwhile book. The text is pithy, and the illustrations excellent. I should add that I've seen the book on sale for only £5.99, and at that price it's a bargain. You can afford to ignore its flaws and accept it for its considerable merits.

The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia have begun a series of booklets featuring material from ten years of *The Petrel Flyer*. 'Premium Petrel' vol. 1 is *ACD Mystery Sonnets* by Ellay Aitchison, who has a talent for encapsulating a story within the required 14 lines. Technically these verses are as good as any I've seen since Jacob C. Solovay's outstanding *Sherlock Holmes: Two Sonnet Sequences* of 1969 — a relief, because there's an awful lot of *bad* Sherlockian verse out there. This pleasant 56-page brochure can be had from Len Haffenden at Hansom Press Ltd, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6. The price, including postage, is

Cdn.\$9.95, US\$7.00 or £5.00. (*I'm looking forward to *Premium Petrel* vol. 2, a collection of Michael Higgs's monographs.*)

Just out from Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) is *The Unrelated Adventures of Clewlow Holmes* by Douglas Moreton. The contents are described as ten pastiches and one parody, but I'd call them all parodies, and clever ones. Clewlow doesn't have all the intellectual equipment of his elder brothers Sherlock and Mycroft, but he gets results — of a sort. Mr Moreton's sense of humour was apparent in his earlier books; it runs wild here, and the result is pretty funny:

'I suppose you mean the killing of Mr Bodily Trussed, a ruptured escapologist?'

'Whose name appears in the stop-press as Mr Badily Trussed.'

'I do not see that it matters.'

'That is because you are not a ruptured escapologist. Clearly the poor fellow has met with vowel play.'

This profusely illustrated 160-page paperback is available from various crime fiction dealers at £12.00, or direct from the publisher at £12.00 (or \$20.00 in the USA). Sterling cheques payable to Cadds Printing Ltd; US dollar checks to Hugh Scullion.

For our Society's recent weekend in *Devil's Foot* country, Pam Bruxner and Bob Ellis produced *The Cornish Horror*, a large-format, 56-page volume of essays. Pam's geographical study, Marina Stajic's identification of *Radix pedis diaboli*, Herbert Tinning's survey of the story's structure, and Bernard Davies's investigation of 'the ancient Cornish language' are outstanding. Lynne Godden has details of availability (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE; phone 01233 770227).

A new and very promising annotated edition of the Canon is in preparation, the work of Leslie S. Klinger. The first volume, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, is due shortly from Wessex Press (P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA).

Newly available from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) are the scripts of 'a whole series of radio plays that were broadcast with Basil Rathbone in guess which character. All are by Stanley Reybun and all are £7.00.' The titles are *The Manitoba Marauder*, *The Case of the Phantom Brigade*, *The Case of the Perilous Pawn*, *The Case of the Crafty Cracksman*, *The Case of the Derailed Shipment*, *The Case of the Nervous Nanny*, *The Murray River Mystery*, *The Parisian Affair*, *The Voyage of Sven Sigerson*, *The Valley of Fear*, vol. 1 and vol. 2, *The Meiji Experience* and *The Case of the Fatal Poppy*. (*I can't find these titles or Stanley Reybun's name listed anywhere. Intriguing!*)

In June Simon & Schuster Ltd published a 'Hardy Boys' case called *The Giant Rat of Sumatra*, by Franklin W. Dixon (West Garden Place, Kendal Street, London W2 2AQ; £2.99). Ben Macintyre's *Napoleon of Crime: The Life & Times of Adam*

Worth, *The Real Moriarty* is out in paperback from Flamingo (HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, 77/85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB; £7.99). Due in September is *Victorian Quest Romance: Stevenson, Haggard, Kipling, Conan Doyle* by Robert Fraser (Northcote House Publishers Ltd, Plymbridge House, Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PZ; £8.99).

I've received catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC1N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk), and **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA; mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net). Phil Wooley of **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB) points out that he can supply all the Calabash Press publications, and is taking orders for *The Jeremy Brett-Linda Pritchard Story* (see DM 180).

Last month Sotheby's sold photographs and equipment belonging to Frances Griffiths, and relating to the Cottingley Fairies hoax. The lot fetched £22,000. But that was capped by a first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, believed to be the only copy it its original dustwrapper. It went for an amazing £80,700!

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW, Scotland), who has produced such excellent Holmes collectibles, is now 'more or less retired'. However, he's still looking for items for his own collection, specifically Sherlock Holmes beer mats, metal badges, cigarette and trade cards, post cards and miniatures. He can buy or will exchange items from his stock.

Michael Ross (Postfach 83 01 25, D-51034 Köln, Germany; e-mail Baskerville-Buecher@bigfoot.de) tells me that the Russian TV series starring Vassily Livanov as Sherlock Holmes has been issued on VHS PAL video, and can be had from Baskerville Bücher at DM 49.90 each or DM 220 for all five. Postage is extra: DM 12 for 1 - 7 tapes, DM 24 for 8 or more. Payment by euro cheque or cash, and allow up to ten weeks for delivery since the tapes are imported from Russia. The content is: 1. STUD + SPEC; 2. FINA + EMPT + CHAS; 3. HOUN (in 2 parts); 4. SIGN (in 2 parts, with elements of SCAN); 5. *The 20th Century Begins* (2 parts based on ENGR, SECO, LAST + BRUC). The recordings are in Russian, with no subtitles.

CSA Telltapes Ltd have recently released *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Episode 3*, read by Edward Hardwicke and featuring 'The Sussex Vampire', 'The Creeping Man' & 'The Speckled Band' (101 Chamberlayne Road, London NW10 3ND; £8.99). Lynda Henderson points out that this is a reissue of the 1995 Tangled Web recording *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Suspense*. Performance and production are, of course, first-rate.

Phil Attwell sends news that Northampton's Royal Theatre company will be touring with Jeremy Paul's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, starting at **The Castle** in Wellingborough on 15 & 16 September, and taking in 18 villages in Northants. You can get details from the **Royal Theatre**, Guildhall Road, Northampton NN1 1EA (phone Janet, Louise or Sean on 01604 627566). Phil notes that the Royal Theatre was used as a location for the rather Holmesian *Doctor Who* adventure *The Talons of Weng Chiang*.

From 8 to 10 October, Dramatis Personae will present *The Final Problem* at the **Portsmouth Arts Centre**, Reginald Road, Southsea (box office 01705 732236). This is the third part of the company's Sherlock Holmes trilogy. For information about the play or Dramatis Personae, contact Nick Scovell, 274 Fawcett Road, Southsea, Hants. PO4 0LG.

The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem invite interested Sherlockians to join in their 3PP Discussion Group on the Internet, at <http://www.TheHawk.net/3ppEZ.htm>. Maribean Briggs is planning the next **Baskerville Bash**, for New York on

8 January. If you'd like to be on the mailing list, contact her at 46 East 29th Street #2R, New York, NY 10016, USA.

The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota celebrate their 50th birthday with *Founders Footprints*, a conference at the Holiday Inn Metrodome in Minneapolis, 7 - 9 August (contact Julie McKuras, 13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124, USA; or e-mail Bruce Southworth at Brucel@mindspring.com). The University of Minnesota at Minneapolis has the world's greatest collection of Sherlockiana, and the first annual meeting of **The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections** will be on 7 August (Dr Richard Sveum, e-mail at sveum001@maroon.tc.umn.edu). On 14 August **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin, Illinois (Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA; e-mail Jekrich@aol.com). **The Irregular Special Railway Company's** Liverpool Street London Walk will be on 22 August (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX).

On 5 September **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will visit Canonical railway locations in Hampshire. This coach tour is organised in conjunction with **The Baker Street Branch Lines** (both at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 12 September, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will investigate the area around Postbridge on Dartmoor (Shirley Purves, Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL).

Periodicals received. *The Passengers' Log*, Spring 1997, Summer 1998 & Autumn 1998 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Sally Cornell, 24 Byron Street, Croydon, NSW 2132, Australia) (**the first three issues of one of the most attractive and interesting Sherlockian journals I've encountered; full of good articles, humour, scholarship & speculation, with marvellous illustrations & cartoons by Philip Cornell; the editor is Rosane McNamara, who will be remembered as a participant in our Society's trip to Switzerland in 1988**). *The Petrel Flyer*, May/June 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of B.C.**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (**now a manageable 20-page booklet; features a good piece by Michael Higgs on waterfalls, and a thorough but pseudonymous study of the tyre tracks in 'The Priory School'**)

The Irregular Special Railway Company Directory 1998-99 (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) (**the low down on the members**). *The Striking (T)Rifles*, June 1998 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Postfach 83 0125, D-51034 Köln, Germany) (**a lively and always interesting newsletter, in German**). *The School Report*, Summer Term 1998 (**The Priory Scholars of Leicester**, Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (**Horace Coates surveys the characters of 'Shoscombe Old Place'**). **3 Pipe Problem Plugs & Dottles**, July 1998 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (**contains part 2 of Gael Stahl's engrossing interview with David Hammer, and Jim Hawkins' account of the 3PP Discussion Group**). *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Summer 1998 (**lots of interest here, of course**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, June 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com) (**the classic Sherlock Holmes newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 182 1st September 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

John Hopkins, who died recently, is best known as a writer for *Z Cars*, *Softly Softly* and other TV series. He also wrote the well-regarded 1979 movie *Murder by Decree*. **Robert A.W. Lowndes** ('Langdale Pike', BSI) died on 14 July. An editor and author, mainly of fantasy and science-fiction, he often referred in his work to his delight in the world of Sherlock Holmes.

Out today is Rupert Books' most ambitious publication, *The Jeremy Brett - Linda Pritchard Story: On the Wings of Paradise*. Telling her story has clearly been a therapeutic act for Linda Pritchard, and it helps the countless many who liked and admired Jeremy Brett to understand what his last years were like. Ms Pritchard, perhaps on the advice of her co-author Mary Ann Warner, has cast her narrative in the third person, which makes the story somehow less personal, even slightly less real, for the reader. Perhaps it's as well. It avoids the situation of a memoir so intimate that reading it feels like the act of a voyeur. We know that Jeremy Brett struggled with the demon of manic-depression, and that mistaken treatment fuelled the cardiomyopathy that eventually killed him. Linda Pritchard gives us perhaps the only first-hand account we shall have of that struggle, and of her own struggle to understand and to help him. Nearly ten years ago, she approached him for help in raising sponsorship for a 5000-mile run in aid of cancer research. His generous response was to have unexpected results: without her patient support, he might never have achieved the tranquil resignation of his last couple of years. No-one interested in the actor who was the great Holmes of our time can fail to gain from it.

This well illustrated 146-page hardback can be had from Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) at £20.00 or \$32.80, plus postage (UK £1.75; Europe £2.70; N. America [air] £5.40/ \$8.85 [surface] £2.70/ \$4.45; elsewhere [air] £6.25 [surface] £2.70). Cheques should be payable to R.D. Smith. £1.00 from the sale of each copy will be donated to the Jeremy Brett Memorial Fund for Imperial Cancer Research. On Friday 25 September, from 6.30 pm, Linda Pritchard will be signing copies of the book at Crime In Store, 14 Bedford Street, London WC2.

New from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia, V0K 1A0, Canada) is *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes: 'The Dying Detective'*. Prices are: hardback £18.50/ US\$30.00/ Cdn\$42.50; paperback £12.50/ US\$21.00/ Cdn\$28.50. Postage is extra: USA US\$3.75; Canada Cdn\$5.30; elsewhere [air] £4.35/ US\$7.05 [surface] £2.55/ US\$4.15. (*The book is available from Rupert Books, Black Cat Bookshop and other dealers. Black Cat's address is 36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB.*)

Issue 26 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* is as full of good things as ever. John Hall observes Dr Watson's

detective abilities; Paul Chapman concludes his comparison of Holmes and Bond; David Stuart Davies looks at the 1972 movie *They Might Be Giants*, and celebrates the conclusion of the BBC Radio 4 series with Merrison & Williams; Roger Forsdyke looks at Victorian crime; Gaynor Coules surveys Anne Perry's novels; Martin Edwards examines Inspector Wexford; Pat Ward becomes 'our special American correspondent'; Barbara Roden considers the Cottingley fairies; Kathryn White assesses Holmes the deceiver; 'Societies Forum' puts **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** under the lens . . . all this, and the first part of a new Holmes story by Denis O. Smith, and part 12 of Michael Cox's definitive account of the Granada TV series! The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Rupert Books have a new catalogue available (address as above; e-mail rupert_books@compuserve.com), as have **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC1N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Classed as a school textbook is John O'Connor's play *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, published in May at £5.75, by Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd (Nelson House, Mayfield Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5PL). Published last year is a nicely produced novel, *Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Globe Murders* by Barry Day — who knows his Holmes and his Shakespeare (Oberon Books, 521 Caledonian Road, London N7 9RH; £5.95).

Michael Ross sends notice that Baskerville Bücher (Postfach 83 01 25, D-51034 Köln, Germany) will publish the first comprehensive bibliography of German crime fiction. *Krimis im Fadenkreuz* by Thomas Przybilka is due on 1 December. If ordered before then, the price is DM 148; after publication it will be DM 198.

Peter Blau reports news from Ken Greenwald: 221A Baker Street Associates plan a new series of Sherlock Holmes radio recordings for later this year. Each cassette will contain two plays from the 1947 series with John Stanley and Alfred Shirley. The distributor will be Radio Spirits.

A reminder to devotees of the wireless: ORCA (the Old-Time Radio-Show Collectors' Association) has what may be the most extensive archive of radio recordings in the world, and an unbeatable fund of knowledge. ORCA can be contacted via John Wolstenholme, 56 Melbourne Avenue, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 5YW.

Ian Wilkes sends advance notice of *Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of the Four*, to be performed at the **Northcott Theatre**, Exeter, next February by Exeter University Student Theatre. The play is written by Adam Dodd, a member of our own Society who is studying for his PhD at the university. The company has been called 'startlingly innovative' by the impeccably Canonical *Western Morning News*. Further information can be had from

Adam Dodd at Stone Cottage, 7 Coldharbour, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, Wilts. BA14 6DA (e-mail a.g.dodd@ex.ac.uk). A reminder of Dramatis Personae's production of *The Final Problem*, the conclusion of their Holmes trilogy, at **Portsmouth Arts Centre** in Reginald Road, Southsea, 8 - 10 October (phone 01705 732236). Tickets cost £4.50 (concessions £3.50). For information about the play or Dramatis Personae, contact Nick Scovell, 274 Fawcett Road, Southsea, Hants. PO4 0LG.

Elaine Hamill sends reassurance about the *Sherlock Holmes Festival*, which will definitely take place in September 1999, centring on the unveiling of John Doubleday's statue of Holmes at Baker Street Station. Donations are still needed, to ensure a sinking fund for the statue's upkeep. They can be sent to Elaine, who is Treasurer to the Sherlock Holmes Statue Company Ltd, at 16 Kirton Close, Chiswick, London W4 5UU.

Some Experiences of an Irish R.M. by Somerville & Ross originally appeared in *The Strand Magazine* and elsewhere; the books are still in print and well worth reading, but the superb television series *The Irish R.M.* has been unavailable for 16 years. Now the complete first series is out on video (Acorn/DISC VHS:AV0102). £16.99 gets you a double video-cassette, giving over *five hours* of sheer quality, with the performances of Peter Bowles, Bryan Murray, Faith Brook, Doran Godwin and others, the witty scripts of Rosemary Anne Sisson, and production values to rival those of the early Granada *Sherlock Holmes*.

Peter Horrocks tells me that a 1941 recording of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* has been reissued on CD. Leopold Stokowski conducts the All American Orchestra, and the narrator is Basil Rathbone.

Thanks to one Chris Lloyd (could he be our member C.P. Lloyd?) *The Sherlock Holmes Journal* has been quoted in *The Bookseller*. 'Bent's Notes' in the issue for 14 August gives a chunk of Colin Dexter's talk at the Society's annual dinner, as reported in the summer issue of the SHJ.

The recruitment of two bloodhounds by Essex Police is paying dividends. Even a helicopter with a heat-seeking camera couldn't find a patient who recently went missing from a hospital in Epping, but Sherlock the bloodhound did. His success is more remarkable as he's only eight months old and less than half-way through his one-year training course.

Our member Kenneth Ross, who participated in the Society's *Devil's Foot* trip to Cornwall, recorded a good deal of the weekend on video, and is offering copies to interested parties. The recording runs about 30 minutes, and Kenneth asks only £3.50 to cover his costs. Send cheques, payable to K.I. Ross, to 2 Cherry Rise, Flackwell Heath, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP10 9PS.

The weekend 4 - 6 September sees the annual meeting of **Von Herder Airguns Ltd** in Bonn. For details contact Michael Ross (Postfach 83 01 25, 51034 Köln, Germany). On 5 September **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Baker Street Branch Lines** visit Canonical railway locations in Hampshire (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 12 September, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** investigate the area around Postbridge on Dartmoor (Shirley Purves, Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL).

On 19 September **The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem** meet to discuss 'The Adventure of the Stock-broker's Clerk' (Gael Stahl at 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA [e-mail GBStahl@juno.com]). There's a web site too, at http://www.nashville.net/~thehawk/3PP_SiteMap.html. On the same day, **The Irregular Special Railway Company** and **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** travel by train

from Euston via Harrow to Bletchley Park — the centre of Allied code-breaking during World War II. There'll be a chance to compare the cryptanalysis of the 1940s with that of the 1890s (and the 1990s!). (Dr Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX).

The Parallel Case of St Louis meets on 21 September at The Big Sleep Bookstore to discuss 'The Dying Detective' (Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA), and **The Priory Scholars of Leicester** meet on 27 September to discuss *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Horace Coates at 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

To round off the month, there are two major conventions in the United States. **The John Bennett Shaw Memorial Conference** will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, over the weekend of 25-27 September (e-mail sherlock@santa-fe.cc.nm.us), and for those of a more frivolous turn **The Canonical Convocation & Capers** will take place in Door County, Wisconsin (*The Baker Street Dispatch*, Box 5503, Toledo, OH 43613, USA).

Looking ahead a bit, on Saturday 7 November **The Six Napoleons of Baltimore** and **The Carlton Club**, both scions of **The Baker Street Irregulars**, will present the 19th annual programme of talks and panel discussions at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Maryland. All presentations are sensibly limited to 15 minutes. The speakers include William Hyder, Peter E. Blau and Canadian guest Peter Calamai. Details can be had from Bill Hyder at 5488 Cedar Lane #C3, Columbia, MD 21044-1374, USA.

Periodicals received. *The Parallelogram*, September 1998 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) (*Gordon R. Speck looks at fog in the Canon, and Pasquale Accardo offers a very curious theory about the death of Ronald Adair*). *The Striking (T)Rifles*, August 1998 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Postfach 83 01 25, 51034 Köln, Germany) (*one of the most informative newsletters around*) *Communication*, July/August 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (*David Scott tells of a remarkable day at a Spiritualist colony and Carl Heifetz reports on June's Sherlockian Cruise and on his visit to Baker Street*). *1998 Club Roster of The Pleasant Places of Florida* (*includes Ben Wood's brief history of the PPOF*).

The Baker Street Journal, December 1997 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*the BSJ is one of the essentials for Sherlockians; along with much else of interest there's the news that **The Baker Street Irregulars** are setting up two publishing programmes: the BSI Library Series and the BSI International Series — also, after a very long gap, 1998 will see a BSJ Christmas Annual, focusing on the 1940 BSI annual dinner*). *The Cormorant's Ring*, August 1998 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA) (*Jim Coffin on Mycroft Holmes, Al Rodin on ACD as a physician — and more*). *The School Report*, Autumn Term 1998 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (*good full pieces on Grace Dunbar by Jeff Lowe and on dogs by Phil Attwell*).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, July 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com) (*the classic Sherlock Holmes newsletter*).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 183 4th October 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Sherlockians throughout the world lost a friend with the death of **Thomas L. Stix Jr** on 9 September. Tom Stix succeeded Julian Wolff as head of The Baker Street Irregulars in 1986; five years later he opened up membership of the BSI to the previously neglected half of humanity by investing six women, among them Dame Jean Conan Doyle, and he continued to pursue the cause of friendship in the world of Sherlock Holmes. He, more than anyone else, was responsible for the current good relations that exist between Sherlockians in the United States and their counterparts in the rest of the world. For his bridging of the transatlantic gap he should have been offered honorary membership of our own Society, but as far as I know he never was. Tom is greatly missed, probably by more people than he could have imagined. Those who would like to do some practical good in his memory are asked to make a donation to the Julie Stix Memorial Fund, Parkview School, 6200 Lake Street, Morton Grove, IL 60053, U.S.A.

The subject of *The Case Files Of Sherlock Holmes: 'The Dying Detective'* (Calabash Press, P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia, V0K 1A0, Canada; hardback £18.50/ US\$30.00/ Cdn\$42.50; paperback £12.50/ US\$21.00/ Cdn\$28.50) has attracted surprisingly little critical writing. Here S.E. Dahlinger deals with the medical aspect, and Kathryn White looks at the psychological angle; David Stuart Davies condemns the detective's treatment of the doctor, but Brad Keefauver reckons that Mrs Hudson is worse treated than Dr Watson; Chris Redmond and Barbara Roden recognise similarities between 'The Dying Detective' and other adventures of Sherlock Holmes; John Hall considers the peculiarities of 221B Baker Street; Sonia Fetherston's piece on Staples the butler is an example of how much the observant reader can find in a character who appears only briefly; Richard Lancelyn Green unearths a probable inspiration for Culverton Smith's poison trap; Diana Barsham and Owen Dudley Edwards both bring a trained academic mind to the story; R. Dixon Smith's comments on the original illustrations are of great interest; finally, Christopher Roden contributes the introduction and makes a number of worthwhile observations about the manuscript, and Barbara Roden gives brief details of film, television and radio adaptations. It's a splendid collection.

