

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

<http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/>

Carrie Chandler e-mail: distmessenger@yahoo.co.uk

Twitter: @SHSLondon Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheSherlockHolmesSocietyofLondon

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It is June already, which means it is almost time for us to face the 'Gold Bats' of the P.G. Wodehouse Society at our annual **cricket** match. The date this year is Sunday 21st June, and takes place at the battle ground of West Wycombe as usual. It's free to attend, and you are encouraged to bring your own refreshments. Full details on our website: <http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/the-victorian-cricket-match/>

Roger Johnson and Heather Owen are hard at work finishing off the Summer 2015 edition of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, which may contain one or two mentions of **William Gillette**. Still no news on a British premiere, alas, but we've certainly noticed some excitable reactions following the showing at the San Francisco Silent Film Festival last Sunday. There has been news regarding an American Blu-ray release scheduled for 20th October this year: <http://www.amazon.com/Sherlock-Holmes-Blu-ray-William-Gillette/dp/B00XOAPFH6>

An apology and correction following the May issue of *The DM*: if you wish to contribute to the Silver Jubilee Edition of *The Torr* celebrating 25 years of **The Poor Folk Upon the Moors**, the correct email address you need is stephan.arthur@gmx.ch

At our **AGM** on 14th May, Robert Ellis retired as Chairman and Elaine McCafferty was accepted into the role; Alistair Duncan and Tony Lee came to the end of their terms as Council Officers while Alice Doyle and Judi Alice began theirs; and Ashley Mayo took over from Calvert Markham as Honorary Treasurer. It was announced that the winner of the Tony and Freda Howlett Literary Award 2015 was Richard Burnip for his article 'All London Shivered - Saintsbury, Harding and *The Speckled Band*' which appeared in the Winter 2014 *SHJ* (as Richard was not present, Roger Johnson found an opportunity to present the award to him at the Sherlock Holmes Pub last week).

Roger Johnson notes the passing of **John Hoath**, who died on 20th April. He had been a member of the Society for some twenty years and was a regular presence at meetings. His friendly face and sociable nature will be missed.

Entertainment One are offering readers of *The District Messenger* the chance to **win a pair of tickets to the UK premiere of *Mr Holmes*** next week. Join Ian McKellen, Laura Linney and director Bill Condon on Wednesday 10th June at the Odeon Kensington, London, W1. Simply answer the following question: To which county does Sherlock Holmes retire to keep bees? Send your answer to publicityuk@entonegroup.com by Monday evening.

A week before *Mr Holmes* is released in UK cinemas (19th June), you will be able to purchase the BBC Radio 4 Book at Bedtime recording of Ian McKellen reading *The Valley of Fear* (11th June): http://www.amazon.co.uk/Sherlock-Holmes-Valley-Fear-Bedtime/dp/1785291424/ref=sr_1_19?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1430930005&sr=1-19&keywords=conan+doyle

This month sees the release of *The Great Detective: The Amazing Rise and the Immortal Life of Sherlock Holmes* by **Zach Dundas** (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, RRP £17.17). Part Doylean biography, part memoir, part social history, part academic critique, part fan adventure; Dundas cogitates over the current Sherlockian renaissance in the context of Holmes's various incarnations in popular culture from Doyle onwards. Reading this book is like an ideal first meeting with a fellow aficionado: that outpouring of shared knowledge, mutual Canonical love, comparative experience, and the occasional clash of opinion over taste (Zach, how can you be so disparaging about 'The Master Blackmailer'?!?) It's an American's love letter to Holmes. Dundas relates his own adventures as a tourist, visiting sites of Canonical significance in England, alongside the escapist pleasures of mentally inhabiting and recreating the world created by Doyle (his description of 221B Baker Street as a 'viral room' is incredibly pertinent). He encounters lots of familiar names along the way, from Steven Moffatt and Benedict Cumberbatch to our own Roger Johnson, Jean Upton and Catherine Cooke. *The Great Detective* revels in the current Sherlockian moment - and the history that brought us here - and is filled with wonderful anecdotes told with insight and wit: it's simply a great read.

Baroness Ruth Rendell of Babergh, the celebrated crime-writer who created Inspector Wexford, died on 2nd May, aged 85. We were fortunate enough to have Baroness Rendell as our guest speaker at our Annual Dinner in 2010 (my report on this meeting can be found in the Summer 2011 *SHJ*). Her generosity to the Society continued when, in 2011, she sponsored our Diamond Jubilee Dinner at the House of Lords. You can detect shades of Sherlock Holmes in Ruth Rendell's novels, most overtly in *The Keys to the Street* which features an Irene Adler Museum. She also provided a foreword to *The Penguin Complete Sherlock Holmes* in 2009.

Sherlock triumphed again at the **BAFTA** Television Awards held at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on 10th May. Steven Moffatt, Amanda Abbington, and Sue and Beryl Vertue collected the Radio Times Audience Award for the series, voted for by the public.