Other recent and forthcoming titles announced include two novels: *Sherlock Holmes and the Lusitania* by Lorraine Daly (Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £15.99); *Sherlock Holmes and the Sandringham House Mystery* by Val Andrews (Breese Books Ltd, 164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER; £6.99). There are also two non-fiction books. *Social Interest* by Alfred Adler, edited by Colin Brett (Oneworld Publications, 185 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7AR; £9.99) is a psychology text, investigating the popularity of Sherlock Holmes and 'his legacy as the prototype fictional detective'. The title of

The Bedside, Bathtub and Armchair Companion to Sherlock Holmes by Dick Riley and Pam McAllister pretty much says it all; it's due in November from Continuum Publishing Co., distributed in the UK by Cassell PLC (Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole, Dorset BH15 3AJ) at £25.00 hardback and £12.95 paperback.

Recently out in Canada are *The Sherlock Holmes Victorian Cookbook* by William Bonnell (Macmillan Canada, 29 Birch Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4V 1E2; Cdn\$24.95); and *Mr Doyle & Dr Bell: A Victorian Mystery* by Howard Engel (Viking, Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 10 Alcom Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4V 3B2 [no price to hand]).

I must correct a notice from DM 181: the scripts by Stanley S. Reyburn, published by Players Press Inc. (P.O. Box 1132, Studio City, CA 91614-0132, USA) and available from Ian Henry, are *not* lost radio plays from the golden age, though they're much in the style of Edith Meiser. They are newly written adaptations and new adventures of Holmes & Watson, and as far as I know have never been broadcast. The titles are *The Manitoba Marauder*, *The Case of the Phantom Brigade*, *The Case of the Perilous Pawn*, *The Case of the Crafty Cracksman*, *The Case of the Derailed Shipment*, *The Case of the Nervous Nanny*, *The Murray River Mystery*, *The Parisian Affair*, *The Voyage of Sven Sigerson*, *The Valley of Fear*, *The Meiji Experience* and *The Case of the Fatal Poppy*. The price of each script is £7.00.

Whitaker's Almanack is now published by The Stationery Office (*formerly Her Majesty's Stationery Office — how are the mighty fallen!*), who next month will publish a facsimile of the 1900 edition of the *Almanack*, at £25.00. (Stationery Office Books, Publications Centre, P.O. Box 276, London SW8 5DT.)

I've received new catalogues from **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB; phone 0116 251 2756) (*an interim listing of newly acquired Sherlockiana*); **Richard Williams** (15 High Street, Dragonby, Scunthorpe, N. Lincs. DN15 0BE; phone 01724 840645) (*the first I've seen; it includes a first of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at £400.00, but Mr Williams will consider offers*); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; phone 0171 836 7757; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk); and **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE; phone 0171 486 8975; MysteriousLON@compuserve.com).

A final reminder of Dramatis Personae's production of *The Final Problem* at **Portsmouth Arts Centre** in Reginald Road, Southsea, 8 - 10 October (phone 01705 732236). Tickets cost £4.50 (concessions £3.50). Our member Rob Thrush plays Holmes, having been highly praised for his previous performances in the rôle, and Robert Richards is Dr Watson.

Jimcin Recordings (P.O. Box 536W, Portsmouth, RI 02871, USA) have recorded most of the Canon. Available are: *A Study in Scarlet* (3 cassettes, \$21.00); *The Sign of Four* (3 cassettes, \$21.00); *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (7 cassettes, \$39.00); *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (7 cassettes, \$39.00); *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (4 cassettes, \$28.00); *The Return*

of *Sherlock Holmes* (8 cassettes, \$49.00); *The Valley of Fear* (5 cassettes, \$29.00); and *His Last Bow* (6 cassettes, \$29.00). All are read by Walter Covell. There are also 35 single cassettes containing one or two stories, read by various actors and priced at \$9.98 each. Jimcin has a website at <http://www.jimcin.com/amazonsh.htm>; you can order recordings on-line or by phone (1-800-538-3034, or 1-401-847-5148 from outside the USA).

Two of the later feature-length television films with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke have been re-released on video by Granada, distributed by VCI. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (GV0035) and *The Master Blackmailer* (GV0036) should be in the shops now. The former, despite good ingredients, fails to be a great screen version of the great Sherlock Holmes novel (**the best to date is the scandalously little-seen BBC TV version of 1968, with Peter Cushing & Nigel Stock**); but the latter is a legitimate and very enjoyable expansion of 'Charles Augustus Milverton', with a riveting performance by Robert Hardy as Milverton himself.

The magnificent replica of the Baker Street sitting-room that used to adorn the *S. Holmes Esq.* restaurant in San Francisco is available for rent at \$3,000.00 per year. It occupies a space of approximately 22 ft by 12 ft 6 ins, and would be a wonderful ornament to a pub, hotel or restaurant. Interested parties (in the USA) should call 415-616-3116.

A new French Sherlock Holmes society has been founded in Strasbourg, a city with impeccable Canonical connections. At present I have no geographical address, but *Les Evadés de Dartmoor*, (*Association Strasbourgeoise d'Études Holmesiennes*) have a website under construction at www.sherlock-holmes.org/dartmoor/. The contact is Francis J. Segond, whose e-mail address is segond@bremnet.de. Another new French group is **The Hôtel Dulong**, a scion of **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**. Sylvain Policard, Manager of the Hôtel Dulong, can be contacted at 584 chemin du Bois, 42155 Pouilly-les-Nonains, France. The address of the parent society, also known as *Les Quincailliers de la Franco-Midland*, is Grand Dépôt de Paris, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France.

Our own Society's next meeting is on 7 October at the Victory Services Club in Seymour Street, near Marble Arch, when Richard Lancelyn Green will give a talk entitled 'In the Chains of Crime: The Centenary of A.J. Raffles'. On 10 October **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will visit the site of the medical practice in Plymouth that ACD shared with the notorious Dr Budd, then cross over to Cornwall to the historic house and country park of Mount Edgcumbe (Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR).

The STUD Sherlockian Society will hold its 6th Annual Anglican Holiday Getaway Weekend in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, on the weekend 16-18 October (Allan Devitt, 16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106, USA). Over the same weekend, **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Baskerville Hounds** will explore Dartmoor. The address for both societies is 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU.

The October meeting of **The Northern Musgraves**, *Travels with Sherlock*, will be at the Midland Pennington Hotel in Bradford on 24 October, and will comprise the usual mixture of scholarly presentations and fun, including two special guest speakers, a *Bradshaw* quiz, and a caption competition (John Addy, 23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU). On Sunday 25 October, **The Sydney Passengers** will gather for afternoon tea, followed by 'Sherlockian memorabilia, collectibles and auction' (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia).

Autumn in Baker Street will be held at the Tarrytown Hilton in Tarrytown, New York, over the weekend of 31 October and 1 November. A high point will be the world premiere of *H.M.S. Sign o' Four*, an operetta by Gilbert, Sullivan and Warren Randall (Bob Thomalen, Highview Drive, Carmel, NY 10512, USA; e-mail: crwk02a@prodigy.com). On 3 November **The Stormy Petrels** will meet at Barclay Manor (1447 Barclay Street, at Nicola, Vancouver), to discuss 'The Dying Detective (Fran Martin, 10662 129 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3T 3H4, Canada).

On Saturday 7 November, **The Six Napoleons of Baltimore** and their fellow BSI scion, **The Carlton Club**, sponsor *A Saturday with Sherlock Holmes: 'A Scandal in Bohemia' — Ten Takes on a Classic Case*, at the Enoch Pratt Free Library (400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Maryland). For information contact Bill Hyder, 5-488 Cedar Lane #C3, Columbia, MD 21044-1374, USA.

The September issue of *The Baker Street Journal* (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) has been delayed by events arising from the death of Tom Stix. (**the BSJ is published by The Baker Street Irregulars but it should be a must for any Holmesian or Sherlockian**).

Periodicals received. *The Petrel Flyer*, July-August 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (**Ellay Aitchison contributes sound suggestions for a basic Sherlockian reference library**). *Practice Notes*, September 1998 (**The Friends of Dr Watson** (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ) (**the newsletter of the FoDW, and necessarily less substantial than The Formulary, the twice-yearly journal**). *The Devon County Chronicle, Serving the Parishes of Grimpen, Thorsley and High Barrow, May 1998* (**The Merripit House Guests**, Robert W. Hahn BSI, 2707 S. 7th, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA) (**reports on the activities of a lively and amiable group, with the bonus of a report on The Devils Foot Society from Herbert P. Tinning, Sterndale, 93 Sagamore Road, Millburn, NJ 07041, USA**). *Communication*, September/October 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**Brad Keefauver comments wittily on Grant Munro's slowness of response**). *The New Baker Street Pillar Box*, August 1998 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) (**Uwe Sommerlad links villainy and beauty; Christine Fell makes some very perceptive comments on ACD's attitudes to children and discipline; Robert Bousquet and Philip Weller have a spirited debate on the character of Mary Morstan**).

The Serpentine Muse, Fall 1998 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (**Peter Horrocks makes the startling allegation that Prof. Moriarty sank RMS Titanic, and Marina Stajic links the case of Matilda Briggs with the trial of Florence Maybrick**). *3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, September 1998 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (**Davice Sharpe looks at the Piltdown hoax, and Jody Baker surveys the debt we all owe to Ronald Knox and Christopher Morley**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, August 1998 & September 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW, #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgs.dgssys.com) (**the classic Sherlock Holmes newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 184 10th November 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The world-famous *Sherlock Holmes* public house & restaurant at 10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA is gearing up for Christmas under its new manager, Warren Boundy (phone 0171 930 2644/0410; e-mail sherlock@popmail.dircon.co.uk). There's a website at www.sherlock.dircon.co.uk.

A couple of items are missing from the Baker Street sitting-room at the pub: the boxing-gloves that hung by the fireplace, and a small box containing two or three hypodermic syringes. The box is a particularly sad loss. It measures about 4½" x 2" x ½", is made of stainless steel or a similar metal, and is engraved with a facsimile of the signature 'A. Conan Doyle'. If you see it, or if you're offered it for sale, please contact Warren Boundy or me.

Hugh Scullion reports that **Douglas Moreton**, author of two volumes of *Sherlock Holmes* stories and one of the misadventures of his brother Clewlow Holmes, has died, less than a year after the death of his beloved wife. Other recent losses were the actors **Betty Marsden** (Mrs Warren in Granada TV's *The Red Circle*) and **Marius Goring** (Conan Doyle in Michael & Mollie Hardwick's 1963 radio play *The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes*).

The Shoso-in Bulletin, an English language journal published in Japan by **The Men with the Twisted Konjo**, may be the only truly international Sherlockian publication. Volume 8 can be had from the editor, Mel Hughes (2664 Sam Hardwick Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL 32216, USA), for \$12.00 (USA/Canada) or £8.00 (UK/Europe) including postage (dollar checks and Sterling money orders should be payable to Melanie Hughes). It contains 50 written and a dozen graphic contributions from ten different countries: serious surveys of Canonical adventures, reports of Sherlockian conventions, pastiches, parodies, poems. The information about Far Eastern publications and activities is especially interesting (Chinese editions of *The Valley of Fear* apparently state that Birdy Edwards communicated with his employers in Chinese!). (*If you'd like to contribute to volume 9, contact Hirayama Yuichi BSI at 2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitakashi, Tokyo 181, Japan.*)

Keith Webb, a contributor to previous volumes of *The Shoso-in Bulletin*, has written the first account in English of the Japanese fascination with Holmes. *Sherlock Holmes in Japan* costs \$10.00 + postage (USA & Canada \$2.00; elsewhere \$3.00 surface or \$4.00 airmail) from Keith at 15104 SE 22nd Street, Bellevue, WA 98007, USA. Some of the book, including the foreword by Kiyoshi Tanaka BSI, is on the Internet at www.dewa.or.jp/webb/holmes.htm. Keith Webb's e-mail address is webb@mail.dewa.or.jp.

Among recent publications from Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) is *The Chinese Junk Affair and Other Stories* (£6.99) by Roy Templeman, a former primary school teacher. He shows much ingenuity in devising puzzles, and a facility for explaining the solutions in a way that the youngest reader can grasp. The stories seem to be aimed mainly

at children or unsophisticated adults, but it's an enjoyable read for anyone.

Forthcoming from Breese are *Sherlock Holmes and the Frightened Golfer* (£7.50) by J.M. Gregson; *Sherlock Holmes and the Boulevard Assassin* (£6.99) and *Sherlock Holmes and the Disgraced Inspector* (£7.50), both by John Hall; *Sherlock Holmes and the Tomb of Terror* (£6.99) and *Sherlock Holmes on the Western Front* (£6.99) both by Val Andrews; and *The Elementary Cases of Sherlock Holmes* (no price given) by Ian Charnock.

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine, issue 27, runs to 56 pages — the fullest yet. The high point for me is still Michael Cox's account of the Granada *Sherlock Holmes* series, but there's a lot to enjoy: John Hall on Dr Watson as author; Gillian Linscott on SH, ACD and the suffragettes; Bert Coules on Brother Cadfael; David Stuart Davies on *The Masks of Death*; Paul Chapman on *The Cater Street Hangman*; Roger Forsdyke on Victorian crime; Gaynor Coules on Minette Walters. Denis Smith concludes his new Holmes story 'The North Walk Mystery'. M.J. Trow reviews the career of Sholto Lestrade, H.R.F. Keating surveys the development of crime fiction, and Mike Ripley looks at trends in British crime writing. Pat Ward reports from America, 'Societies Forum' examines **Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, and Moriarty mutters. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The Pleasant Places of Florida have a 1999 *Sherlockian Calendar*, available from Dr Benton Wood BSI (9840 Sucia Circle, Parrish, FL 34219-9080, USA) at \$2.50 in USA, \$4.00 or £3.00 elsewhere (dollar checks to Benton Wood; sterling in cash). **Mark Alberstat's** *Sherlock Holmes* calendar is \$12.00 in North America (5 Lorraine Street, Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2B9, Canada).

The Poor Folk Upon The Moors offer a nice 'Houndian' Christmas card at £5.00 for 12, plus postage (12 £1.00; 24 £1.50; 36 £1.75; 48 or more £3.00) from Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR. **Eddie Maguire** (63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ) has two sets of greeting cards, featuring Paget illustrations to 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' and 'The Blue Carbuncle', in dark sepia on ivory, the insides blank for your own message. They're sold in packs of ten (five of each design), with envelopes, at £3.50 including postage.

There are new catalogues from: **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE; website www.mysteriousbookshop.com); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; website www.nigelwilliams.com/); **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH; website www.postmortembooks.co.uk); and **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; website www.sherlock-holmes.com). (*Classic Specialties' *Sherlockian Times* is a magazine in its own right, and fun to read.*)

Cindy Stevens tells me the **British Heart Foundation** catalogue (P.O. Box 52, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. DE14 3LQ) offers a very nice Sherlock Holmes magnifying glass at £29.99, and a letter-opener at £24.99. The new catalogue from **Modern Originals** (P.O. Box 99, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6SN) features an electronic violin — battery operated, 27cm long, has a repertoire of eight tunes (£17.95). Stephen Farrell notes that **Colin Waite** (Stall 20, Apple Market, Covent Garden — Mondays only) is a good source for top hats; Mr Waite's phone number is 0171 385 6253.

The BBC recently broadcast two relevant radio programmes: on the BBC World Service, 14 October, was a 15-minute feature on Holmes and his world, part of *Inside*, hosted by Martin Stott; on 16 October, the 5th instalment of Radio 3's *Sound Stories* was an hour about Holmes and his music. If you recorded these programmes, and can sell or lend me a copy, please let me know!

Dawn Pryer (48 Brook Vale, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 3YB) has several items for sale. She invites serious offers for memorabilia of *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, some signed by Jeremy Brett and/or Edward Hardwicke, as well as signed photos (not in Sherlockian character) of Brett, James Mason, Laurence Olivier, Robert Hardy and Frank Finlay.

Christopher Roden sends news that Simon Jones (you've seen him in *The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Brideshead Revisited*, *Twelve Monkeys*, etc.) will stage William Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes* at the **New York Historical Society's Theatre** (2 West 77th Street at Central Park West). There'll be performances at 7.30 pm on Friday 13 and Monday 16 November, and at 2.00 pm on Sunday 15 November. Tickets are \$15.00, available at the door, or phone (212) 645 8228. Simon Jones's recording of June Thomson's story *The Case of the Scottish Tragedy* has recently been released (does anyone have publication details?), but this may be the first time he's played Sherlock Holmes on stage.

Philip Attwell notes that the cameras that took the notorious Cottingley Fairies photographs have been secured for the National Museum of Photography in Bradford, at a cost of £14,000 — thanks largely to public donations. Phil also reminds me that the Old Vicarage at Mullion in Cornwall (the original of Tredannick Wollas vicarage in 'The Devil's Foot') is now a private hotel. Prices per person per night range from £22.00 (low season) to £25.00 (high season). Phone 01326 240898 for details.

Brian Pugh, Curator of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, gives notice of the 1999 *Sherlock Holmes Festival* in Crowborough, which will run from 3 to 10 July. Details from P.O. Box 17, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1WU.

Jim Hawkins sends news of a new web-based society **Sherlockians Online**. Check them out at <http://mycomm.excite.com/mycomm/browse.asp?cid=nXW5hL>. **OnF**. (*It's the longest address I've come across! Jim has his own website at www.thehawk.net/3ppEZ.htm.*)

David Stuart Davies & Kathryn White have nurtured **The Northern Musgraves Sherlock Holmes Society** from its beginnings as a local group to its flourishing present as one of the dozen leading international Sherlockian organisations. At the end of the year they will relinquish the posts of Co-President to Anne Jordan & John Hall. *Ave atque vale!*

The Friends of Dr Watson announce that the writer of the best essay on the subject of Watson's relationship with Holmes will win: a free subscription to *The Friends* for the year 2000, *A Sherlock Holmes Reader* (Philadelphia, 1994), *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*, and the Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Certificate. For details, contact Dr Watson's Dresser, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ.

On 14 November, **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will have lunch and a video show at the Dartmouth Inn in Totnes (details

from Shirley Purves, Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL). The same day sees *Watson's Wanderings* in London, organised by **The Friends of Dr Watson**, followed by their Annual Dinner at the Caravan Serai Afghan Restaurant (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, address above).

At the annual Film Evening of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** on 20 November David Stuart Davies will present movies featuring Basil Rathbone and Eille Norwood as Sherlock Holmes; and there'll be a very special guest, Eille Norwood's son-in-law, the actor and dramatist Ernest Dudley.

On Saturday 5 December, **The Sydney Passengers** will hold their Christmas lunch (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia), and half a world away **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will hold its Annual General Meeting and seasonal festivities in Oxford (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU). Next day **The Priory Scholars of Leicester** will hold their AGM and associated junketings (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY).

Periodicals received. *The Passengers' Log*, Winter Issue 1998 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) (**Rosane McNamara gives the background to her entertainment The Merry Wives of Watson, Michael Duke considers Watson's childhood in Australia, Kerry Murphy looks at the James-John enigma . . . and there are Philip Cornell's superb illustrations**). *The Sherlock Holmes Railway Journal*, volume 5 (**The Irregular Special Railway Company**, Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) (**a 1935 article on Holmes and railways, David Walsh's identification of the accident in which Helen Stoner's mother died, Catherine Cooke's study of Charing Cross Station, Antony Richards' discussion of the calculation in 'Silver Blaze' and more good stuff**).

The School Report, Winter Term 1998 (**The Priory Scholars of Leicester**, Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (**Ken Savery examines the characters in 'The Red-Headed League'**). *The Musgrave Papers*, 1998 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, west Yorkshire BD16 4DN) (**144 pages with an essay on each story in The Memoirs, plus humour from Auberon Redfeare, wonderful cartoons by Jeff Decker, a lovely dramatic illustration by Chris Senior. . .**). *Communication*, Halloween Edition 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**an interesting and sometimes amusing look at horror in the Canon**).

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, September 1998 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. MN 55455, USA) (**behind the scenes at the world's greatest public Sherlockian collection**). *The Petrel Flyer*, September/October 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (**mostly given over to a report on the 10th and last annual Sherlympiad, held in Seattle; it must have been tremendous fun!**). *The Camden House Journal*, October 1998 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, 105 Wilcox Street, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) (**Barbara Roscoe contributes an excellent brief account of Victorian mourning customs**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, October 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com). (**The classic Sherlockian newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 185 7th December 1998

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The superb new *District Messenger* letterhead was designed by Philip Cornell of **The Sydney Passengers**. Many thanks, Philip!

William Berner ('Aloysius Doran Esq. of San Francisco', BSI) died last year. Until his retirement he was one of the best specialist Sherlockian booksellers. **James Goldman**, who wrote the play and film *They Might Be Giants*, and who won an Oscar for *The Lion in Winter*, died on 28 October.

The Norman Rosenbaum collection of books and MSS by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, one of the world's finest, will be auctioned at Sotheby's on 17 December. There's a lot of Sherlockiana, of course (first editions, signed copies, an autograph letter from ACD explaining that Holmes wouldn't work on stage, an unpublished Paget portrait of Holmes) and much relating to other aspects of ACD's life and work — 217 lots in all. The catalogue is available now, and the full text is posted on Sotheby's website: www.sothebys.com. Enquiries to Peter Selley, Sotheby's Book Dept, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA (phone 0171 293 5295; fax 0171 293 5904).

The London Festival of Sherlock Holmes will run from Wednesday 22 to Sunday 26 September 1999. John Doubleday's statue of Holmes will be unveiled outside Baker Street Station on 23 September. Details of the associated events will follow.

The Bedside, Bathtub & Armchair Companion to Sherlock Holmes by Dick Riley & Pam McAllister (Continuum Publishing Co., 370 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10017, USA; \$19.95) is an attractive book, engagingly written and profusely illustrated in black & white. The authors have done their homework, and their essays on, for instance, the British peerage, drug use and abuse, and Sherlockian parody & pastiche, are brief but often enlightening. They seem sound on Holmesian societies, though a few addresses might have been helpful. The book is distributed in Britain by Cassell PLC (Wellington House, 125 Strand, London WC2R 0BB) at £12.99 paperback or £25.00 hardback.

The core of *Holmes, Chemistry & The Royal Institution* is Bryson Gore's paper 'Chemistry Is ... Elementary', presented to our Society at the Royal Institution in 1994. Antony J. Richards adds essays on Sherlock Holmes's chemical career and has some intriguing ideas about his university education. This handsome, well illustrated softback can be bought from Pam Bruxner (2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB; cheques payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**). Until 15 December, prices postpaid are; UK £13.50; Europe £14.50; USA \$27.50; elsewhere £16.50. After then the price will be £15.75.

The latest title from Calabash Press (PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) is *The Abominable Wife, and Other Unrecorded Cases of Mr Sherlock Holmes*, in which the indefatigable John Hall speculates on the truth behind Watson's tantalising hints. Many writers have attempted to write accounts of various of the untold tales, but John's is a different approach, and perhaps more valuable. *The Abominable Wife* is a worthy companion to his *Sidelights on Holmes*. It's available from good Sherlockian booksellers or from Calabash at £12.50, US\$19.50 or Cdn\$23.50. Postage is extra: USA US\$3.75, Canada Cdn\$5.30; elsewhere (air) US\$7.05 or £4.35, (surface) US\$4.15 or £2.55.

The latest *Musgrave Monograph*, due shortly from **The Northern Musgraves**, is *221 BBC: Writing for the World's First Complete Dramatised Canon* by Bert Coules. Bert was the originator and head writer of the unique BBC Radio series with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, and his illustrated 76-page brochure puts that achievement firmly into the context of Sherlockian radio drama. It can be ordered from Mark Hunter-Purvis (6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon-on-Tyne NE21 5PD), at £6.50, US\$15.00 or Cdn\$23.00, including postage.

The good news for fans of Skelington Bones, Spook Detective is that David Stuart Davies has written a 5th instalment of the incompetent ghost-hunter's adventures. The bad news is that *The Final Spooking* is the last. To find out how Bones gets the better of his arch-enemy Dr Cadabra at the cost of his own corporeal existence, send a cheque payable to David Stuart Davies to: Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER (UK £5.00, Europe £6.00, USA \$10.00, Canada \$12.00 — postpaid).

The Winter issue of *This England* (PO Box 52, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 1YQ; £3.50) contains an article by John Hall: 'In the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes'. December's *Book & Magazine Collector* (43-45 St Mary's Road, Ealing, London W5 5RQ; £2.70) has a piece on Sherlockian pastiche: 'The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes' by David Whitehead.

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine no. 28 is a 'Special Parody Issue'. Brian Adrian surveys early Sherlockian travesties; David Stuart Davies looks at the Peter Cook & Dudley Moore *Hound of the Baskervilles*; Jean Upton examines Schlock Homes; 'The Case of the Danish Prince' by Miles Kington gets a welcome reprint; Barbara Roden notes that Conan Doyle too could send up his hero; 'Socialites Forum' (*sic*) casts the spotlight on **The Sidney James Passengers**... Fortunately for our sanity, there's also Michael Cox's *A Study in Celluloid*, looking at Granada's *Hound*, and a Christmas story by John Hall, as well as Colin Dexter on his TV career, Gaynor Coules on Simon Brett and Mike Ripley on the new *Sherlock* awards, while the real Societies Forum looks at **The Bimetallic Question of Montréal**. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO

Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

There are new catalogues from **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH); **Bibliotective** (Box 47347, Oak Park, Michigan 48237, USA); and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE).

New from Constable & Co. Ltd (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER; £16.99) is *Sherlock Holmes and the Royal Flush* by Barrie Roberts.

Jennie Paton sends news that 12 of the late 1940s American radio plays with John Stanley & Alfred Shirley as Holmes & Watson have been released by Radio Spirits as *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* on 4 cassettes at \$24.98 or 4 CDs at \$39.98. (MysteryNet: www.MysteryNet.com/offer/sherlock01/ offers the cassettes at \$19.00 and the CDs at \$30.00.)

Catherine Cooke passes on two enquiries. One is from **Maya Vision International Ltd**, who produce *The Real History Show* and are looking for an engaged couple who would like to have a small and historically accurate Victorian wedding in the spring or summer of 1999. Phone 0171 836 1113 and speak to Paula or Sam. The other is from **Genootschap Nederland-Engeland**, a Dutch-British cultural exchange society, who want a Sherlockian or Doylean speaker to give half a dozen lectures in Holland at some time between September 1999 and June 2000. No fee is offered, but travel and accommodation expenses will be paid, and out-of-pocket expenses. Contact Mrs Kathleen Tripp (Haydnlaan 10, 3723 KH Bilthoven, Holland; phone +31 030 2293418).

Catherine herself will be busy with a new IT system at Marylebone Library through much of next year, so she stresses that people wanting to visit the Sherlock Holmes Collection *must* make an appointment. Write to her at Marylebone Library, Marylebone Road, London NW1 5PS, or phone 0171 641 1206.

Jon Lellenberg notes that **ACD Holdings PLC** is looking for investors for a very ambitious project. The idea is to turn Undershaw, Conan Doyle's former home at Hindhead, into an exclusive club offering 'one of the largest single collections of ACD and Sherlock Holmes memorabilia; Magic & Mystery evenings; Conventions, Banquets & Superior Dining; Séances in ACD's original Study complete with "Butler" service; Exclusive Member's overnight Accommodation; TV Dramatised Documentary of the life and times of ACD'. The company seems to be unknown, and no terrestrial address is given, but you can get details from Scott Clifton Lucy at slucy@suprailfe.co.uk.

Bob Ellis sends notice of a conference on *Victorian Crime* to be held at London University Centre for English Studies on 24 April 1999. You can get full details from the website at www.geocities.com/Athens/Crete/3783/crimeconf.html or from Centre for English Studies, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU (phone 0171 862 8672). Also from Bob comes notice of Bill Dorn's illustrated *Sherlock Holmes Calendar 1999*, marking important dates in the world of Sherlock Holmes. Send \$9.95 (+ \$2.00 postage overseas) to William S. Dorn, 2045 S. Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210-3734, USA.

Mad Dogs & Englishmen will perform *A Collector of Women* (based on 'The Illustrious Client') at **Greyfriars Adult Community College** in Colchester on 11 December at 7.30. Tickets are £5.50. Phone 01206 542242.

Maurice Tanner (180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA) offers philatelic covers to mark the anniversaries of the

1939 and 1959 films of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. No. 9 features the 1939 poster plus the five 1993 Holmes stamps and the 1997 Hound stamp (£13.99, or £14.99 overseas); no. 10 shows Peter Cushing & Christopher Lee, plus the 1993 and 1997 Hound stamps (£11.99, or £12.99 overseas).

We found in Lawley's a charming figurine of a small hedgehog examining a ladybird through a lens. It's called 'Sherlock', and is one of the *Hedgies* series from Paw Prints (The Mill, Avenue Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks. CV37 0HR). Cost is about £15.00.

The *Sherlock Holmes Public House & Restaurant* (10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA; phone 0171 930 2644) has some nice new memorabilia for sale, with lots of nice older stuff. The website at www.sherlock-dircon.co.uk/ has the full list.

Michael Ross of **Von Herder Airguns Ltd** has just moved. His new address is Postfach 42 06 70, 50900 Köln, Germany.

The Annual Dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** will be held on Friday 8 January 1999. (Contact Michael Whelan, *Wiggins*, 414 N. Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA) The Annual Dinner of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will be held at the House of Commons on Saturday 16 January. The Guest of Honour will be Dr Pierre Nordon.

On 9 January **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** will hold its Disjecta Membra event (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU), and **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia** will hold the Master's Dinner (Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada). **The Sydney Passengers** will celebrate Sherlock Holmes's birthday and the centenary of 'Charles Augustus Milverton' on 10 January. (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia), and **The Pleasant Places of Florida** plan to hold Sherlock's Birthday Celebration on 16 January (Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA). The winter party of **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** is scheduled for 6 February, which will allow time for the other commitments of the Festive Season to have abated (Shirley Purves, Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL).

A very brief round-up of periodicals received. *ACD: The Journal of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society*, 1998 (PO Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada). *The FMHC Memo*, November 1998, and *The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Interim Report 1998: The Engineer's Thumb Contract Reviewed* (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU). *The Formulary*, December 1998, and *Watson's Wanderings: A Tour of Some Walks Taken by Dr Watson (The Friends of Dr Watson*, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ).

The Baker Street Journal, September 1998 (PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*all correspondence for *The Baker Street Irregulars* should be addressed to Michael Whelan, 414 N. Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA*). *The Parallelogram*, November 1998 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 23126, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, October 1998 and November 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

The Compliments of the Season to all!

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 186 23rd January 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

David Stuart Davies reports that **Michael Pointer**, who set the standard for research into Holmesian drama in works such as *The Public Life of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Sherlock Holmes File*, died on Boxing Day. Peter Blau notes that another of our members, **Willard Van Valkenburgh**, died on 6 December.

At the **Baker Street Irregulars'** dinner on 9 January, *Wiggins* announced the following well-deserved investitures: **Marilyn MacGregor** ('V.V. 341'), **June Kinnee** ('Hatty Doran'), **Leslie Klinger** ('The Abbey Grange'), **Paul Jeffers** ('Wilson Hargreave') and **William S. Dorn** ('Newgate Calendar'). At the William Gillette Memorial Luncheon, David Stuart Davies & Kathryn White awarded the Northern Musgrave Crown to **Susan Rice**.

You'll enjoy *On the Rack with Conan Doyle, and Other Journeys* comprising 23 of Michael Higgs's essays from *The Petrel Flyer* (Hansom Press Ltd, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada; e-mail lenhaffenden@bc.sympatico.ca). Michael seems to have been everywhere, and he's kept his eyes open for Sherlockian connections (and found them). His writing is easy and literate, his comments are stimulating, and the result is a grand contribution to our Game. The price is Cdn\$17.95, US\$12.50 or £8.50 (plus postage).

Let me also recommend Patrick Campbell's *Shades of Sherlock*, a handsome hardback containing three enjoyable new Holmes stories, a short play and essays on the troopship *Orontes*, the Vernet connection, the railway connections in 'The Final Problem', and other subjects. It's nicely illuminated with illustrations by Jean-Pierre Cagnat and Paul Churchill. *Shades of Sherlock* is published at Cdn\$30.00 by The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (P.O. Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada) and should be available from specialist dealers.

The Mammoth Book of Armchair Detectives & Screen Crimes edited by Peter Haining (Robinson Publishing, 7 Kensington Church Court, London W8 4SP; £6.99) includes a rare gem in Thomas H. Hutchinson's script for the very first Sherlock Holmes TV play, *The Three Garridebs*, broadcast by NBC in 1937, with Louis Hector as Holmes.

The Ultimate Guide to Unusual Leisure by Stephen Jarvis (Robson Books Ltd, Bolsover House, 5-6 Clipstone Street, London W1P 8LE; £10.99) is a compendium of uncommon pursuits, such as ningle jumping, vertical archery and pyramidology. Holmesian groups featured include **Holmes in Scale**, **The Solar Pons Society of London** and **The Watsonians**.

Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; e-mail rupert_books@compuserve.com) have issued two more Rupert Books Monographs, each priced at £10.00 plus postage. No. 9, at 28 pages, is 'a facsimile of a scarce 1925 Conan Doyle Spiritualist pamphlet', *The Early Christian Church and Modern Spiritualism*, with an afterword by Michael W. Homer. No. 10, at

60 pages, is *Collecting Sherlockiana: John Bennett Shaw's Basic Holmesian Library*, edited and annotated by Catherine Cooke.

Catalogue 33 from **Violet Books** (P.O. Box 20610, Seattle, WA 98102, USA; e-mail violet@drizzle.com) lists 12 of John Kendrick Bangs' rare parodies, including *The Dreamers: A Club* and *The Enchanted Typewriter* — both Sherlockian.

More new catalogues: **Bibliotective** (P.O. Box 47347, Oak Park, MI 48237, USA; e-mail wroth@mich.com); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (82 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 3DE; e-mail mysteriouslon@compuserve.com); **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH; e-mail ralph@pmbooks.demon.co.uk); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk); and **Rupert Books** (address above).

The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; website www.sh-memorabilia.co.uk) is always worth a visit. The shop has *The Bedside, Bathub & Armchair Companion to Sherlock Holmes* by Dick Riley & Pam McAllister (favourably reviewed in DM 185) at £10.00, a significant saving on the published price of £12.99. Also in stock is the new *Strand Magazine*, at £3.50, and the shop has added a new range of miniature collectibles in porcelain.

A reminder of the first annual *Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay* competition, organised by **The Friends of Dr Watson**. It's open to all who have an interest in Holmes' great-hearted friend, and there is no entry fee. You are asked to discuss, in 1000 - 3000 words, Watson's relationship with Sherlock Holmes. The best essay will win *A Sherlock Holmes Reader*, *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*, the *Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay* certificate, and a year's subscription to the Friends of Dr Watson. Well worth going for, I'd say! Write for an entry form to: Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ.

David Stuart Davies's new play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* will be produced at **Salisbury Playhouse** from Tuesday 18 to Saturday 22 May, with Roger Llewellyn as Holmes. There are plans to take it to the Edinburgh Festival, and it will be staged at the **Cockpit Theatre** in London during the *Sherlock Holmes Festival* in September.

Plans for the Festival include a reception at Tower Bridge on Wednesday 22 September; the unveiling of John Doubleday's statue of Holmes at Baker Street Station on Thursday, followed by Music Hall at the Players' Theatre; a film-show at the Museum of London on Friday; and a Sherlock Holmes Fête in Regents Park on Sunday 26 September. The principal sponsor is Abbey National, which has occupied 221 Baker Street since the 1930s.

Peter Blau notes that Scott Lucy of ACD Holdings, who plan to establish The Undershaw Club at Conan Doyle's former home in Surrey (see DM 185), can supply information from The Undershaw Club, c/o Grannom House, Gasden Lane, Witley, Surrey GU8 5QB (e-mail slucy@supralife.co.uk).

The *Daily Mail* for Saturday 26th December featured 'A special Boxing Day Sherlock Holmes story — by Stephen Fry'. Though no acknowledgement was made, the story was 'The Adventure of

the Laughing Jarvey', an anachronistic but enjoyable comedy first published in *The Listener* in 1987, and reprinted in Stephen Fry's book *Paperweight* (Heinemann, 1992).

Alex Booth has been in touch with VCI, who have the video licence for the Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (GV0035) and *The Master Blackmailer* (GV0036) are currently available, and the rest are slowly being made available, beginning with the first series. Alex adds: 'Apparently VCI have done a deal with Britannia to release the whole set, but you can only get the last series by buying all of the videos in turn (which I imagine is not a lot of use to most people who have the others already!).' (**Britannia, I think, sells only by mail order.**)

I'm happy to report that the original Portsmouth-based Sherlock Holmes society is still alive and well. The Chief Secretary of **The Fratton Lodgers** is Simon Smyth, whose address is 31 Sandyfield Crescent, Cowplain, Hants. PO8 8SQ. The annual subscription is just £5.00; cheques or postal orders (payable to Chris Neale) should be sent to the Paymaster, Chris Neale, at 15 Boldre Close, Bedhampton, Havant, Hants. PO9 4BN.

A distinguished offshoot of **The Baker Street Irregulars** celebrates its first half-century with a book. *Hugo's Companions, Chicago: 50 Years of a Sherlockian Scion Society* introduces such notable Companions as Vincent Starrett, Basil Rathbone and T.S. Eliot. This limited edition hardback is available by subscription only at \$65.00, post-paid, from **Hugo's Companions**, Grosse Point Lighthouse, 2535 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201-2431, USA.

The Phœnician Tin Traders are a new Branch Office of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, founded by Tracey and Bryan Knuckey (1 Cross Street, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 2EY). **The Noble West Enders** have 'ceased to function as an FMHC Branch Office', but the founders, Paula and Frank Brown, have formed another at their new home in Oregon. The address of **The Portland Prisoners** is 132, 7th Street, Ashland, OR 97520, U.S.A.

The Poor Folk Upon the Moors will hold their Annual General Meeting and 'Beryl Coronet Lunch' on Saturday 6 February at the Globe Hotel, Topsham, near Exeter. As well as the Guests of Honour, Bernard Davies and Geraldine Beare, there will be a Victorian musical entertainment by Tony Yates, a raffle and a short auction. The Poor Folks' Secretary is Shirley Purves (Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL).

The AGM of **The Irregular Special Railway Company** will be held on 13 February at the Montague Hotel in Montague Street, near the British Museum (a candidate for Holmes's first London lodgings). A visit to the London Transport Museum will be followed by lunch at the hotel, then the AGM, a tour of the British Museum, tea and an auction. (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX; e-mail arichards@msicam.co.uk.)

The next day **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Glades of the New Forest** will combine for a tour of forts connected with Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle in the Portsmouth area. The address for both societies is 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU. They stress the need for early booking, 'as we have a programme for overcoming potential problems with the required pre-reading study'.

The Red Circle of Washington will meet at the National Press Club, at 14th and F Streets NW, Washington, DC, on 19 February, when Henry W. Zecher will talk about the life & times of William Gillette. Details from Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA.

April sees the first open meeting of **The Napoleons of Crime**, who are devoted specifically to the villains in the Canon. The venue is Gelnhausen, near Frankfurt am Main, a village with a

curious history. Exact dates are to be announced. Contact Uwe Sommerlad at Rödelheimer Landstr. 32, 60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

Periodicals received. **The Cormorant's Ring**, December 1998 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA) (**Sherlockian percussion by Clarence Barber, mystery in 1905 by Les Klinger, Bernard Oudin's correct assertion that 'A Gazogene Is Not a Seltzogene' [which misses the fact that the British used the word 'gasogene' indiscriminately — as they still do with 'tantalus']...**). **The Torr**, no. 13 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) (**Eric Monahan writes about Conan Doyle in Torbay and about Jonathan Wild; Eddie Maguire gives a brief introduction to Holmes on radio**).

Le Nouveau Registre de l'Hôtel Dulong: Publication lyonnaise sur Sherlock Holmes, December 25th 1898 (**sic**) (Sylvain Policard, Manager of the Hôtel Dulong, 34 gde rue de la Guillotière, 69007 Lyon, France) (**among much else of interest there's Sylvain Policard's French translation of 'The Adventure of the Two Collaborators' by J.M. Barrie**). **Communication**, November-December 1998 & Special Christmas Edition 1998 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**news, views and part 1 of a seasonal Sherlockian Star Trek story by Carl L. Heifetz**).

The Log of the Canonical Hams, January-June 1998 (published: December 1998) (**The Sherlock Holmes Wireless Society**, Ron Fish, P.O. Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919-0004, USA) (**reprints a most interesting New York Times piece about the renovation of the Algonquin Hotel**). **The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In**, no. 25, & **The Striking (T)Rifles**, December 1998 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Postfach 42 06 70, D-50900 Köln, Germany) (**a handsome journal with a good mix of scholarship and fun, and a fine newsletter, both in German**). **The Ritual**, Autumn 1998 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 4DN) (**the police, personal memories of Martin Dakin, glosses on Jack Tracy's Encyclopædia and more**).

The Camden House Journal, December 1998 & January 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, 105 Wilcox Street, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) (**Lloyd Worley's controversial notes on 'The Red-Headed League' in December; Bill Cochran's comments on 'The Dying Detective' in January**). **The Petrel Flyer**, Nov./Dec. 1998 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (**ears and fingerprints by Len Haffenden, and part 1 of a round-robin: 'The Adventure of the Indian Colonel' by Barbara Roden**).

The Serpentine Muse, Winter 1998 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 W. 21st Street #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (**fond memories of Tom Stix, and a typically ASH Christmas story**). **The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter**, no. 25 & no. 26 (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) (**a reminder that the ISRC's engrossing annual The Sherlock Holmes Railway Journal vol.5, is available at £5.00 including UK postage, or \$10.00 including postage worldwide**).

The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Winter 1998 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** — but you should all know about this one anyway!).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, December 1998 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (**the original Sherlockian newsletter**).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 187 28th February 1999

SHERLOCK HOLMES STATUE FESTIVAL: provisional programme

- Tues. 21 Sept. 5.45 pm *Tower Bridge* — Tour and inaugural reception
Wed. 22 Sept. 6.30 pm *British Library* — Talk on the library and its holdings of Conan Doyle material
Thur. 23 Sept. 11 am *Baker Street Station* — Unveiling ceremony; 12 noon — Reception; eve. *Players' Theatre* — Holmesian Music Hall
Fri. 24 Sept. 12 noon *Mövenpick Restaurant* — Informal lunch; 3.30 pm *House of Lords* - Tea; 7 pm *Museum of London* — Film evening
Sat. 25 Sept. 11 am *Baker Street Station/Cockpit Theatre* — Ceremonies at statue, etc.; 8 pm *Cockpit Theatre* — Special performance of David Stuart Davies's one-man play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* with Roger Llewellyn
Sun. 26 Sept. 11 am *Cockpit Theatre* — Symposium; 2 pm *Central London* — Depart for John Doubleday's studio in Essex

The appeal for funds to erect, maintain and promote the statue is still open. Donations, large or small, in pounds sterling or US dollars, should be sent to The Secretary, Sherlock Holmes Statue Company Ltd, 16 Kirton Close, London W4 5UU (cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Statue Company Ltd).

Check the website at <<http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk>> or contact the Sherlock Holmes Statue Festival at: 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU (phone 0181 540 7657; fax 01233 617296; e-mail <minuetter@aol.com>).

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Robert W. Hahn ('Colonel Ross', BSI) died early this month, aged 80. Bob Hahn founded the Chicago 'Silver Blaze' Stakes, and the 40th running, on 24 July, will be dedicated to his memory. He was prominent in several BSI scion societies, in Chicago and the Midwest. In 1983 he received the **Baker Street Irregulars'** Two Shilling Award. He was a gentleman and a nice guy.

Gael Stahl reports that **Christopher Redmond**, who has done as much as anyone to 'keep the memory green' is recovering from a heart operation. Our thoughts are with him. Chris's *Sherlockian Homepage* is the most popular Sherlock Holmes website, deservedly.

Just out from Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £15.99) is *Sherlock Holmes and the Lusitania* by Lorraine Daly, an exciting tale of the Great War. Von Bork is captured, so who is responsible for the acts of sabotage at Royal Naval dockyards, culminating in the loss of RMS *Lusitania* on 7 May 1915? Shadows arise from Holmes and Watson's past — from the Baskerville case and the business of the naval treaty — and we learn that Watson's second wife was the former Violet Hunter. It's a good read, though a different typeface might have made it an easier one.

Due in May from Phoenix (Orion House, 5 Upper St Martin's Lane London WC2H 9EA; £3.99) is *The Best of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur Conan Doyle, edited by H.R.F. Keating — apparently a new edition of the 1993 Everyman book.

George Vanderburgh's Battered Silicon Press is still active (Box 122, Sauk City, WI 53583, USA, and Box 204, Shelburne, ON Canada L0N 1S0). Recent publications are: *The Spenserian Holmes* by Pasquale Accardo; *An Irregular Anglo-American Glossary of More or Less Unfamiliar Words, Terms and Phrases in the Sherlock Holmes Saga* by S. Tupper Bigelow; *The Final Adventures of Solar Pons* by August Derleth; *Joe Fink Tells Tall Sherlockian Tales* by Joseph J. Fink; *The Final Solution* by Walter J. Harmidarow; *Personae Dramatis in Ludis Sherlockiensibus* by Gary L. Heiselberg; *The Sacred Seal* by J. Regis O'Connor; *The Log of the*

Gloria Scott edited by Warren Randall; *Pike's Peeks at the World of Sherlock Holmes* by Franklin W. Rhode; *Ritualia Musgraviensia* (a Latin translation of 'The Musgrave Ritual'); and *The Practical Handbook of Bee Culture by Sherlock Holmes* by Karl Showler.

Daniel Stashower's *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle* concentrates largely on the development of Conan Doyle's interest in spiritualism, from its 'first stirrings in Southsea through his final years as a globe-trotting crusader'. The book will be published in April by Henry Holt & Co. (no address to hand).

New catalogues are at hand from: **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB; phone 0116 251 2756) (**Black Cat now offers a free Sherlock Holmes/Conan Doyle booksearch service*); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019; e-mail mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Hugh Scullion of Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) now has a website at <http://members.aol.com/beetons/index/htm>. There are several product pages and a joke page.

Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine no. 29 is just out. Michael Cox continues his magisterial account of the Granada TV series, and there are articles on 'The Reigate Squires', *The Woman in Green*, Dr Watson's women, serial killers, Dalziel & Pascoe, Robert B. Parker's 'Spenser' novels, Neill Cream the poisoner, and much more. A.L. Blake presents the first chronicle of Victorian sleuth Luther Darke, and 'Societies Forum' looks at **The Sydney Passengers**. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from 46 Purfield Drive, Wargrave, Berks. RG10 8AR. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The magazine has inaugurated the annual *Sherlock Awards*, and the first will be presented by Julian Rathbone at Murder One, 71-73 Charing Cross Road, at 1 pm on Thursday 4 March. The winning authors are John Harvey, Robert B. Parker, Sparkle Hayter and our own Leslie S. Klinger.

The Dr John H. Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition is organised by **The Friends of Dr Watson**. Submissions of 1000-

3000 words are invited, on the subject of Watson's relationship with Holmes. For more information and an entry form, contact Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ (phone 01462 625432). The closing date has been extended to 31 March.

Don't despair if you miss the special performance of David Stuart Davies's *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* on 25 September. The play will run at the **Cockpit Theatre** in Gateforth Street, London NW8 (about 5 minutes walk from Baker Street Station) from 20 September until 10 October. Phone the Box office on 0171 402 5081. The play opens at the **Playhouse** in Salisbury on 18 May, running until 22 May with a matinee on Thursday 20 May (box office 01722 320333). There'll be one performance at the **Maddermarket Theatre** in Norwich on 9 June (01603 626560). The play will feature at **Roman Eagle Lodge** in Edinburgh during the Festival — 6 and 7 August, then a 3-week run from 9 to 29 August (0131 622 7207). Other venues are planned. Watch this space!

Brian Pugh sends news of plans for the **Sherlock Holmes Festival** at Crowborough: Fri. 2 July — *Sherlock Holmes of Crowborough* (illustrated talk by Philip Weller at the Winston Manor Hotel); Sat. 3 July — Victorian Street Market; Sun. 4 July — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Ceremony at the Terrace Montargis, *A Walk with Sir Arthur* led by Brian Pugh, and 'the Baskerville Dog Show'. Sunday's ceremony is arranged by **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**, of which Brian is Curator — a very worthwhile organisation that welcomes associate members. Check <http://webzone.ccacyber.com/www/conandoylecrowborough/> or contact Brian at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN.

The Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake will this year feature a production of Conan Doyle's play *Waterloo*, running from 5 June to 25 July, as well as plays by Shaw, Coward, Granville Barker, Wodehouse and others. Contact: Shaw Festival 99, PO Box 774, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada L0S 1J0 (phone 905 468 2172; fax 905 468 3804). Francine Swift notes that Edwards & Edwards (1 Lower Regent Street, London SW1Y 4PE; phone 0171 734 4555) handle tickets for the festival, but not accommodation. (**GBS despised Waterloo and Henry Irving's performance!**)

Gerry Turnbull passes on a letter (addressing him as 'Gary Turnbull'), stating that the final Granada series, *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, has been bought for showing on Granada Sky Broadcasting, as '*Sherlock* is always very popular with our viewers and always does well for us on our ratings, it seems, no matter how many times we show it on Granada Plus.'

John English Gifts Ltd (6 Princes Arcade, Piccadilly, London SW1Y 6DS) have sent a copy of their March 1998 catalogue of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia, with notice of two new additions: a wall plaque (£44.95) and a miniature teapot (£15.95), both by Hazle Ceramics and both depicting '221B Baker Street, London NW1'. They look nicely done, but the house in question is actually 239 Baker Street, which houses the Sherlock Holmes Museum, and has no legal or moral claim to the number 221B.

There's a light-hearted, entertaining and informative free e-mail newsletter called *Sherlockian Snippets*, edited and produced by Tabitha Smith. Contact her at SaralockH@aol.com. (**I've pinched some of Tabitha's snippets for this DM.**)

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London will meet on 15 March at London's famous Savage Club, when Colin Prestige will talk about Solicitors in the Canon.

The Occupants of the Empty House will meet at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin on 5 March (details from Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). The Eighth Annual STUD Dinner, on 5 March, at the Starlight Inn, Schiller Park, Illinois, will be followed next morning by the Solar Pons Breakfast (**The STUD Sherlockian Society**, STUDmaster Allan T. Devitt, 16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA). Saturday 6 March also sees *Holmes and Hostelries*, the 11th Birthday Celebration of **The Northern Musgraves**. Lunch at Oscar's, near Leeds Central Station, will precede a programme of entertainment and

enlightenment (John Hall, 20 Drury Avenue, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 4BR). On the same day **The Pleasant Places of Florida** will hold a *Diogenes Meeting* (Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA).

The 18th Annual **Sherlock Holmes/Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium** will be held at the Holiday Inn, Fairborn, OH, with a host of interesting events and speakers (Cathy Gill, 4461 Hamilton Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45223, USA; or e-mail Greg Sullivan at GregSullivan@ae.com). **The Priory Scholars** will meet in Leicester on 28 March to study 'The Boscombe Valley Mystery'. Contact Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY.

Periodicals received. *The Reichenbach Journal*, no. 10 & 11, Winter 1999 (**The Reichenbach Irregulars — The Swiss Sherlock Holmes Society**, Marcus Geisser, Alemannenstrasse 4, CH-9320 Arbon, Switzerland) (**an attractively produced magazine, mostly in German but with abstracts in English, very interesting and wide-ranging; the journal is available at \$10.00 or £5.00 the copy, including surface postage — cash, please; after 30 April Marcus will relinquish the editorship to another brilliant young scholar, Michael A. Meer, of Morgenstrasse 70, CH-3018 Bern, Switzerland**). *The Petrel Flyer*, Jan./Feb. 1999 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada) (**Michael Higgs looks at Holmes's travels in Persia; dramatist Craig Bowlsby gives us part 2 of 'The Adventure of the Indian Colonel'**). *The Beeman's Christmas Annual 1998 and The Camden House Journal*, February 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, 105 Wilcox Street, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) (**the annual is delightful selection from the Occupants' first decade, 1977-1986 — and now we know what Petri wine was really like!**).

The Baker Street Journal, December 1998 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (**lots of interest, as always, and the welcome return of Jeff Decker's 'Tales from Dartmoor'; the BSJ is published by The Baker Street Irregulars, but correspondence not relating to the journal should go to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', 414 N. Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA**). **3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles**, January 1999 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA) (**always full of human interest**). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, December 1998 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA) (**hinting at remarkable revelations regarding 'Aunt Clara'**).

Communication, January-February 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**part 2 of the Sherlockian Star Trek story by Carl L. Heifetz, plus news and views**). *Practice Notes: The Newsletter for the Friends of Dr Watson*, March 1999 (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ) (**links have been formally established between the Friends and the American society The Watsonians, whose President is Susan Z. Diamond, ASH, BSI, 16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA**). *The Parallelogram*, February 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA) (**Pasquale Accardo examines the curious problems in the two 'problem' stories and reviews the BBC Radio 4 Casebook of Sherlock Holmes**). *The School Report*, Spring Term 1999 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (**fascinating research into the Gasfitters' Ball and details of a real Gaslighters' Soirée**).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, January 1999 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (**the mother of all Sherlockian newsletters**).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 188 29th March 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Christopher Roden sends news of the death on 18th March of **Dr Alvin Rodin**, one of the most formidable Conan Doyle scholars of our time. His work on *The Medical Casebook of Dr Arthur Conan Doyle* and *The Annotated Lost World*, in particular, will remain as a worthy memorial. From Francine Swift we learn of the loss of another American stalwart, **Lynn Willis**. Peter Blau notes the deaths of **Ezra Wolff** ('Sir James Damery', BSI), and the composer **John Addison**; besides his Oscar-winning score for *Tom Jones*, Addison's many credits include the theme for BBC TV's 1964 series *Detective* and the score for *The Seven-per-Cent Solution* in 1976.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, edited, with annotations by Leslie S. Klinger, was published late last year by Gasogene Books as the first volume in **The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library**. No-one can take from William Baring-Gould the honour of being the first to produce an annotated edition of the Canon, nor can we deny the achievements of Owen Dudley Edwards and his team in *The Oxford Sherlock Holmes*. However, it seems to me that as a collation of Holmesian (rather than Doylean), commentary Leslie Klinger's monumental project seems likely to surpass both its predecessors, choosing wisely from pretty much the full range of scholarship worldwide. I'm looking forward eagerly to the other 8 volumes. (Gasogene Books, P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; \$26.95.)

Philip A. Shreffler, former editor of *The Baker Street Journal* and scholar of note, has turned his hand to fiction. *The War of the Worlds Mystery* (Wessex Press, P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; \$15.95) sees Eliot Simpson, journalist, and other members of the Baker Street Irregulars investigating murder against the background of Orson Welles's famous 1938 Hallowe'en broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*. Simpson and the BSI will return in *The Twentieth Century Limited Mystery*.

Eric Monahan's *After the Beryl Coronet: The Further Misadventures of Alexander Holder* is a nice little pamphlet whose title tells you pretty much what to expect. Any profit will be shared equally with the **Poor Folk Upon The Moors**. (Parallel Publications, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW; £2.20 including postage, or \$4.90 airmail to USA – please make cheques payable to Eric Monahan.) (*How did Alexander Holder manage to achieve a respected place in the City?*)

Jennie C. Paton has drawn my attention to a couple of astounding re-interpretations of the Canon. *The Red-Necked League* and *The Adventure of the Wild Turkey* are described as 'from the Continuing Adventures of Hamhock Holmes, by Billy Joe-Bob "Bubba" Watson, edited by John Atkins & C.

Bryan Gassner'. Atkins and Gassner are real, but I can't guarantee anything else in these very funny booklets. They're published by Wilson's Basement Dwellers, c/o 234 Mockingbird Lane, Corrales, NM 87048, USA.

The 11th Rupert Books Monograph is *To Arms!*, a 62-page facsimile of a scarce 1914 Conan Doyle propaganda work, with an afterword by Sqn Ldr Philip Weller. (Rupert Books, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB8 8TE; £10.00.)

Bob Ellis passes on news of *Raffles and His Creator* by Peter Rowland, the first full study of the Amateur Cracksman and his author, Conan Doyle's brother-in-law E.W. Homung (Nekta Publications, P.O. Box 18514, London E11 2YH; £11.95). Peter Rowland is the author of the well-received *The Disappearance of Edwin Drood*.

Philip Attwell has spotted *Sherlock Sooty Picture Book*, based on a story by Matthew Corbett (World International Ltd, Deanway Technology Centre, Winslow Road, Handforth, Cheshire SK9 3FB). The published price is £2.99, but it seems to be remaindered all over the place at about 40p.

More new books. *Embassy Row* is the 2nd Mycroft Holmes novel by Quinn Fawcett (Forge, February, £16.99). *A Letter of Mary* is an adventure of Sherlock Holmes and Mary Russell by Laurie R. King (Collins Crime Club, June 1999, £15.99). *The Secret Documents of Sherlock Holmes* by June Thomson was reissued this month in paperback by Allison & Busby at £5.99. And according to Whitaker's BookBank Nelson Dramascripts have published a play based on that well-known Sherlock Holmes story *The Speckled Hen*.

New catalogues are available from The Mysterious Bookshop (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019; e-mail mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net), and Nigel Williams Rare Books (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

The April issue of the BBC *Homes & Antiques* magazine includes a 3-page article about Richard Lancelyn Green and his celebrated collection (BBC Magazines, Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT; 01795 414713). The February issue of *Norfolk Journal* has two pages 'On the trail of the Dancing Men', with some coverage of our Society's trip to Norfolk in 1984 (The Journal Magazines, The Old County School, Northgate Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1HP).

The first issue of *The Strand Magazine* tries hard to emulate its illustrious predecessor and does capture some of the interest and excitement, with good stories by Denis Smith, Henry Slesar and others, and articles by Chris Willis, Christopher and Barbara Roden and Andrew Gasson. The new illustrations are fairly awful, though. You can buy it at the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company, 230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT, and other outlets, or subscribe to P.O. box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012-1418, USA.

A. Leigh sent an e-mail saying 'I have recently discovered around 15 *Strand Magazines* dating 1891 to 1899 in a cellar. They are without covers unfortunately.' Anyone interested is asked to contact him or her at jellibabi@globahiet.co.uk. (*My reply to the message was bounced back by the server..*)

A plea from Peter Blau: 'According to Bill Liman (to **The Hounds of the Internet**), on Feb. 19 1999, Greater London Radio (the BBC's station for London) had an item about "a statue of Holmes which is to be erected outside Baker Street tube station in central London. There were some snuffy comments about him not really existing." Any chance of getting a dub of this?' (**Sherlock Holmes not exist? Next they 'll be saying Peter Pan didn 't exist!**) If you can help, please contact Peter sat 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA (e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com).

On Sunday 18th April the **Keighley & Worth Valley Railway** will hold its first Steam on the Screen day, celebrating Sherlock Holmes. Several of the Granada TV films had railway sequences filmed on this historic line in Yorkshire, so besides a vintage steam train service there'll be re-creations of scenes from the Canon by the Irregular Special Players. For information, contact the railway on 01535 645214 or check the website at www.kwvr.co.uk. (*On 23rd May Steam on the Screen will celebrate that lovely movie *The Railway Children*.*)

From 14th to 17th April, the Pranksters Theatre Company will present *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* – 'devised by Mr Richard Brookman, with sincere apologies to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle' – at the **Electric Theatre**, Onslow Street, Guildford GU1 4SZ (phone 01483 444789). 'In a remote country, famous for its gold and sausages, Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson are desperately trying to find out – why the King has gone mad and where the evil Moriarty has imprisoned the Princess...' It looks like fun!

Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act by David Stuart Davies opens at the **Playhouse** in Salisbury on 18th May, running until 22nd May with a matinee on Thursday 20th May (box office 01722 320333). Other dates include: one performance at the **Maddermarket Theatre** in Norwich on 9th June (01603 626560); the **New Vic Theatre**, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 9th & 10th July (01782 717962); the **Quay Theatre** at Sudbury in Suffolk, 31st July, 01787 374745; a run at **Roman Eagle Lodge** during the Edinburgh Festival – 6th and 7th August, and then three weeks from 9th to 29th August (0131 622 7207); the **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal, 1st September, 01539 725133; the **Cockpit Theatre** in Gateforth Street, London NWS (about 5 minutes walk from Baker Street Station), 20th September to 10th October (0171 402 5081).

This month Naxos Audiobooks released *Sherlock Holmes volume 2*, available on three cassettes at £9.99 or three CDs at £13.99. I've no more details at present, but should mention that I was very impressed with *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes 1*, read by David Timson and released last year. (Naxos Audiobooks, Select Music & Video Distribution, 34A Holmethorpe Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2NN.)

Dr Eilidh Gunson will spend twelve days in August walking and cycling in Little Tibet, in northern India, in aid of Mencap – a charity which works for people with learning disabilities, and supports their carers. Eilidh has funded the cost of the trek herself, and asks for sponsorship from fellow-Sherlockians, all of which will go directly to Mencap.

To support this venture, or to get further information, contact Eilidh Gunson at 1 Dene Royd Close, Stainland, Halifax HX4 9QP (phone 01422 310597). Cheques should be payable to Eilidh Gunson Trek Account.

The Phoenician Tin Traders and **Gerard's Hussars** will host an Easter Pack Meet on Dartmoor, 1st – 5th April (details from Tracey and Brian Knuckey, 1 Cross Street, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 2EY). The Tibet Trek of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** is scheduled for 2nd – 25th April, taking in visits to Lhasa and the North Everest Base Camp (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU). **The Practical, But Limited, Geologists** will meet for dinner in San Antonio on 14 April (Ben Fairbank, Box 15075, San Antonio, TX 78212, U.S.A.). **The Irregular Special Railway Company's** weekend away, 16 –18 April, will take members to York, Manchester (for the Granada Studios Tour), and the Worth Valley Railway (see above) (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX).

Last year's was a huge success, so this year's *221 Beach*, planned for 23 – 25 April at Spring Lake, New Jersey, should be just as much fun (Al Gregory, 118 South Prospect Street, Verona, NJ 07044, USA). April also sees the first open meeting of **The Napoleons of Crime**, who are devoted specifically to the villains in the Canon, at Gelnhausen, near Frankfurt am Main, a village with a curious history (Uwe Sommerlad, Rodelheimer Landstr. 32, 60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, March 1999 (The Occupants of The Empty House, 105 Wilcox Street, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) (**Bill Cochran dates The Valley of Fear**). *Sherlockian Snippets*, March 1999 (received by e-mail from Tabitha Smith at SaralockH@aol.com) (**just what the title says: informative and fun**). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, March 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA) (**Jon Lellenberg looks at the background of John Dickson Carr's Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**).

The Striking (T)Rifles, February 1999 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, c/o Michael Ross, Postfach 42 06 70, D-50900 Köln, Germany) (**an always informative newsletter about Sherlockian events in Germany**). *Communication*, Mad March 1999 Special Issue, and March/April 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA) (**among many good jokes in the Mad March issue, I particularly like Dave Scott's Monty Python skit, 'ACD's Flying Circus'; the regular issue is simply full of interesting reportage**). *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, January 1999 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (**the original Sherlockian newsletter**).

I'm very honoured to have been elected to membership of **The Edmonton Deerstalker**. The Membership Secretary, Peter H. Wood, notes that 'there are no annual fees and no annual dinner or other activities. Members of the society who find they are in the company of a fellow "Edmonton Deerstalker" may, of course, celebrate the occasion in any manner they consider fitting.'

I shall therefore sign this issue of *The District Messenger*,

Roger Johnson, E.D.

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 189 6th May 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The new Naxos AudioBooks release, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes II*, comprises 'A Scandal in Bohemia', 'The Engineer's Thumb', 'The Five Orange Pips' and 'Silver Blaze', all read superbly by the versatile David Timson. Again, the producer, Nicolas Soames, has chosen wonderfully appropriate music to enhance the stories, by Smetana, Paganini and (unexpectedly) E.J. Moeran. This second volume is even better than the first because the stories, chosen by David Timson, are read unabridged. It comes as 3 cassettes for £9.99 or 3 CDs for £13.99. It's brilliant — what more can I say? (Naxos AudioBooks, Unit 4, Wyllyotts Manor, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 2HN.)

The Baker Street Irregulars in The War of the Worlds Mystery by Philip Shreffler (Wessex Press, P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; \$15.95) admirably re-creates the early days of the BSI and the New York of the late 1930s. I thoroughly enjoyed the pen portraits of Christopher Morley and his chums and of Orson Welles and his *Mercury Theatre on the Air* company. The disappearance and murder of a promising young actress is convincingly set against the background of Welles' now-classic broadcasts of *Sherlock Holmes* and *The War of the Worlds*. If Eliot Simpson, journalist and amateur sleuth, didn't exist as an early Irregular (he didn't — I've just checked), then he jolly well should have. *The War of the Worlds Mystery* is a grand detective mystery, with the enticing promise of more to come.

Eric Monahan's new chapbook has just arrived: *Holmes under the Lens: Some Observations on Aspects of the Canon* — 32 pages of essays reprinted from *The Torr*. Eric has copies at £4.00 or \$7.80 including postage, cheques payable to Eric (Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NQ).

Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) have just issued a nice new edition of the best-selling detective story of the 19th century *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* by Fergus Hume. This neglected novel, dismissed by Howard Haycraft as a shoddy pot-boiler, is actually intelligent and intensely readable, well worth the price of £7.99.

Visitors to the beautiful city of Venice can buy a revised and very attractively presented new edition of the novel *Sherlock Holmes a Venezia*, an exciting adventure by Ivo Lombardo, illustrated by Maurizio Amendola (Edizioni GB, 35131 Padova, Via Marzolo, 15/B, Italy). An English language edition is planned.

Bill Barnes (19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) offers *The Hounds' Collection, vol. 4*: 80 pages of pastiche, humour & scholarship by members of **The Hounds of the Internet** (airmail US\$12.00, Cdn\$17.00 or £8.00; surface US\$8.00, Cdn\$11.00 or £5.00 — personal cheques or currency accepted).

The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (P.O. Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, L0N 1S0, Canada, and P.O. Box 122, Sauk City, WI 53583-0122, USA) has an extraordinarily full and interesting catalogue of publications available. A brief selection: *Joe Fink Tells Tall Sherlockian Tales* by Joseph J. Fink; *The Log of the Gloria Scott* by Bob Brodie & Warren Randall; *Who Was Bruce-Partington?* by Michael H. Kean; *The Final Adventures of Solar Pons* by August Derleth; *Shades of Sherlock* by Patrick Campbell; *The Winged Wheel* by Peter H. Wood . . .

The Sherlockian Times for Winter-Spring 1999 is as much a magazine as a catalogue, and full of good things (**Classic Specialties**, P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA). Other new catalogues of interest have been issued by **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH); **Violet Books** (P.O. Box 20610, Seattle, WA 98102, USA); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA) (**this is A-J of a specialist Sherlock Holmes listing; incidentally, I understand that the London branch of the Mysterious Bookshop has closed**).

P. & P. Davies (19 Fisher Avenue, Woodthorpe, Nottingham NG5 4JE) have Sherlock Holmes postcards for sale. The website is at freespace.virgin.net/petedavies.modernpostcards.

In the 30th issue of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* Michael Cox continues his magisterial account of the making of the Granada TV series; Paul Chapman looks at the twilight of the master criminal; Roger Llewellyn talks about playing Holmes on stage; Kathryn White considers the Viagra Principle; David Stuart Davies considers the 1931 movie *The Speckled Band*; Raymond Johns observes A.J. Raffles, and John Hall contributes a new Raffles story; Gaynor Coules examines Liza Cody's books; Ian Rankin is interviewed; **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** comes under the spotlight — and there's more from Roger Forsdyke, Pat Ward, Mike Ripley and Moriarty. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from Angeline Greenaway, Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Our member Mary Rutter (0171 359 6135) will lead a *Valley of Fear* ramble on 12 June, starting at Ashurst Station (dep. Victoria 9.23am, arr. Ashurst 10.24am) and taking in Groombridge village and Groombridge Place (the 'real' Birlstone Manor). The walk is about 10 miles in all. There's no charge, but members must arrange their own transport and food.

Running now until 13 May at the **Drayton Court Theatre** (2 The Avenue, West Ealing, London W13) is a production of Conan Doyle's 1910 play *The Speckled Band*, directed by Kenneth Bentley. Performances are 3.00pm Sundays and 7.45pm Monday - Thursday (no performances Friday or Saturday); tickets are £7.00, or £5.00 concessions; the box

office number is 0181 991 1722. It's a grand chance to see this highly entertaining play.

Adam Dodd's play for Exeter University Student Theatre, *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of the Four'*, will run at the **Northcott Theatre** in Exeter from 22 to 26 June, with matinees on the Thursday and Saturday. Adam has arranged an 'after-show chat' for the Friday evening, and would like to make one of the evening performances a 'societies evening', with a small buffet and drinks for members of Sherlockian societies. This promises to be a fresh and exciting look at a favourite adventure. Interested parties should contact Adam Dodd on 01392 410544 (e-mail a.g.dodd@ex.ac.uk).

Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act by David Stuart Davies opens at the **Playhouse** in Salisbury on 18 May, running until 22 May with a matinee on Thursday 20 May (box office 01722 320333). The tour continues: **Maddermarket Theatre**, Norwich 9 June (01603 626560); **New Vic Theatre**, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 9 & 10 July (01782 717962); **Penistone Theatre**, Penistone, 12 July (01484 313663); **Wycombe Swan**, High Wycombe, 20 July (01494 512000); **Quay Theatre**, Sudbury, 31 July (01787 374745); **Roman Eagle Lodge**, Edinburgh Festival, 6 - 29 August excluding 8, 16 & 23 (0131 622 7207); **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal, 1 September (01539 725133); **Gladstone Hall**, Port Sunlight, 4 September (0151 645 57559); **Cockpit Theatre**, Gateforth Street, London NW8, 20 September to 10 October, excluding 27 Sept. & 4 Oct. (0171 402 5081).

Phil Attwell reminds me that *Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century*, an animated TV series, begins today at 4.05pm on ITV.

[wysiwyg://content.8/http://findagrave.com/pictures/855.html](http://content.8/http://findagrave.com/pictures/855.html) on the Internet is **Find A Grave**, and you can search by name, location or claim to fame. Brian Pugh has sent a printout of Basil Rathbone's grave in Ferncliff Cemetery, Hartsdale, New York.

Tim Pettifer (Banks, 9 Church Lane, Moorhaven Village, Bittaford, Devon PL21 0XW) wants video recordings of *The Eligible Bachelor* and the 6-episode *Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* — the final broadcasts in Granada TV's Holmes series. If you can help, please contact Tim direct. (*Videos were released in North America but not yet, I think, in Europe.*)

Bill Barnes reports that **Uno Studio in Holmes** will stage a Sherlock Holmes exhibition in the gardens of the Imperial Forum in Rome from 10 July to 10 August. Every night there will be a film at an open-air theatre, and over the weekend 24 - 25 July the society will hold a seminar with numerous talks and presentations. If you can offer material for display, or if you'll be in Rome that month, please contact Enrico Solito at Via Lazerini 56, 50019 Sesto Fiorentino - F1, Italy (e-mail esolito@tin.it).

The restaurant at the *Sherlock Holmes Public House* in London has been extended, taking in the former kitchen area. It's now 1½ times its original size, splendidly decorated with some exhibits that must have been in storage for years, and of course the food and drink are excellent. The Baker Street sitting-room has been given a thorough spring-cleaning and looks better than it has done for years. The managers, Sue and Ken Collier, are keen to maintain the pub's dual rôle as a great place to drink, eat and socialise, and as the world's leading Sherlockian shrine. (10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2N 5DA; phone 0171 930 2644; e-mail sherlock@popmail.dircon.co.uk.)

The Crew of the S.S. May Day will host an 'overseas weekend' in Belfast, 14 - 16 May (details from Mrs Margaret

Stretton, 21 Kylemore Park, Belfast BT14 6SA, Northern Ireland). **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will meet on 13 May for Annual General Meeting and a panel discussion on the 'Neglected Cases' (R.J. Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU). **The Société Sherlock Holmes de France** will hold its annual convention in the wonderful *belle époque* setting of the *Train Bleu* Restaurant at the Gare de Lyon in Paris on 15 May (Sébastien Le Page, 82 Holland Road, London W14 8BB) (*alas, the deadline may already be past*). On 15 - 16 May, **Cox & Co. of New England** and **The Bull Terriers of Boston** will hold an anniversary gathering at Windsor Castle (David House, 498 Hanover Street #1-D, Manchester, NH 03104, USA).

The Boscombe Valley Mystery Tour of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London** will explore sites in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, over the weekend 4 - 6 June (Anna Smyth, 32 Cirencester Road, Tetbury, Glos. GL8 8EY). On 19 June, **The Northern Musgraves** will meet at the Greater Manchester Police Museum. The title of the meeting is *Come In, Lestrade* (Terry and Barbara Harding, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Staley Bridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY). *Buzzing in Sussex* is a full-day function on 20 June, organised by **Gerard's Hussars** to explore Holmesian and Doylean connections in East Sussex, including the possible location of Holmes's villa (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN).

Periodicals received: I think I somehow omitted to mention the Summer issue (6th January 1999) of *The Passengers' Log* (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia), which, thanks to Rosane's firm hand as editor, Philip Cornell's enviable talent as artist and writer, and the input of a grand bunch of Aussie Sherlockians, maintains its status as one of the most stylish and enjoyable journals anywhere in the world. (*I'm sorry to see the end of 'Passing the Deerstalker', but I suppose the series couldn't go on forever.*)

Also received: *The Camden House Journal*, April 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA); *The Petrel Flyer*, March/April 1999 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada); *The Serpentine Muse*, Spring 1999 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA); *The Cormorant's Ring*, Spring 1999 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA); *The Camden House Journal*, May 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, December 1998 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA); *Ironmongers Daily Echo and Franco-Midland Branches Advertiser*, April 20th 1898 and March 1899 (*sic*) (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Grand Dépôt de Paris, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France); *The Parallelogram*, March 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA); *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, March 1999 and April 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 390 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*the great Sherlock Holmes newsletter*).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 190 10th June 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

My apologies to those who have complained that our Society's website still shows DM 188 (26th March) as the current issue. I sent in DM 189 in good time. After that it's out of my hands!

The Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company (230 Baker Street, London NW1 5RT; phone 0171 486 1426; e-mail sales@shmc.demon.co.uk) has pulled off a remarkable coup. The company has acquired nearly all the props and furnishings from Granada TV's Baker Street sitting-room set and has mounted, above the shop, a permanent and unique tribute to Granada's *Sherlock Holmes* series and to Jeremy Brett. Two of JB's friends have ensured the accuracy and authenticity of the set, which can be visited at a charge of £1.50 per person. The Company's website is at www.sh-memorabilia.co.uk.

The fourth volume of that excellent series *The Case Files of Sherlock Holmes*, from Calabash Press, is *The Blue Carbuncle*. Christopher Roden gives a fine comprehensive and balanced survey of the literature to date, and the following 16 essays maintain the high standard. They cover all sorts of topics, from the location of the *Alpha Inn* (Bernard Davies almost convinces me that it is the *Plough* rather than the *Museum Tavern*) and the culpability of Catherine Cusack, to the Victorian Christmas card and comparisons with *A Christmas Carol*. As a bonus Peter Wood presents a letter from Alf Breckinridge, which raises a few more possibilities. Paul Lowe's new illustrations are splendid. Like the earlier volumes, *The Blue Carbuncle* is a must. (Calabash Press, P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada; Cdn\$30.00.)

A letter written by Mary of Magdala, proving her to have been an apostle of Jesus, would cause havoc within the Christian church — but is it a strong enough reason for murder? That's the premise of *A Letter of Mary*, Laurie R. King's third novel about Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes (Collins Crime, HarperCollins Publishers, 77/85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB). It's a clever and exciting story, and by now, I can just about accept the notion that the 70-year old Holmes and the 20-something Russell are married. Ms King doesn't really capture the atmosphere of England in 1923, however, and the text is littered with anachronisms (no respectable young woman would enter a pub alone unless she wanted to be considered 'fast'; nor would she drink beer) and Americanisms (English head waiters are not called *maitre d'*, and English restaurants don't employ busboys) — which the British publishers should have caught and corrected. Recommended, but with reservations.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) offers a special deal on two of his excellent books, co-written with Peter Blythe. You can have the two-part *On Stage Sherlock Holmes: A Guide to Sherlock Holmes Theatre Productions* for just £4.50, and *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* for £2.95. He also offers a set of 12 different

postcards for £3.00 and 6 different theatre flyers for £3.00. All prices include postage within the U.K.

The latest book from David L. Hammer is *The Vital Essence*, a collection of new Sherlock Holmes stories (Gasogene Books, P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; \$12.95 plus postage of \$2.50 in USA and \$3.50 other countries). I'll review the book in the next DM.

I've received advance notice of *The Siam Question*, the first volume of *The Holmes Report* by Timothy Francis Sheil. This series of novels, recounting the doings of Sherlock Holmes during the Great Hiatus, will be published and directly marketed by Aladdin Press Ltd, a company registered in Thailand. The British representative is Jonathan Price, 209 East Dulwich Grove, London SE22 8SY.

The 12th Rupert Books Monograph is *The Story of British Prisoners*, a facsimile of a rare 1915 propaganda brochure by Conan Doyle, with an afterword by Sqn Ldr Philip Weller (Rupert Books, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; e-mail rupert_books@compuserve.com). It costs £10.00 plus postage. There's a new catalogue, too, from **Rupert Books**, full of good things, as always. Enticing new catalogues are also available from **Forbes Gibb** (29 Falkland Street, Hyndland, Glasgow G12 9QZ; e-mail forbes@dis.strath.ac.uk); **Baskerville Bücher** (Michael Ross, Postfach 42 06 70, 50900 Köln, Germany; e-mail baskerville@d3.net); **The Mysterious Bookshop** (129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA; e-mail mysteriousny@worldnet.att.net) (*this is J-Z of the special *Sherlock Holmes catalogue**); and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Published in March by Forge at £16.99 was Quinn Fawcett's second Mycroft Holmes mystery, *Embassy Row*. Older yet is *The Einstein Paradox: And Other Science Mysteries Solved by Sherlock Holmes* by Colin Bruce (Perseus Books, October 1998; £8.50).

Don Hobbs offers copies of his 214-page bibliography *The Crowded Box-Room; A Checklist of Sherlockian Publications and Their Publishers* at \$35.00 (2100 Elm Creek Lane, Flower Mound, TX 75028, USA).

I learn from Catherine Cooke (*via Peter Blau and Francine Swift!*) that the manuscripts of 'The Dying Detective' and 'The Lion's Mane' have been retrieved by their owner from Marylebone Library, and will be sold. Facsimiles of both are available from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada; e-mail ashtree@ashtree.bc.ca). Francine Swift tells me that the MS of 'The Adventure of the Worst Man in London' (the original title of 'Charles Augustus Milverton') was due to be auctioned at Christie's in New York yesterday, along with an original F.D. Steele illustration.

Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act by David Stuart Davies will be at the **New Vic Theatre**, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 9 & 10 July (01782 717962); **Penistone Theatre**, Penistone, 12 July (01484 313663); **Wycombe Swan**, High Wycombe, 20 July (01494 512000); **Quay Theatre**, Sudbury, 31 July (01787

374745); **Roman Eagle Lodge**, Edinburgh Festival, 6-29 August (0131 622 7207); **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal, 1 September (01539 725133); **Gladstone Hall**, Port Sunlight, 4 September (0151 645 57559); **Cockpit Theatre**, London NW8, 20 Sept. to 10 Oct. (0171 402 5081).

A reminder that this year's flagship production from Exeter University Student Theatre is a play by our member Adam Dodd: *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 'Sherlock Holmes and the Sign of the Four'*. It will be performed at the **Northcott Theatre** in Exeter from 22 to 26 June, with matinees on the Thursday and Saturday (box office phone 01392 493493). Adam has arranged an 'after-show chat' for the Friday evening. This promises to be a fresh and exciting look at a favourite adventure.

Ian Wilkes passes on news that, half a world away, the **Sierra Repertory Theatre** in California is currently staging Paul Giovanni's play *The Crucifer of Blood*. It runs until 11 July at East Sonora (SRT, P.O. Box 3030, Sonora, CA 95370, USA). Peter Blau notes that the same play will feature in the Berkshire Theatre Festival from 24 June to 10 July (Box 797, Stockbridge, MA 01262, USA; phone 413 298 5536).

Phil Attwell points out that Nigel Williams' recent BBC TV documentary on Sherlock Holmes inspired interesting articles in the *Sunday Times* and the *Daily Mail*. These reveal that David Pirie has conceived a series about the detective exploits of Dr Joseph Bell, with Arthur Conan Doyle as his sidekick. Jonathan Pryce is tipped to play Bell, and the series is expected to be shown on BBC TV in the autumn.

This year's **Sherlock Holmes Festival** will take place in Crowborough from 2 to 4 July. You can get details from P.O. Box 117, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1WU (phone 01892 665464; fax 01892 661425). There's a website at www.city2000.com/ec/sherlock-holmes-festival.html. Besides the Conan Doyle Billiard Tournament, the Victorian Street Market, the Baskervilles Dog Show and similar, **The Conan Doyle Crowborough Establishment** will ensure that the man who actually lived at Crowborough, and who created Sherlock Holmes, is remembered. Philip Weller will give a talk on 'Sherlock Holmes of Crowborough', a Conan Doyle Memorial Service will be held at Montargis Terrace, and Brian Pugh will lead a guided 'Walk with Sir Arthur'.

The Establishment needs and deserves our support. Contact the Curator, Brian Pugh, at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN. The Establishment's website is at <http://webzone.ccacyber.com/www/conandoylecrowborough/>.

Richard Wein reminds me that besides the two excellent collections of Sherlock Holmes stories, read by the wonderful David Timson, Naxos Audiobooks also offer a 2-CD (or 2-cassette) recording of *Four Short Stories* by Arthur Conan Doyle. I don't have full details to hand, but I do know that these are *not* Sherlock Holmes stories. (Naxos AudioBooks, Unit 4, Wyllyotts Manor, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 2HN; check the website at www.naxos.co.uk/audiobooks/.)

Robert Redford has bought the rights to Ben Macintyre's *The Napoleon of Crime: The Life and Times of Adam Worth, the Real Moriarty*. He wants Paul Newman to play Worth's nemesis, William Pinkerton.

In 1996 the London Postcard Company (phone 0181 961 9572) issued a series of cards to celebrate 40 years of Hammer Films. One is a reproduction of the poster for the 1959 production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which I spotted recently in a newsagent's in Marylebone Road.

Issue 35 of Geoff Bradley's admirable magazine *CADS* (Crime And Detective Stories) is available from Geoff at 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA. The Sherlockian content this time includes Philip Scowcroft's article on 'Walking Sticks and Detective Fiction'.

The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia hold their third annual *Reichenbachfall* picnic and games in or near Vancouver on 12 June (get details from Fran Martin, 10662 129 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3T 3H4, Canada). **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** host the ASH Spring Dinner on 19 June in New York City (Evelyn Herzog at 360 West 21st Street, Apt. 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). On the same day, **The Northern Musgraves** meet at the Greater Manchester Police Museum, which featured as a location in the Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series; the meeting is called *Come In, Lestrade* (Terry and Barbara Harding, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Staley Bridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY).

Buzzing in Sussex on 20 June is organised by **Gerard's Hussars** (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN; phone 01273 475558) to explore Holmesian and Doylean connections in East Sussex. Also on 20 June, **The Priory Scholars** visit the former Station X at Bletchley Park (Horace L. Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). Next day **The Parallel Case of St Louis** discuss 'The Illustrious Client' at the Big Sleep Bookstore in St Louis (Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA; Jekrich@aol.com).

On 25 June **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will attend their new member Adam Dodd's play *The Sign of the Four* at the **Northcott Theatre** in Exeter, after which they'll meet the author and cast over drinks and nibbles. Next day the Poor Folk will explore the area of Dartmoor around Princetown. Get details from Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR.

Periodicals received. *The Cormorant's Ring*, Spring 1999 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4901, USA). *The Petrel Flyer*, May/June 1999 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C. V7P 3C6, Canada). *The Torr*, Spring 1999 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadlands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). *The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In*, Frühjahr 1999, and *The Striking (T)Rifles*, April/Juni 1999 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Postfach 42 06 70, D-50900 Köln, Germany).

3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles, January (*sic* — i.e. May) 1999 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). *The Camden House Journal*, May and June 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Sherlockian Snippets*, 29 April and 28 May 1999 (Tabitha Smith, SaralockH@aol.com). *Communication*, May/June 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 37698, USA).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, April and May 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 191 9th July 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Hillary Brooke died recently. She played opposite Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce in *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*, *Sherlock Holmes Faces Death* and (most memorably) *The Woman in Green*. Other losses are the author and early Baker Street Irregular **Clifton Fadiman**, the British actor **Graham Armitage**, who played Holmes on South African radio for 5½ years, and **Stella Zucco** (the former actress Stella Francis), widow of **George Zucco**, Moriarty to Rathbone's Holmes in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

A postcard from Arthur Conan Doyle will feature in a very important sale at Sotheby's in London on Thursday 15 July. The card confirms scholars' conclusions about the dropping of 'The Cardboard Box' from *The Memoirs*, and the transferral of the mind-reading episode to 'The Resident Patient'. A signed *Hound of the Baskervilles* is among the 80-odd Conan Doyle items in a catalogue that includes the extensive Dickens Archive among much else. (Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA; phone 0171 293 5000.) (**The MS of 'Charles Augustus Milverton', plus Steele's portrait of the blackmailer, fetched \$255,000 at Christie's in New York last month, while Paget's picture of Holmes, Watson and John Hector McFarlane fetched \$18,400.**)

New from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., V0K 1A0, Canada; e-mail ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca) is David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act*. The script reads well, weaving Conan Doyle and Davies seamlessly together, and giving the reader a glimpse of Holmes the flawed but triumphant human being. It's a more successful play than either Martyn Read's *221B* or Jeremy Paul's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, excellent though those two are. This 68-page paperback costs £9.50 or Cdn\$20.00 or US\$15.00 (plus postage). Forthcoming from Calabash are *The Canonical Compendium* by Stephen Clarkson (£28.50/Cdn\$60.00/US\$45.00); and *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* by Arthur M. Alexander (£17.50/Cdn\$37.50/US\$27.50). The web page is at www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html.

David L. Hammer has written a fine series of books exploring the topography of the Canon, in Britain Europe and North America, all published by Gasogene Books (P.O. Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; e-mail Sdoyle221@aol.com). Mr Hammer is also well stuck in to a series of new Sherlock Holmes stories, of which the latest is *The Vital Essence: Being the Further Annals of Sherlock Holmes* (Gasogene Books; \$12.95 + postage: \$2.50 in USA or \$3.50 elsewhere). Sadly, he doesn't do himself or his subject justice. Plots and characters are perfunctory, even though the stories often depend on psychological subtleties; atmosphere is lacking; and the style is hopeless. I never thought I'd encounter the phrase 'cock-up' in a serious Holmes pastiche! The book is unworthy of both author and publisher. Give it a miss.

For our Society's recent trip to the Welsh Marches, Anna Smyth compiled an attractive and instructive 52-page book, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery Tour*, with contributions from Grant

Eustace, Catherine Cooke, Nicholas Utechin, Antony Richards, Roger Johnson, Auberon Redfearn, Alan C. Olding, Victor Hamilton, Richard Lancelyn Green, John Hall, Roger Matthews and Anna herself. (Wot — no Bernard Davies?) I don't have details of price yet, but you can get information from Lynne Godden at Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE.

Our member John Radford, Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of East London, has written the first book to consider Holmes and Watson from the point of view of modern psychology. *The Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Three-Pipe Problems: Psychological Studies of the Great Detective and Dr Watson* will be published in September by Sigma Forlag International (22 Jellicoe House, Osnauburgh Street, London NW1 3AY) at £9.95. It should make a good companion for Richard Kellogg's *Sherlock Holmes and the Origins of Psychology*.

Sherlock in L.A. (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA) has issued a supplement to its Catalogue 14, featuring nearly 800 more items from the collection of Ted Schulz, Sherlockian and friend. **Philip J. Attwell** (105 Winstanley Road, Wellingborough, Northants. NN8 1JQ) has a list of books for sale, mostly crime & detective fiction; send a stamped & self-addressed envelope and a 1st class stamp, to cover copying costs. There's also a new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

Murray Shaw, author of the admirable series for younger readers *Match Wits with Sherlock Holmes*, has turned his hand to writing new Holmes adventures and has hopes of publication. At 90 Murray attends a gym regularly, but can't get to Sherlockian functions; he'd probably appreciate hearing from other devotees. Write to him at 3601 N. 5th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85013, USA.

Avril Ashton recommends *Don't Walk in the Long Grass*, the first volume of autobiography by Tenniel Evans — Hilton Cubitt in Granada TV's *The Dancing Men* (Bantam Press, Transworld Publishers Ltd, 61-63 Uxbridge Road, London W5 5SA; £15.00).

The Parallel Case of St Louis (Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA) has published an anniversary booklet featuring essays by several distinguished members. *The Parallel Cases of St Louis* costs \$8.00 to non-members, plus \$2.00 in the USA, \$3.00 to Canada, and \$4.00 to Europe. Checks and money orders should be payable to Joseph J. Eckrich.

More new or forthcoming titles. Winston H. Plowes notes that *The Sherlock Holmes Companion* by Michael & Mollie Hardwick has been republished by Senate Books and is available for £2.00 + £2.50 postage from Bibliophile (phone 0207 515 9222). *The Case of the Crafty Cracksman* and *The Case of Sven Sigerson*, two more Sherlock Holmes plays by Stanley Reyburn (August; Players Press, c/o Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20, Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH; £7.00 each). *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire* by Paula M. Krebs, an examination of the impact of ideas of race and gender on culture through various forms of discourse surrounding the Boer Wars (August; Cambridge University Press, Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU; £35.00).

In issue 31 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* Michael Cox continues his absorbing account of the Granada TV series; Paul Chapman observes Holmes's detective qualities; Shane Baldwin admits to being a Sherlockian punk rocker; Jeffrey Richards examines *The Radio Detectives*; Gaynor Coules discusses Frances Fyfield's books; **The Fratton Lodgers** come under the spotlight; there's a new Luther Darke story by A.L. Blake - and there's more from David Stuart Davies, Martin Edwards, John Hall, Roger Forsdyke, Pat Ward, Mike Ripley and Moriarty. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from Angeline Greenaway, Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Despite the publicity for the statue of Sherlock Holmes in London we shouldn't forget the plans to erect a statue of his creator. The Crowborough Conan Doyle Trust (reg. charity no. 1073842) has commissioned a fine sculpture by David Cornell, who had Dame Jean's enthusiastic approval. To make a donation, or for more information, contact The Town Clerk, The Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DA. Cheques should be payable to the Trust.

Winston H. Plowes (40 Dorset Avenue, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7WR; phone 0161 232 7590) is looking for a video of the Clive Brook movie *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. He has an extensive collection of Holmes videos, and is willing to exchange copies. Winston mentions two nice postcards: a Spanish poster for the Rathbone *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and an ad for Postum cereal. Both are from Mayfair Cards (phone 0181 813 8557; fax 0181 895 6118).

On 27 July the Guernsey Post Office will issue a set of six stamps marking 200 years of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Get details from Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Guelles Road, St Peter Port, Guernsey, Channel Islands GY1 1AB (e-mail philatelic@guernseypost.com).

Peter Blau notes an interview with Bert Coules in 'the latest issue' of *Scarlet Street* (\$6.95, or \$35.00 a year for six issues, from Box 604, Glen Rock, NJ 07452, USA). (**Murder One stocks it.**)

Geoff Budd sends an ad for Britannia Collections (FREEPOST, Romford RM50 1JP), who offer the Sherlock Holmes Collectors' Edition (i.e. the Granada TV series) at £11.99 per video, plus £1.47 postage. Phil Attwell sends an ad for the RT Video Club (P.O. Box 190, Peterborough PE2 6UW; phone 01733 230500), offering videos of *The Eligible Bachelor* and *The Last Vampyre* at £9.99 each, plus £2.95 postage; quote RADT9013.

'Philip Weller's Deerstalker Tours organizes Holmesian and Doylean excursions, ranging from one-day visits within Britain to seven-day expeditions visiting Holmesian sites in continental Europe. The one-day tour of Holmesian and Doylean Hampshire sites, including guide and transportation, costs £25 (about \$60) a person (for a minimum of two people). A two-day tour of Dartmoor is £50 (\$120) a person plus accommodation. Bookings are now being taken to celebrate the centenary of The Hound of the Baskervilles in 2001 on Dartmoor. E-mail: sherlock.publications@btinternet.com or write Philip Weller at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3RU, England.' (Footnote to a good long travel article in a recent issue of the *Toronto Globe & Mail*.)

Richard Greep of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment notes that a new café, *Sherlock's Coffee Shop*, opened in the town in time for last weekend's Sherlock Holmes Festival.

Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act by David Stuart Davies will be at the **New Vic Theatre**, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 9 & 10 July (01782 717962); **Penistone Theatre**, Penistone, 12 July (01484 313663); **Wycombe Swan**, High Wycombe, 20 July (01494 512000); **Quay Theatre**, Sudbury, 31 July (01787 374745); **Roman Eagle Lodge**,

Edinburgh Festival, 6-29 August (0131 622 7207); **Brewery Arts Centre**, Kendal, 1 September (01539 725133); **Gladstone Hall**, Port Sunlight, 4 September (0151 645 57559); **Cockpit Theatre**, London NW8, 20 Sept. to 10 Oct. (0171 402 5081).

The Northern Musgraves will hold a reception at the Cockpit from 2 pm to 5 pm on Saturday 25 September. *Meet the Musgraves* will feature talks and a dramatic presentation - and it's free. If you'd like to attend, please contact Terry & Barbara Harding at Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY.

La Société Sherlock Holmes de France, La Société d'Études Holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande and **The Reichenbach Irregulars** invite Sherlockians and Holmesians to take part in the Millennium Congress of Holmesian Societies, based in Lausanne, in May 2000. For full details, contact Michael A. Meer, Morgenstrasse 70, CH-3018 Bern, Switzerland.

The Sydney Passengers meet on 17 July to mark the 110th anniversary of 'The Second Stain' (contact the Captain, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; e-mail bbarnes@ozemail.com.au). The 8th annual *Watsonian Weekend* in Chicago, 23 to 25 July, includes the Regimental Dinner, the running of the *Silver Blaze* and the Fortescue Honours Brunch. (Susan Z. Diamond, 16 W 603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106-2327, USA; e-mail szd@ix.netcom.com.) **The Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers** celebrate 25 years on 24 July, at the Westin William Penn (Lynda Conway at 2330 Benson Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216, USA). **The Friends of Dr Watson** plan their Battle of Maiwand Luncheon for the same day, at Hudson's Victorian Dining Room, attached to the Sherlock Holmes Museum at no. 239 Baker Street (Richard Stacpoole-Ryding at 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). (**The winner of the first Dr John H. Watson Annual Prize Essay is Joe Marino, and the runner-up is Theo Skeat.**)

Periodicals received. *The Serpentine Mews*, Summer 1999 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA). *The Baker Street Journal*, March 1999 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (**all correspondence for The Baker Street Irregulars should be sent to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', 414 N. Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA**) *The Formulary*, June 1999 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *The Maiwand Dispatch*, March 31 1999 (**The Watsonians**, Fred Levin, 8242 N. Ridgeway Ave, Skokie, IL 60076, USA). *The Log of the Canonical Hams*, July-December 1998 (*sic*) (**The Sherlock Holmes Wireless Society**, Ron Fish, PO Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919, USA). *The Ritual*, Spring 1999

Annual Report 1999: The Stock-broker's Clerk Contract and *The FMHC Memo*, June 1999 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3RU). *Sherlockian Snippets*, July 1999 (Tabitha Smith, sherlockian.snippets@email.com) (**this lively newsletter is available only via e-mail; note the new address**). *Communication*, Father's Day 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The School Report*, Summer Term 1999, (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, June 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *The Parallelogram*, May 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA); *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, June 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 390 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 192 9th August 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Michael Cox passes on sad news that the stunt man Marc Boyle died on 21 July, aged 51 from a brain aneurysm. His most publicised appearance was as Jeremy Brett's double at the Reichenbach Falls. Peter Blau reports the death of **John D. Clark** ('The Politician, the Lighthouse and the Trained Cormorant', BSI), who first suggested that Nero Wolfe was the son of Sherlock Holmes and Irene Adler - a notion 'now accepted in many quarters as gospel', says Peter (*and in many quarters as twaddle!*).

Happier news from Michael is that Jeremy's son David Huggins has just had his second novel published. There's nothing overtly Sherlockian about *Luxury Amnesia* (Faber & Faber Ltd, 3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AU; £9.99), but reviews suggest it's a better than average thriller.

Anna Smyth's admirable anthology *The Boscombe Valley Mystery Tour* can be had from our Merchandising Officer Lynne Godden (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE) priced including postage at: UK £6.50; Europe £7.50; USA \$13.50; elsewhere £7.50. Cheques and checks should be payable to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

The Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has (or have) published a guide to one collection: *Edith Meiser and Her Adventures with Sherlock Holmes*, by Lucy Brusic, James Hubbs & William Nadel, is an invaluable and all-but-complete listing of the classic American radio scripts by Edith Meiser, Denis Green, Leslie Charteris and Anthony Boucher. (**The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections** help support the world's greatest public collection. Get details from 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA.)

The Adventure of the Awful Apparition by Ellay Aitchison (alias Len Haffenden) is Volume 3 in the *Petrel Premium* series published by Hansom Press for **The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**. The title piece is a short three-act play based on the 'plot for Sherlock Holmes story' found by Hesketh Pearson among Conan Doyle's papers (see *The Uncollected Sherlock Holmes* edited by Richard Lancelyn Green); it is followed appropriately by an encore, *How Watson Learned the Trick*, dramatised from ACD's own parody; and to round off the 52-page booklet there's a script for a Punch & Judy show, based on Len's childhood memories (*I can't remember when I last saw the Devil get the better of Punch as he does here*). It's all nicely produced, with endearing illustrations by Xerez, and very entertaining. Prices including postage are: Canada \$17.00; USA \$12.00; UK £8.50; checks and cheques should be payable to Hansom Press and sent to 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V7P 3C6.

The Maiwand Luncheon Monograph, published by **The Friends of Dr Watson** (14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ) is an instructive 'Account of the Battle of Maiwand & Associated Canonical & Military Matters'. Particularly

interesting is the coverage of the Afghanistan Medal and other awards made to participants in the battle. This 26-page A4 brochure can be had by non-members for £5.00 or by members for £3.00.

Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., V0K 1A0, Canada; e-mail ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca) offer a special deal on their ground-breaking *Case Files of Sherlock Holmes* series. Order the latest volume *The Blue Caruncle* with *The Dying Detective* and/or *The Speckled Band* and you get the additional volume(s) post free. Calabash also, of course, publish the script of David Stuart Davies's triumphant play *Sherlock Holmes - The Last Act!* (see DM 191). Write for details, or check the web page at <http://www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabash.html>.

Brian Pugh reports that John Sutherland's third quirky collection of essays is out from Oxford University Press at £4.99; *Who Betrays Elizabeth Bennett* includes 'Cabinets and Detectives', an investigation into 'A Scandal in Bohemia'. Peter Blau notes that Roberta Rogow's novel *The Problem of the Missing Miss*, featuring Arthur Conan Doyle and Lewis Carroll, has been published in Britain by Robert Hale as *The Problem of the Missing Hoyden* at £16.99. The sequel, *The Problem of the Spiteful Spiritualist*, is out from St Martin's Press at \$23.95, and Ms Rogow has completed the third novel, *The Problem of the Evil Editor*.

Bantam Books have recently published the fifth Mary Russell novel, *O Jerusalem*, which takes Russell and her husband Sherlock Holmes to Palestine (US\$13.95 or Cdn\$21.95). Coming in November from Constable is Barrie Roberts' latest novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Harvest of Death* (£16.99), and from Robinson the first British edition of *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Martin Greenberg & Carol-Lyn Rossel Waugh (£7.99).

The Black Cat Bookshop (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB; phone 0116 2512 756), one of Britain's most reliable specialist dealers, offers a free Sherlock Holmes/Conan Doyle booksearch service. There's a new catalogue from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

The writing in the second issue of the new *Strand Magazine* maintains the standard of the first issue, with fiction by H.R.F. Keating, Michael Gilbert and others, a new Sherlock Holmes story by Denis Smith, an interview with Michael Bond by Andrew Gulli, and articles by Mathew Prichard, Christopher & Barbara Roden and Charles L.P. Silet. The artwork shows an immense improvement, being now in the hands of the incomparable Chris Senior. The magazine is published quarterly and can be had from P.O. Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012-1418, USA. Annual subscriptions in USA and Canada are \$24.95, and international \$29.95. Trade distribution in UK: Diamond Magazine Distribution, Unit 7, Rother Ironworks, Fishmarket Road, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7LR.

Peter Blau notes that the July issue of *In Britain* features 'The Greatest Detective', an article about Crowborough's associations with Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes (British Tourist Authority, Thames Tower, Blacks Road, London W6 9EL; £2.75 or \$6.25).

Peter Blau notes that the BBC video-cassette of *The Speckled Band* and *The Illustrious Client*, with Douglas Wilmer & Nigel Stock, can be had in NTSC format for £30.99 post-paid from Blackstar, 11 Ravenhill Road, Belfast BT6 8DN, Northern Ireland. There's a website at www.blackstar.co.uk. This may be the only chance to obtain these fine productions in NTSC.

On 10th July Brad Keefauver posted a note on *The Hounds of the Internet*: 'Mr Victor Godfrey has asked that the following notice be made public: 'The will of Sir Henry Baskerville will finally be executed in the manner specified by the deceased at approximately 8:00 pm on the evening of September 11, 1999. All further attempts by certain individuals to claim, either legally or illegally, the Baskerville fortune will be met with the harshest measures. The estate will be distributed according to Sir Henry's wishes as long as there is a single lawyer still breathing at the firm of Whyte, Norton, Morris, Fordham, Hebron, Reilly, Barelli, Sutro, McFarlane, Morrison and Dodd. And, as the name implies, the firm has a lot of lawyers. To quote John H. Watson, M.D., "There is at least one reader who will understand."' (*Do you? I don't!*)

The **Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment** collection of memorabilia and photos of Sir Arthur will move in late September or early October to a new home at the Crowborough Beacon Community College. Brian Pugh, the Curator, expresses his thanks to the management at Groombridge Place, who have housed the collection for the last four years, to Mrs Alison Banks, Principal of the College, and to Mrs Barbara Payne, who actually owns the collection for which the Establishment acts as trustees.

The **Crowborough Conan Doyle Trust** (reg. charity no. 1073842) has commissioned a fine statue of Sir Arthur by David Cornell. To make a donation, or for more information, contact The Town Clerk, The Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DA. Cheques should be payable to the Trust.

Those interested in the Whitechapel murders of 1888 may like to know of **The Cloak & Dagger Club** and its magazine *Ripperologist*. The club meets six times a year at The City Darts pub, near Aldgate East station. You can get information from Coral Kelly at 71 Penwortham Road, Streatham, London SW16 6RH (phone 0181 677 0337; e-mail coralkelly@usa.net).

Douglas Warren recommends Bristol University's extra-mural course on 'The Science of Crime Detection' to be held on 6th November. The fee is £18.00, and you can get application forms from: University of Bristol, Public Programmes Office, 8-10 Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1HH.

Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act! by David Stuart Davies is at the Edinburgh Festival, at Roman Eagle Lodge, until the 29th August (0131 622 7207). I do urge you to see the play, at Edinburgh or elsewhere on its tour. Roger Llewellyn's mesmerising performance does justice to a first-rate script. (Late news is that the tour has become international as Roger has been invited by the Baker Street Irregulars to perform the play in New York in January.) In Edinburgh, the main rival to *Sherlock Holmes — The Last Act!* is Exacting Theatre Company's production of Jeremy Paul's *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, running 16th - 21st August (box office: 0131 225 9893). Our member Adam Dodd plays Holmes, fresh from his triumph at Exeter's Northcott Theatre in his own play *Sherlock Holmes and The Sign of the Four*.

The Cambridge Footlights' Christmas show at the ADC Theatre will be *Sherlock Holmes, the Pantomime*. More details as they reach me.

The new President of **The Arthur Conan Doyle Society** (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C., V0K 1A0, Canada; e-mail ashtree@ash-tree.bc.ca) is Owen Dudley Edwards. The Society

has published the tenth anniversary issue of its journal *ACD* - a full 180 pages. The annual subscription is: Cdn\$33.00, US\$27.00, £20.00 (airmail, rest of world) or £16.00 (surface mail, rest of world).

As usual, August is a quiet month for Sherlockian societies. **The Red Circle's** Lodge on the 13th at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., will feature a discussion of Sherlockian parodies, a performance, and a quiz on 'The Greek Interpreter' (details from Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgs.dgsys.com). On the 21st **The Irregular Special Railway Company** will tour Freemasons' Hall, take lunch at the Charing Cross Hotel, and visit a candidate for The Myrtles at Beckenham (Antony Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). On the same day **The Cardboard Boxers of Croydon** will be walking around Croydon — which takes in Conan Doyle's former home in Tennyson Road, South Norwood (Andrew Butler, 35 Fleetwood Close, Croydon CR0 5HD).

There's a new(ish) Sherlock Holmes society in Malaysia, **The Common Loafers**, founded by Aziz Bin Adam (no. 12, Lorong 14/54A, 46100 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, West Malaysia; e-mail benoy@tm.net.my). The society has a website at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/6513/afoot.htm>.

Periodicals received. **The Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter**, February-April 1999 and May-July 1999 (Antony J. Richards, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). **The Petrel Flyer**, July-August 1999 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). **Communication**, July-August 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA).

The Passengers' Log, Autumn Issue, 22nd May 1999 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) (*still one of the most stylish journals around*). **The Camden House Journal**, July 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). **Sherlockian Snippets**, 2nd August 1999 (Tabitha Grace Smith (618 4th Street SW, Spencer, Iowa 51301-6218, USA) (*this lively newsletter is available only by e-mail; Tabitha seems to have reverted to her original e-mail address of SaralockH@aol.com, but you may get her at sherlockian_snippets@e-mail.com*).

3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles, July 1999 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). **Franco-Midland Daily Echo**, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15 août 1998; **Ironmongers Daily Echo**, August 1898, April 1899, May 1899 and undated; **The Gas Factory Newsletter**, April 1899 (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, 26 avenue de la République, 75011 Paris, France) (*these are also among the most stylish Sherlockian periodicals! Flatteringly, they now include a French translation, by Alexis Barquin, of *The District Messenger**).

The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Summer 1999 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, of course) (*and I hope you've all received your copies by now*). And **Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press**, July 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, D.C. 20007-4830, USA; e-mail pblau@dgs.dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 193 4th September 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

The latest publication from Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) contains two new stories. The longer and more complex is Hugh S. Scullion's 'A Fatal Mistake', an adventure of Wiggins, formerly leader of Holmes's Baker Street irregulars and now a professional investigator himself. The setting is mostly Dulwich, Norwood and Sydenham - parts of south London that Mr Scullion knows well, as did Arthur Conan Doyle. The style is earthy and often humorous, though the punctuation is highly erratic, and the story is well illustrated with photographs of the area. So too is the second, slighter, story, 'The Rising Ransom' by the late Douglas Moreton. This is the last of his Sherlock Holmes stories, and not a bad one to end on, being a clever (and cleverly titled) tale set in the author's native Lancashire, well-butressed by historical research. *A Fatal Mistake & The Rising Ransom* is available from specialist dealers or direct from the publisher, at £12.00 or \$20.00.

There's a nice new paperback edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* published by Wordsworth Classics (Wordsworth Editions Ltd, Cumberland House, Crib Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9ET). David Stuart Davies has contributed an enthusiastic introduction for the general reader, and the book costs just £1.00!

Our member John Radford's book *the Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes and Other Three-Pipe Problems: Psychological Studies of the Great Detective and His Companion Dr John H. Watson* is now available from Sigma Forlag International (22 Jellicoe House, 4 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3AY; £9.95). A review will appear in the next issue of the DM.

New from Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) is Rupert Books Monograph 13, *An Appreciation of Sir John French* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a facsimile of a scarce 1916 propaganda booklet, with an afterword by Squadron Leader Philip Weller. It's priced at £10.00. Due in March next year from Rupert is *The Man Who Hunted Jack the Ripper* by Nicholas Connell & Stewart P. Evans, containing much previously uncollected material from the papers of DI Edmund Reid, who succeeded Fred Abberline in Whitechapel in 1888. (*Reid believed that there were nine Ripper murders, rather than the usually accepted five or six. *) The price is likely to be £18.00.

The standout for me, though, will be *A Study in Celluloid: A Producer's Account of Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* by Michael Cox, to be published by Rupert Books on 1st December at about £18.00. Michael's series in *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* has produced many fascinating insights, both technical and personal, into the making of Granada's *Sherlock Holmes* series, but his book promises to be definitive.

Bill Barnes sends word of *Footsteps in the Fog, and Other Stories*, a volume of three long Sherlock Holmes stories by the

Australian author Kel Richards. Mystery at the testing of the Bruce-Partington submarine in Loch Ness ... a werewolf stalks Dartmoor ... murder follows the escape of Col. Moran from prison, and Holmes joins forces with Professor Challenger ... This 304-page, perfect-bound book can be had from Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia, for £15.00, US\$24.00 or Can.£32.00 (airmail); £13.00, US\$21.00 or Can.\$29.00 (surface mail).

Recommendations from **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) include: *Sherlock Holmes Visits a Cemetery* by Don Izban (a tour of Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, resting place of, among others, Allan Pinkerton and Vincent Starrett; \$8.00); *366 Excuses for a Sherlockian Party* by Joel & Carolyn Senter with Rick Freeman (\$14.95); *Ready When You Are, Mr Rathbone: A Review of the Universal Holmes Films* by Roger Johnson (they call it 'this marvelous little book', and who am I to disagree?; £12.95); *The Sherlock Holmes Cook Book* and *The Sherlock Holmes Book of Wine and Spirits*, both by Charles A. Mills (\$6.00 each); *Deeper Shades: The Dressing-Gowns of Sherlock Holmes and the Psychology of Color* by Bill Mason (\$8.00); *Five Sherlockian Walks in London* by William S. Dorn (\$8.00); *The Floor Plans of Baker Street* by Edward S. Smith, Jr (\$7.50). There's lots more. Look up **Classic Specialties'** website at <http://www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

The Black Cat Bookshop (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB) has a new catalogue out, full of Holmesiana and Doyleana.

Coming in November from Constable is Barrie Roberts' latest novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Harvest of Death* (£16.99), and from Robinson the first British edition of *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Martin Greenberg & Carol-Lyn Rossel Waugh (£7.99). Out now from Players Press (distributed by Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) are two more plays by Stanley Reyburn: *Sherlock Holmes in The Voyage of Sven Sigerson* and *Sherlock Holmes in The Case of the Crafty Cracksman* (each £7.00).

Issue 32 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* is a 'Special Statue Issue' - not surprising, really. Two pages are given over to a foretaste of the **Return of Sherlock Holmes** festival, taking place in London 21st - 26th of this month. The central event, of course, will be the unveiling of the new statue of Sherlock Holmes outside Baker Street Station (by the Chairman of Abbey National, who contributed most of the funding for it), and there's an interview with the sculptor, John Doubleday. Michael Cox's magisterial account of the making of Granada TV's *Sherlock Holmes* series closes in a mood of mixed satisfaction, relief and frustration - so much achieved, and so much *almost* achieved. The series has been expanded into a book, to be published in December by Rupert Books (see above). There's part one of a new Holmes story by D.O. Smith. Martin Edwards looks at Anthony Berkeley's sleuth, Roger Sheringham. Paul Chapman considers crime as entertainment. Pat Ward reports from America. Jeffrey Richards continues his series on the radio detectives, and Chris Senior examines detectives on television. Antony Richards illuminates the Inspector Morse Society ... And there's more, of course! The

magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Mamelok Press Ltd (P.O. Box 12, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 6NQ) make wonderful Victorian card masks, facsimiles of ones in Madame Tussaud's Collection and elsewhere. In similar style, Mamelok has issued a Millennium Collection of assorted masks including **Sherlock Holmes** (M.C.7). You may find them at carnival and novelty shops, or try Mamelok direct. They have a website at www.mamelok.co.uk.

The Friends of Dr Watson announce their second annual *Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Competition*, open to members and non-members alike. Essays are invited of between 1,000 and 3,000 words on the subject of Dr Watson's medical abilities, knowledge and skills. The first prize consists of: a year's membership of The Friends of Dr Watson, the Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Certificate, a signed copy of Leslie Klinger's latest volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*, and *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*. The second prize is a £20.00 Black Cat Bookshop gift voucher, and *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*. The judges this year are David Stuart Davies, Leslie S. Klinger and Philip Weller - formidable Holmesians all. Get entry forms and rules from: Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ. Please enclose a stamped & self-addressed envelope (in UK) or 2 International Reply Coupons.

Patrick Brown sends a message via e-mail: 'The Bird's Nest Theatre in Deptford, South London, is to present an evening called *In League with Sherlock Holmes*, consisting of two short plays, *Where's Frannie?* by David Collier, an adaptation of "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax", and *The Copper Beeches* by Kevin Scouler, followed by an "irregular" adaptation of *The Red-Headed League* written by our Attached Writer Clive King. The show runs from September 8th - 25th, Wednesday to Saturday at 8.00 pm. Tickets are £7.50 (£5.00 concessions and £4.00 Equity members). The Bird's Nest Theatre is above the Bird's Nest pub at 32 Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4RZ. Our phone number is 0181 694 2255.' (*Looks good!*)

(*So does this ...*) Cambridge's two famous comedy and drama societies, the Footlights and the ADC, plan something special for Christmas. *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* will run at the ADC Theatre from 23rd November to 4th December, at 8.00 pm. Tickets cost £3.00 - £7.00, but on the first night only all seats are £3.00. You can book now at the Cambridge Arts Theatre Box Office (6 St Edwards Passage, Cambridge; phone 01223 503333). A limited edition numbered *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* programme will be available for £3.50 including postage from the producer, Gemma Rougier, at the ADC Theatre, Park Street, Cambridge CB5 8AS. Please make cheques payable to Gemma Rougier. The programmes will be despatched in December. If you need more details, either write to Gemma, or e-mail her on gcer2@cam.ac.uk.

Those who treasure the performances of Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley, Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce, Barry Foster & David Buck, and the other great Holmes and Watsons of radio should consider joining **The Old-Time Radio-Show Collectors' Association**, which has a vast library of recordings from both sides of the Atlantic, many of them available for loan. Get details from the membership secretary, John Wolstenholme, at 56 Melbourne Avenue, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 8YW.

I've had a message from Jim Ferreira of **The Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco**, the oldest BSI scion society

west of the Mississippi, and the first anywhere to admit women on equal terms with men. Annual subscriptions to the Scowrers' thrice-yearly journal, *The Vermissia Herald*, are available to non-members at \$10.00. Send checks, payable to The Scowrers, to Jim Ferreira at 753 Oriole Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550-2684, USA. Jim also has Scowrers & Molly Maguires lapel pins, based on the brand mark described in *The Valley of Fear*, at \$15.00. The price includes postage. You can get more details from Jim at BakerSt@home.com, or look at the website: <http://www.fortunecity.com/victorian/canterbury/222/sherlock.htm> - that the site for the San Francisco Bay Area Sherlockian Societies

The Parallel Case of St Louis has published an anniversary booklet, called *The Parallel Cases of St Louis*. Copies can be had for \$8.00 plus postage from Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA. Make checks payable to Joseph J. Eckrich. **Holmes Under the Arch**, an 'irregular union of societies in Missouri and Illinois' will present a 'Weekend at Baskerville Hall' in St Louis on 10 & 11 September. Contact *Holmes Under the Arch*, 7101 Mardel Avenue, St Louis, MO 63109, USA. The Parallel Case of St Louis' next regular meeting will be on 20th September (details from Joe Eckrich: Jekrich@aol.com).

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company will be in Birmingham on 18 & 19 September, and will attend the unveiling of the statue outside Baker Street Station on 23 September, going on to visit various London statues with Sherlockian associations, before retiring to the Sherlock Holmes pub for refreshments. (Get details from 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.) On 25 September, **The Northern Musgraves** will hold a reception at the Cockpit Theatre in Gateforth Street, five minutes' walk from Baker Street Station. (Terry & Barbara Harding, Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY; phone 0161 303 0011). David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* will be on at the theatre in the evening.

The Priory Scholars' Video Day will be at the Guild Hall, Leicester, on 26 September (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet in Du Quoin, Illinois, on 1st October (P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). The Pack Meet of **The Baskerville Hounds** will be based at the Prince of Wales inn at Princetown, Dartmoor, 15 - 17 October (The Kennel Maid, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

La Société Sherlock Holmes de France, La Société d'Études Holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande and The Reichenbach Irregulars are organising the *Millennium Congress of Holmesian Societies*, to be based in Lausanne, 4 to 7 May 2000. Participants will visit the Conan Doyle Foundation at the *Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire de Lausanne-Dorigny* (where the 'Arthur Conan Doyle Iconography' CD-ROM archive will be launched), the Château de Lucens (Adrian Conan Doyle's erstwhile home), Meiringen, with its superb Sherlock Holmes Museum, and the Falls of Reichenbach. To be put on the mailing-list, contact Michael A. Meer, President of The Reichenbach Irregulars, Morgenstrasse 70, CH-3018 Bern, Switzerland (e-mail sherlock.holmes@gmx.net).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, August 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *The Parallelogram*, August 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). *Sherlockian Snippets*, August 1999 (Tabitha Smith, SarahlockH@aol.com) (*a lively newsletter available only by e-mail*).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 194 6th October 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

George C. Scott, one of the finest stage and film actors, died last month aged 71. Sherlockians cherish his performance as Justin Playfair, who believes himself to be Sherlock Holmes, in James Goldman's 1971 movie *They Might Be Giants*.

Our good friend **Marcus Geisser** is in the Congo with the Red Cross. Letters can be addressed to: Marcus Geisser/ Lumumbashi/ RDC, c/o CICR, 19 avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland. Or you can send e-mail via his brother at hannes.geisser@kttg.ch.

The Conan Doyle Room at Groombridge Place has closed, and the Conan Doyle Collection is now in its permanent home at the Beacon Community College. It will be officially opened by Georgina Doyle on Saturday 9 October. For information about the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment (ten years old this year!) and its work, contact the Curator, Brian Pugh, at 20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN (01273 475558).

The Sherlock Holmes Statue Festival was a great success, and the organisers have a right to be proud of themselves. Lynne Godden (Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE) has a good amount of attractive souvenir merchandise for sale.

In *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, an anthology of lasting value, Peter Horrocks & Richard Lancelyn Green have garnered essays from an international constellation of scholars, on Holmesian statues, Baker Street, Sexton Blake, the Players' Theatre, cricket, peers of the realm, and Holmes in Germany, France and Japan. There are forewords by Prince Charles (a Holmes devotee) and Tony Blair, and it's splendidly illustrated. Prices including postage are: UK £13.25; Europe £14.25; USA \$31.00; elsewhere £16.25.

Irregular Crises of the Late 'Forties is the fifth and fullest volume in the BSI Archival History Series. Having survived World War II, the Baker Street Irregulars had to weather the disillusionment of their founder Christopher Morley, the start of the Cold War, the greed of Adrian and Denis Conan Doyle, the failure of the BSI's business enterprise, and the demise of *The Baker Street Journal*. Jon L. Lellenberg presents an assemblage of letters and other documents, which with his own witty commentary helps the reader to know the people who created our Great Game. Morley, Starrett, Ben Abramson, Helene Yuhasova, Louis Greenfield, James Montgomery - and above all the wise and diplomatic Edgar W. Smith. Personally I want to know more of Pope R. Hill's theory that there is a deliberate code in the Sherlock Holmes stories for those who can read it! *Irregular Crises* can be had from *The Baker Street Journal* (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) for \$28.95 plus postage: \$2.95 in the US, or \$3.95 elsewhere. I recommend the book to everyone who's interested in the phenomenon that is Sherlock Holmes.

The Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes, and Other Three-Pipe Problems by John Radford (Sigma Forlag International, 22 Jellicoe House, 4 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3AY; £9.95) is an excellent psychological study of Holmes and Watson for the lay reader. Prof. Radford is a member of our Society, and writes in the

best tradition of Holmesian scholarship. He indicates the points of contact between the methods of Holmes and those of his great contemporaries Sigmund Freud, Francis Galton and Alphonse Bertillon; he points out the differences in thinking between the society of Holmes's time and that of our own; and he offers pertinent observations on Holmes's disappearance after Reichenbach. This attractive 176-page paperback is a valuable addition to the fairly small number of books that actually illuminate the characters of Holmes and Watson. My only gripe is that there's no index and no bibliography.

The Strange Affair at Glastonbury is Eddie Maguire's fifth Sherlock Holmes story and *The Poor Folk Upon The Moors*' third *Charles Merriman Monograph*. After settling a delicate matter for the Diocese of Bath & Wells, Holmes and Watson find that some very odd things are happening in nearby Glastonbury. Signposts are turned around in the night; a butcher's sign is stolen, as is the flag of The George hotel; a horse-trough is emptied; and the blossoms are cut from the famous Glastonbury thorn... This ingenious mystery brings Holmes face to face with an old adversary - but not the one I expected. The price, including postage, of the pleasant 40-page booklet is £3.95, from Big House Books, 63 Wellington Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 5EZ (cheques payable to E. Maguire). (*Eddie has a few copies left of the early American parody *The Old Age of Holmes*, at £3.00 each, and packs of Sherlockian greetings cards at £3.25 each.*)

Bob Ellis sends notice of a limited edition (150 copies) of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, illustrated by Jason Powers and published by Micawber Fine Editions. 20 copies 'in a deluxe clamshell box with a set of all the illustrations, signed by Jason Powers, laid in' are priced at \$395.00 each. 35 copies 'in a box with two signed prints laid in' are \$195.00 each. 95 copies, signed but unboxed, are \$95.00 each. Postage is extra. (Book Buffs Ltd., Janis Frame, 1307 Bannock Street, Denver, CO 80204, USA; e-mail jframe6383@aol.com.)

There are new catalogues out from **Post Mortem Books** (58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH; e-mail ralph@pmbbooks.demon.co.uk) and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

The latest of Kinky Friedman's funny and clever private eye novels concerns Kinky's attempts to find the right Watson to his Sherlock. The book is called *Spanking Watson*, and it's published by Faber & Faber Ltd (3 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AU) at £5.99.

More new and forthcoming books. *Sherlock's Home* by Jenny Dale (Macmillan Children's Books, 25 Eccleston Place, London SW1W 9NF; £2.99) *Detective Fiction & the Rise of Forensic Science* by Ronald R. Thomas (October; Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU; £37.50). *The Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* by Robert Mighall (November; Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP; £40.00).

50 years ago Adrian Conan Doyle took *The London Mystery Magazine* to court for using the 221B Baker Street address and mentioning Sherlock Holmes in its advertising. He lost his case. Now Andrea Plunket, who claims to own the Conan Doyle copyrights, is trying on the same trick, threatening organisations

like the Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Company. There seems no reason to suppose that Mrs Plunket would fare any better in court, but it strikes a sour note of greed in the Sherlockian world. (*See *Irregular Crises of the Late 'Forties and the Sunday Telegraph for 12th September 1999.**)

Barbara & Terry Harding have established a forum for collectors of Holmesiana. *The Tin Box* is a quarterly magazine of sales, wants and swaps, at an annual cost of £2.50 (UK), £3.50 (Europe), £5.50 (USA), or £6.50 (elsewhere). Send enquiries and subscriptions to Barbara & Terry at Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY. Cheques payable to B. Harding, please. (*Ask about their *Baker Street Portfolio of Canonical illustrations.**)

CSA Teltapes (101 Chamberlayne Road, London NW10 3ND) have released more of Edward Hardwicke's excellent readings from the Canon. *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes vol. 4* comprises 'The Crooked Man', 'The Greek Interpreter' and 'The Naval Treaty'. (*It's a British issue of *Tangled Web's* recording *Sherlock Holmes: Tales of Intrigue*, released in 1995.*) Due in January from HarperCollins Audio (Harper-Collins Publishers Ltd, 77/85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB) is *The Adventure of the Lion's Mane, and Other Stories* read by Christopher Lee.

Bill Dorn offers what looks like a splendid *Sherlock Holmes Calendar for the Year 2000*, featuring Canonical dates based on Zeisler's chronology, and significant dates in the lives of Conan Doyle and others who are part of the great phenomenon that is Sherlock Holmes. The calendar costs \$11.95 from The Sherlock Store (William S. Dorn, Prop., 2045 S. Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210-3734, USA). Canadian orders add \$1.00 postage; other international orders add \$2.00. Check Bill's website at <http://www.TheSherlockStore.com>.

The DiFalco Bear Co. (Box #700192, Plymouth, MI 48170) makes a prize-winning Sherlockian teddy bear - details on request.

Hugh Parry will run a course on *Sherlock Holmes & Victorian Detection* at Woburn, Bedfordshire, from 28 to 30 April 2000. The fee is £89.00, or £115.00 including accommodation (Maryland College, Leighton Street, Woburn, Milton Keynes MK17 9JD; phone 01525 292901).

Hampstead Theatre (Swiss Cottage Centre, Avenue Road, London NW3 3EX; phone 0171 722 9301) will present Snoo Wilson's *Moonshine* (about Conan Doyle and the fairies) later this month.

A reminder that *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* will run at the ADC Theatre, Cambridge, from 23 November to 4 December, at 8.00 pm. Book now at the Arts Theatre Box Office (6 St Edwards Passage, Cambridge; phone 01223 503333). A limited edition programme will be available for £3.50 including postage from Gemma Rougier (ADC Theatre, Park Street, Cambridge CB5 8AS); make cheques payable to Gemma Rougier. For details, write to Gemma, or e-mail her on gcer2@cam.ac.uk.

The most amazing source of repro. Victorian & Edwardian goods I've come across - everything from stereoscopes to spats - is **Amazon Vinegar & Pickling Works Drygoods** of 2218 E. 11th Street, Davenport, IA 52803, USA (fax 319 322 4003). Write for a copy of the latest catalogue.

Don't forget the second annual *Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Competition*. Essays are invited on the subject of Dr Watson's medical abilities, knowledge and skills. The judges are David Stuart Davies, Leslie S. Klinger and Philip Weller. Get entry forms and rules from: Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ. Please enclose a stamped & self-addressed envelope (in UK) or 2 International Reply Coupons.

Peter Blau tells us that Moonlight Cinema (416 West 3rd Street, London, KY 40741, USA) has 'an interesting list of old and new Sherlockian and Doylean films on videocassette, with seldom-seen titles such as *Sherlock Holmes' Fatal Hour* [*The Sleeping Cardinal*] (1931) with Arthur Wontner...' (*exciting news! I thought that was a *Lost Movie*.*) Peter also notes that Ian

Richardson (Edinburgh born and bred) is to play Joseph Bell in BBC TV's *Bloodline*, with Robin Laing as Arthur Conan Doyle.

Our Society's next meeting is on 28 October, at the Museum of London, when Roy Davenport & Larry Barnes will re-create the magic act of Roy's great-grandfather Lewis Davenport; get details from Pam Bruxner (2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB). The Pack Meet of **The Baskerville Hounds** will be based at the Prince of Wales inn at Princetown, Dartmoor, from 15 to 17 October (The Kennel Maid, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants, PO14 3RU). On 5 November, **The Occupants of the Empty House** will hold their regular meeting at Alongi's Restaurant in Du Quoin (P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA).

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London will celebrate its 50th birthday in 2001 with a Golden Jubilee Cruise of the Baltic on the *Princess Danae*, taking in Oslo, Tallinn, St Petersburg, Riga and Kalliningrad. Get details from Arena Travel, FREEPOST 1H 1047, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7BR. The cost is likely to be £1098.00 (\$1758.00) per person.

Periodicals received. *The Passengers' Log*, 7th August 1999 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia) (*it was a great pleasure to meet the editor Rosane McNamara and her husband Frank in London for the *Statue Festival*.*). *The Camden House Journal*, September 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *The School Report*, Autumn Term 1999 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY) (*the Scholars have some copies available of their useful booklet, *The School Register no. 1: Where and When in SIXN - Locations and Chronology in The Adventure of the Six Napoleons* by Philip Weller*). *Sherlockiana*, nr. 2, 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark**, Bjarne Nielsen, Sherlock Holmes Museet, Algade 3, 4500 Nykøbing-Sjælland, Denmark) (*Bjarne also deals in antiquarian crime & detective literature, and runs Scandinavia's only Sherlock Holmes Museum!.*).

The New Baker Street Pillar Box, August 1999 (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) (*a double issue to mark the *FMHC's* 10th anniversary*). *Practice Notes*, September 1999 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *Communication*, September-October 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The Serpentine Muse*, Fall 1999 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, # 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA) (*it was likewise a delight to meet Ev Herzog and a bevy of *ASH* in London last month*). *The Baker Street Journal*, June 1999 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*all correspondence for *The Baker Street Irregulars* should be sent to Michael Whelan, 'Wiggins', 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA*).

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, September 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Collections**, 466 Wilson Library, 309 19th Avenue South, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA). *3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*, September 1999 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA). *The Waterloo Sherlockian Letter*, no. 48 (Chris Redmond, 523 Westfield Drive, Waterloo, Ontario N2T 2E1, Canada) (*the engaging ramblings of a master Sherlockian: a unique publication!.*). *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, August & September 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA) (*the great Sherlockian newsletter*).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 195 16th November 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Richard B. Shull ('An Actor and a Rare One', BSI) died on 14 October. Well known on stage and screen, he'll be remembered by Sherlockians as Alex Holmes in television's *Holmes & Yoyo*.

Eric Monahan (Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW) has written and published an attractive 40-page booklet, *Sherlock Holmes Right and Wrong*. As the title suggests, there's a humorous touch to a couple of these tales, though all three remain on this side of parody. The writing is assured, and the plotting neat. The cost is £5.00 or \$8.25 including postage. (*I understand that George Vanderburgh's *Battered Silicon Dispatch Box* will shortly publish a collected volume of Eric's Sherlock Holmes stories. More on this as it reaches me!*)

Catalogue 5 from Calabash Press (P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada) has lots of interest, including Arthur M. Alexander's satisfyingly chunky *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* (Cdn\$37.50 / US\$27.50 / £17.50), which I'll review in DM 196; Stephen Clarkson's *The Canonical Compendium* (Cdn\$60.00 / US\$45.00 / £28.50); Denis O. Smith's *The Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes, vol. 3* (paperback Cdn\$23.50 / US\$19.50 / £12.50; hardback Cdn\$40.00 / US\$30.00 / £19.00); and David Stuart Davies's new novel *The Shadow of the Rat* (paperback Cdn\$23.50 / US\$19.50 / £12.50; hardback Cdn\$40.00 / US\$30.00 / £19.00). Postage is extra.

The Shadow of the Rat may well be Sherlock Holmes's most terrifying case. He and Watson chance to meet their old friend Stamford, drunken, drugged or both. Shortly after, a body is recovered from the Thames — dead of bubonic plague. How and why is Stamford involved? A hypnotist called the Great Salvini, a very dubious club called the Bridge of Dreams, the beautiful and cruel Baroness Dubeyk, a doctor named Karswell (*that will ring a bell with readers of M.R. James's ghost stories*), and of course the giant rat of Sumatra — all play their part in a conspiracy that could bring down the government and destroy the country. David Stuart Davies conjures up a grand atmosphere of excitement and fear. As in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Watson is at the centre of things for much of the time, and this is his case as much as Holmes's. *The Shadow of the Rat* is both a tremendous read, and a story to make you think.

A Study in Celluloid, Michael Cox's account of the groundbreaking Granada TV *Sherlock Holmes* series, will be launched at Murder One in Charing Cross Road on Wednesday 1 December. Michael will be signing copies from 6.00 to 8.00 pm, and it's hoped that David Burke and Edward Hardwicke will be there. All are welcome. The 235-page book, expanded from his series in *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine*, is published by Rupert Books (58-59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) at £19.00. The TV series was Michael Cox's idea, and he was involved as producer or executive producer for nearly all its ten-year run. Only Jeremy Brett could have given us as full an account, and he probably couldn't have told us why things went as they did — why Mrs Barclay and ex-Cpl Wood meet in a social hall, not in the street, why Professor Moriarty appears in *The Red-Headed League*, why *The Reigate Squires* was scripted but not

filmed . . . Michael has given, as only he could, what must now be considered the definitive story of a vital episode in the dramatic career of the great detective even including the final, sometimes unwatchable, series, in which he played no part. *A Study in Celluloid* is an important, enlightening and immensely enjoyable book. Read it!

The Poor Folk Upon The Moors have several booklets available, including *You Have Lost One of Your Boots, You Say?* by Roger Matthews, *Sherlock Holmes, Cryptanalyst* by Eric Monahan, *Some Ecclesiastical Reflections by a Non-Holmesian* by Revd S.J. Davies, and *Two Fills of Shag Tobacco, Being a Brief Discourse on the History of Pipe Smoking with Some References to Mr Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* by Reggie Musgrave. Enquire of H. Vosper Arthur, Spynishlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR, or e-mail the society at poorfolk@talk21.com.

Geoff Jeffrey sends news of Rick Boyer's *A Sherlockian Quartet*, a 1998 paperback from Alexander Books (65 Macedonia Road, Alexander, NC 28701, USA; no price given). The book contains 'The Adventure of Zolnay the Aerialist', 'The Adventure of the Bell Rock Light', 'The Adventure of the Eyrie Cliff' and 'The Giant Rat of Sumatra' — that last was first published in 1976.

There are new catalogues to hand from **The Black Cat Bookshop** (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB) (*crime fiction & first editions*); **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrrarebook@tcp.co.uk); **Janus Books** (Mike Greenbaum, P.O. Box 40787, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA; e-mail mike@janusbooks.com) (*a dealer new to me, who has lots of Sherlock Holmes material; the list is also on the website at <http://janusbooks.com>); **Gravesend Books** (Box 235, Pocono Pines, PA 18530, USA; e-mail gravesnd@epix.net) (*a single collection of books and letters by Henry Lauritzen and Julian Wolff; also 'Prologue One to Gravesend Catalogue 34*'); **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) (*as always, *The Sherlockian Times* is as much a magazine as a catalogue, and full of good things; check the website at <http://www.sherlock-holmes.com>).

Murray Shaw is still busy writing. Otto Penzler (The Mysterious Bookshop, 129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, USA) plans to publish Murray's Sherlock Holmes story 'An Anatomy of Two Murders' and has asked for more! Meanwhile *Sherlock Holmes and the Arabian Princess* by John North (based on Terence Mustoo's play *Sherlock Holmes in the Deerstalker*) has been translated into Turkish as *Sherlock Holmes ve Arap Prensesi!*

In issue 33 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine*, David Stuart Davies reports on the 'Return of Sherlock Holmes' statue festival; Denis Smith concludes his story 'The Adventure of the Richmond Horror'; Toby Earnshaw sees how writers have imagined the giant rat of Sumatra; Kathryn White asks whether plot or character is more important; Peter Foors looks at Jules Maigret; Paul Chapman begins 'A Clash of Titans: Sherlock Holmes and Jack the Ripper'; Gaynor Coules surveys the novels of Robert Barnard; Brian Adrian examines disabled detectives on TV; Michael Cox is interviewed; DSD continues the coverage of the Granada series with *The Master Blackmailer*; Mike Ripley considers how and why authors kill their characters; Richard Stacpoole-Ryding illuminates the Friends of Dr Watson (*don't forget the second annual Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay

*Competition on the subject of Dr Watson's medical abilities, knowledge and skills; get entry forms and rules from: Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ**) — and there's more, of course! The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The Conan Doyle Collection is now officially installed at Beacon Community College, Crowborough, where it was opened on 9 October by Georgina Doyle and Barbara Payne, Patron and Joint President of **The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment**. The Collection is open from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday; weekend visits can be arranged with the Curator, Brian Pugh (20 Clare Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PN; phone 01273 475558) giving at least three weeks' notice. Entrance is free, but donations are welcome.

13½-inch maquettes of the statue of Sir Arthur commissioned from David Cornell by the **Crowborough Conan Doyle Trust Ltd** (The Town Hall, The Broadway, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DA) can be ordered from the Trust. There'll be 250 bronze maquettes at £890.00 each and an unlimited number of bronze resin maquettes at £390.00 each.

Cheaper, and very desirable, is the work of Kate Woodlock (Role Models, 2A Stonehouse Road, Liphook, Hants. GU30 7DD; phone 01428 723083). Ms Woodlock offers a good 3½-inch bust of Basil Rathbone (with turned-up coat collar, as in the Universal Holmes movies) and a superb Peter Cushing (in deerstalker, as in *The Masks of Death*). In white resin they're £12.00 each, and in bronzed resin £14.00 — a bargain! There are also 5-inch pewter figures of Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles at £18.00 each. Prices include postage (ask about international prices).

Phil Attwell sends notice of a day course on *Smugglers and Bodysnatchers* on Saturday 27 November in Northampton. The cost is £18.25 including lunch (concessions available) from Leicester University Dept of Adult Education, University Centre, Queen's Building, 6-12 Leicester Parade, Barrack Road, Northampton NN2 6AF (phone 01604 251801).

Geoff Bradley (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA) needs a photocopy of the clues to the 1970 Sherlock Holmes 'follow the clues' jigsaw puzzle, issued as a tie-in to Billy Wilder's movie *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. Can anyone help, please?

The Guardian for 13 October featured a two-page article by Jon Henley, asking if Sherlock Holmes was really French. (**Other papers were considering the question about 18 months ago. Well, it's a good plug for La Société Sherlock Holmes de France.**)

That wonderful source of repro Victoriana, **Amazon Vinegar & Pickling Works Drygoods**, is moving to 411 Brady Street, Davenport, IA 52801-1518, USA. Check the company's goods on <http://www.victoriana.com.amazon/>.

The only place these days that you can experience a real Victorian pantomime, with rhyming couplets and wonderfully awful puns, is **The Players' Theatre** in The Arches under Charing Cross Station. This year's panto is *Cinderella, or, The Lover, the Lackey and the Little Glass Slipper*. Check with the box office on 0171 829 1134 (there's a website at www.theplayers.co.uk). The theatre's just along from **The Sherlock Holmes** pub in Northumberland Street, which is always worth a visit. The restaurant does excellent lunches and dinners (phone 0171 839 5864).

Wonderful Victorian (and other) Christmas presents can be had from **Past Times**, who have 60 shops and a mail order service. Call 01993 770440 for a catalogue. **Hawkin & Co.** (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0PJ; phone 01986 782536) sell all sorts of toys and things you didn't know were still made. The 1999-

2000 catalogue is out now, and there are shops in Windsor, Salisbury and Tunbridge Wells.

A reminder that *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* will run at the ADC Theatre, Cambridge, from 23 November to 4 December, at 8.00 pm. Book now at the Arts Theatre Box Office (6 St Edwards Passage, Cambridge; phone 01223 503333).

Sylvain Policard, Manager of **The Hôtel Dulong** (the Lyon scion of **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**) is currently studying in Ireland. His address is: 7 Larchfield Road, Goatstown, Dublin 14, Republic of Ireland.

Visitors to New Zealand may like to check out **The Sherlock Holmes Club of Dunedin**. Contact Edwin R. Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Our Society's Christmas card, bearing Douglas West's picture of Sherlock Holmes examining his statue in London, is available from Geoffrey Stavert in packs of ten at £5.50 (Europe £6.00, USA \$13.00, elsewhere £7.00). Make cheques payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**. Note Geoffrey's new address: 22 Homeheights, Clarence Parade, Southsea, Hants. PO5 3NN. (**Other Society merchandise can be had from Lynne Godden at Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE.**)

Our Society's next meeting will be the Film Evening at the Museum of London on 26 November, when David Stuart Davies will present the 1965 BBC film of *The Red-Headed League* starring our Honorary Member Douglas Wilmer; get details from Pam Bruxner (2B Hiham Green, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HB).

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company will hold its AGM, Lunch and Seasonal Activities in Oxford on Saturday 4 December (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). The following day will see the AGM, Lunch and Seasonal Games of **The Priory Scholars** in Leicester (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). On the other side of the world, **The Sydney Passengers** plan their Christmas Luncheon for that same day (Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; e-mail bbarnes@ozemail.com.au).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, October 1999 and November 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *The Torr*, Autumn 1999 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). *Irregular Special Railway Company Directory*, 1999-2000 (**The Irregular Special Railway Company**, The Station Master, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX). *Sherlockian Snippets*, October 1999 (Tabitha Smith, SaralockH@aol.com). *The Parallelogram*, October 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA).

The Petrel Flyer, Sept./Oct. 1999 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Watson's Wanderings Again! A Guide to the Dr Watson Day Domiciliary Organised by The Friends of Dr Watson, Saturday 13 November 1999* (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *The FMHC Memo*, November 1999, and *Interim Report 1999: The Stock-broker's Clerk Contract Reviewed* (**The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, October 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

Roger Johnson

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE
e-mail: roger_johnson@hotmail.com

no. 196 11th December 1999

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$12.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Dorothy Rowe Shaw, widow of John Bennett Shaw, died on 24 November. Peter Blau notes that 'she was toasted as *The Woman* in 1974, and received the BSI's Queen Victoria Medal in 1995. She created the magnificent miniature of 221 Baker Street now on permanent display at the Special Collections at the University of Minnesota.' I can add that she was a kind and gracious hostess at the Shaw house in Santa Fe.

Those in search of Holmesian London should equip themselves with Arthur M. Alexander's excellent guidebook *Hot on the Scent: A Visitor's Guide to the London of Sherlock Holmes* (Calabash Press, P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0, Canada; Cdn\$37.50 / US\$27.50 / £17.50). Others have devised admirable walking tours of London — notably Charles Merriman, Antony Richards and Bill Dorn — but Mr Alexander's 35 'adventures' are more comprehensive than any. He gives useful information for the American or other non-British visitor, and in a series of appendixes goes into such subjects as the Battle of Maiwand, the Festival of Britain, *The Strand Magazine*, and the Black Museum. There are occasional oddities (Eros in Piccadilly Circus was never, I think, a fountain, and Prince Philip, unlike Prince Albert, is not known as the Prince Consort), but very few. As with David Hammer's travel guides, you feel that you're in the hands of a knowledgeable and congenial friend. *Hot on the Scent* is a thoroughly enjoyable book.

From Christopher Roden via Peter Blau, the news that Christopher Frayling is working on an annotated edition of the Canon for Penguin. The first volumes, including *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, are due next year.

Other new and forthcoming books. Breese Books (164 Kensington Park Road, London W11 2ER) continue their programme of new adventures, including *The Elementary Cases of Sherlock Holmes* by Ian Charnock and *The Case of the Frightened Golfer* by J.M. Gregson. In September Mustard (Parragon Book Service Ltd, 13 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PR) published a children's picture puzzle book *Sherlock's Missing Bone* at £2.99. In October Oxford University Press (Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP) published a picture book version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at £4.99. *The Monster of St Marylebone: The Journals of Dr Watson* by Wayne Worcester is out from Signet (Penguin Putnam Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014, USA) at \$5.95. Last month Players Press (c/o 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) issued three more Sherlock Holmes plays by Stanley S. Reyburn: *The Kiangnan Blueprint*, *The Scarab of Abu-Simbel* and *The Soong Conspiracy* (each £7.00).

Barrie Roberts' *Sherlock Holmes and the Harvest of Death* is out from Constable this month (3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER; £16.99). *The Art of Detective*

Fiction by Warren L. Chernaik et al. (Macmillan Press, Brunel Road, Houndmills, Basingstoke RG21 6XS; £42.50) is due in January 2000, as is *The Sherlock Holmes Classic Compendium* (Siena Publishing, Unit 13, 17 Avonbridge Trading Estate, Atlantic Road, Bristol BS11 9QD). Laurie R. King's first Mary Russell novel, *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*, is coming in paperback at £6.99 from HarperCollinsPublishers (77/85 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JB) in February, and *The Moor*, is due in hardback in January 2001 at £15.99, according to Whitaker's BookBank.

The 6th and last catalogue of the Thomas L. Stix, Jr collection is available from Dorothy K. Stix (34 Pierson Avenue, Norwood, NJ 07648, USA), but orders must be received by 20 December as Dorothy will shortly be moving to Florida. (*This is a rare chance to buy something from one of the great Sherlockian collections.*)

New dealers' catalogues are those from **Violet Books** (Jessica Amanda Salmonson, 3214 Preble Street, Bremerton, WA 98312, USA; e-mail haunted@violetbooks.com); **Rupert Books** (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE; e-mail rupert_books@compuserve.com); and **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (22 & 25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; e-mail nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

A reminder (with correct details this time!) of Good Places in London: The only place these days that you can experience a real Victorian pantomime, with rhyming couplets and wonderfully awful puns, is **The Players' Theatre** in The Arches under Charing Cross Station. This year's panto is *Cinderella, or, The Lover, the Lackey and the Little Glass Slipper*. Check with the box office on 0171 829 1134 (there's a website at <http://www.theplayerstheatre.co.uk>). The theatre's just along from **The Sherlock Holmes** pub in Northumberland Street, which is always worth a visit. The restaurant does excellent lunches and dinners (phone 0171 930 2644; fax 0171 839 5864), and Mr Holmes's sitting-room has been decorated (by Mrs Hudson and Dr Watson, presumably) for the Festive Season.

Issue 34 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* offers David Stuart Davies on *The Master Blackmailer*, Catherine Morrell on that excellent series *Sergeant Cribb* and an interview with Cribb's creator Peter Lovesey (*it's time the series was released on video!*), Pat Ward with news from America, Cath Staincliffe on female detectives, John Hall on Holmes's upbringing, Jean Upton on *Jonathan Creek*, Gaynor Coules on Michael Connelly, Toby Earnshaw on murder in the Canon, Mike Ripley on the 1999 Sherlock Awards, me on the Margery Allingham Society - and, as always, much much more. The magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

The East Anglian Magazine (weekend supplement of *The East Anglian Daily Times*) for 27 November - 3 December had a good two-page article about John Doubleday, sculptor of the London and Meiringen statues of Sherlock Holmes.

Columbia Pictures intend to produce *Sherlock Holmes and the Vengeance of Dracula* from Michael Valle's script. Chris Columbus (*Young Sherlock Holmes*) may 'develop' and direct the movie. This account we have from all quarters received.

Thierry Saint-Joanis points out that the manager of the **Hotel Dulong**, the Lyon branch of **La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, is Jean-Pierre Crauser, whose address is Résidence Récamier, allée 4, 69130 Ecully, France. There are other branches in Toulouse, Le Mans, Marseilles, Valenciennes, Bruxelles and elsewhere. Thierry says: 'Everywhere you go in France, you will find a Holmesian, so a friend!'

Vosper Arthur of **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** (Splynshlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR) offers a handsome binder that by lucky chance fits *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*. It's very modestly priced at £6.00 to members of the Poor Folk and £7.50 to non-members (including postage). Membership of the society is £9.00 a year; cheques payable to The Poor Folk Upon The Moors should be sent to Vosper.

The Poor Folk are planning their first weekend expedition within the West Country, a visit to the Lizard peninsula ('Devil's Foot' country) on 1 & 2 July next year. Get details from Shirley Purves, Lea House, Couches Lane, Woodbury, Exeter EX5 1HL.

Dr Benton Wood has produced a *Y2K Sherlockian Calendar* at \$2.00 including postage (9840 Sucia Circle, Parrish, FL 34219-9080, USA).

Naxos Audiobooks (Unit 4, Wyllyotts Manor, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 2HN) will release *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes III*, on 3 CDs or 3 cassettes, in February. The reader is again the splendid David Timson, and the stories ('The Cardboard Box', 'The Musgrave Ritual', 'The Man with the Twisted Lip' and 'The Blue Carbuncle') are enhanced by appropriate music. This is an excellent series of recordings.

The Christmas show at the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham (Regent Street, Cheltenham, Gloucs. GL50 1HQ; phone 01242 512515) is *Sherlock Holmes and the Christmas Star*. At the Guildhall in Leicester on 12, 13 & 14 December, the Herrick Theatre presents *Sherlock's Christmas Cracker* (box office: 0116 270 7679).

Essex Police are justly proud of their bloodhounds Sherlock and Morse. Sherlock recently received a silver medal at the PRO awards after living up to his name with a nifty bit of life-saving detective work. Sherlock, who will be two in January, attended the awards ceremony at the Hilton Hotel in Surrey.

Issue 36 of Geoff Bradley's excellent magazine *CADS* (that's Crime And Detective Stories) is our now, with articles on Nicholas Blake, E.R. Punshon, James Crumley, Bradshaw's railway guide, and a whole lot more. Enquire of Geoff at 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA.

Phil Attwell has spotted 'Wishbone' from Equity Toys: 'a little dog with a big imagination'. Wishbone is a posable figure with five snap-on costumes including a Sherlockian one.

Our Society's next meeting will be the Annual Dinner in the great hall at Lincoln's Inn on Saturday 8 January. The annual dinner of **The Baker Street Irregulars** will be held on Friday 14 January at the Union League Club in New York. The weekend will also see the Baskerville Bash, the William Gillette Luncheon, the Martha Hudson Breakfast and other associated junketings. (Get information about the BSI from

Michael Whelan, Wiggins, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, Indiana 46278, USA.)

The Footprints of a Gigantic Hind will be crossing Mount Kilimanjaro at midnight on 31 December 1999. An enquiry to 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU, will no doubt establish the connection with Sherlock Holmes. The 50th anniversary dinner of **The Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark** - otherwise *The Danish Baker Street Irregulars* - will be held on 7 January 2000 (Bjarne Nielsen, Sherlock Holmes Museet, Algade 3, DK-4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark; e-mail sherlock@sherlockiana.net). January 8 sees the *Disjecta Membra* outing of **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company**, taking in a tour of Canonical hotels in London (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU; e-mail franco.midland@btinternet.com).

The Sydney Passengers, naturally, will celebrate Holmes's birthday in high summer - on 9 January (Bill Barnes, at 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia; e-mail bbarnes@ozemail.com.au). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** will make a special visit on 15 January to *The Sherlock Holmes Experience* museum & tea rooms in Princetown, Dartmoor (just opposite the High Moorland visitors' centre); the museum comprises a collection originally belonging to Mike Philipson of the Poor Folk (get details of the visit from Vosper Arthur, Splynshlake, Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter EX6 7PR). **The Pleasant Places of Florida** plan *Sherlock's Sunshine Celebration III: Birthday Bash* for 29 January at Leverock's Restaurant in St Petersburg (Carl L. Heifetz, 3693 Siena Lane, Palm Harbor, FL 34685, USA).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, December 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Communication*, November—December 1999 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The Cormorant's Ring*, Fall 1999 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach, CA**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807-4910, USA). *The School Report*, Winter Term 1999 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Tin Box*, introductory issue, 1999 (Barbara & Terry Harding, Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY) (**a magazine specifically for collectors of Holmesiana; the first issue proper is due in January**).

The Musgrave Papers, 1999, and *All That Is Ours*, first issue (**The Northern Musgraves**, Eilidh Gunson, 1 Dene Royd Close, Stainland, Halifax HX4 9QP) (**All That Is Ours is the Musgraves' new 'occasional newsletter'**). *Sherlockiana*, nr. 3, 1999 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark**, Bjarne Nielsen, Sherlock Holmes Museet, Algade 3, 4500 Nykøbing Sjælland, Denmark). *The Formulary*, December 1999, *Practice Notes*, supplementary issue, December 1999, and *The Dr John H. Watson Annual Prize Essay Competition 1999: The Winning Essays* (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Richard J. Stacpoole-Ryding, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ). *3 Pipe Problem Plugs and Dotules*, November 1999 (**The Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem**, Gael Stahl, 1763 Needmore Road, Old Hickory, TN 37138, USA).

And, by no means least, the admirable *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, November 1999 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

The Compliments of the Season to all!

Roger Johnson