On 11th June, an event at the Coca Cola **London Eye** on the Southbank celebrating 32 famous Londoners includes a talk on Conan Doyle by *Londonist* journalist Matt Brown. Tickets are £40 and are available here: <http://32londoners.com/aconandoyle.html>

Guy Marriott noted the publication of *Lionel Atwill: The Exquisite Villain* by Neil Pettigrew (Midnight Marquee Press, Inc., 9721 Britinay Lane, Baltimore, MD 212343, \$25). As Basil Rathbone fans may have observed, Atwill played both Dr Mortimer (*The Hound of the Baskervilles*, 1939) and Professor Moriarty (*Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon*, 1943). Details on the publisher's website: <http://www.midmar.com/bioatwill.html>

Robert Graham spotted a screening of *The Lost World* (1925) at Wilton's Music Hall (1 Graces Alley, London, E1 8JB) on 18th June: <https://wiltons.org.uk/whatson/34-the-lost-world-1925->

This year's **Edinburgh Fringe Festival** in August features many acts of Sherlockian and Doylean interest:

- *Impossible*, a play by Robert Khan and Tom Salinsky, tells the story of the feud between Doyle and Houdini. The play will star the comedian Phil Jupitus as Doyle and Alan Cox (Watson in *Young Sherlock Holmes*, 1985) as Houdini, at Pleasance Dome, 5-31 Aug.
- The inimitable David Stuart Davies will present his new one-man show *The Game's Afoot: An Encounter with Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle* at The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Centre, 12-14 Aug (unsurprisingly, there are other acts of Doylean interest taking place at this aptly-named venue, including a psychic and a Scots fiddle player).
- The Tobacco Tea Theatre Company presents *The Accidental Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*: 'When Sherlock Holmes unknowingly murders his own client, the game is on to track down the criminal mastermind who did it – Holmes himself!' at C, 16-31 Aug.
- Ghostwriters present *Adventures of the Improvised Sherlock Holmes* ('No script, Sherlock!') at Just the Tonic at the Community Project, 6-30 Aug.
- The Edinburgh Makars present *The Game's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays*, a play in which William Gillette becomes embroiled in a murder mystery at Christmas, at Murrayfield Parish Church, 6-15 Aug.

For further details about the festival, see <https://www.edfringe.com/> or call the Festival Office on +44 (0)131 226 0026.

Chapterhouse Theatre are touring open air theatres around the UK and Ireland this summer with *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*: 'With a missing novice, a death in the convent and some very suspicious nuns, Holmes' newest case promises to be his most terrifying and challenging yet.' For details of the tour, see their website: <http://www.chapterhouse.org/show5.html> or call them on +44 (0)1522 569222.

Talking Scarlet are touring the UK with Brian Clemens's play *Sherlock Holmes and The Ripper Murders*, starring Brian's son, Samuel Clemens. You can see them soon at The Haymarket, Basingstoke, from 24th to 27th June (special performance with Q&A on 25th June). See <http://www.anvilarts.org.uk/whats-on/sherlock-holmes-and-the-ripper-murders> for tickets or call the box office on +44 (0)1256 844244.

The **Tamworth Herald** gives notice of a murder mystery event on 6th June: *Sherlock Holmes and the Tale of the Tamworth Terror*: <http://www.tamworthherald.co.uk/Murder-mysteries-Tamworth-Assembly-Rooms/story-26574956-detail/story.html>

It's a great time to be a German-speaking Sherlockian. In Austria, a second **Baker Street Vienna** conference is taking place on 26th and 27th of September: <http://www.bakerstreetvienna.at/>

Olaf Maurer announces that The Deutsche Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft will run the 3rd **SherloCON**, the German Sherlock-Holmes-Convention, from April 22- 24, 2016 in Saarbruecken. Under the patronage of the lord mayor of the state capital Saarland, plans include live-audio presentations, cinema presentations, criminal dinners, lectures and presentations, games and trade fairs. Tickets and Information are available here: www.SherloCON.info, or direct by email: info@Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft.de.

Olaf also notes that the **Deutsche Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft** has published an app for Apple and Android, which the society use to relay news, new publications, et al. The app (in German) is free of charge and can be found here:

(Android) <http://apks.tobit.com/67757-15121.apk> or at Amazon DE <http://www.amazon.de/dp/B00WVVXZFI/>. For Apple (IOS) <https://itunes.apple.com/de/app/sherlock-4u/id988649350?mt=8>.

The Deutsche Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft also produce **The Baker Street Chronicle** which can be ordered here: www.Baker-Street-Chronicle.de, or by email: info@Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft.de

Forbes Gibb of Lomax Press announces the launch of their vintage and used crime and detective fiction website - **Baskerville Books**. You can download their first catalogue of over 600 books by authors from A-D, and you can view covers of selected items on the website. Further catalogues will be available in the near future, see www.baskervillebooks.co.uk.

Peter Blau notes in his recent editions of *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press* (which you can view here <http://www.sherlocktron.com/scuttle.htm>) that 'The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes' is the title of the next conference in **Minneapolis**, on June 17-19, 2016, sponsored by the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and the University of Minnesota Libraries.

Peter also observes that a letter written by **Agatha Christie** to Evelyn B. Byrne in 1966, in which she notes 'All the Sherlock Holmes stories were enthusiasms of mine,' is coming to auction on 11th June at Profiles in History (estimated at \$2,000-\$3,000). Christie's letter was published in *Attacks of Taste* (New York: Gotham Book Mart, 1971), edited by Byrne and Otto M. Penzler, along with letters and essays by other authors on their childhood literary influences. Details of the auction are on the Profiles in History website www.profilesinhistory.com

Howard Ostrom's *In Search of...Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: A Chronological Reference List of Autobiographies, Biographies, and Quasi-Biographies* is a really useful breakdown of the wealth of life writing relating to Doyle. A PDF file is available for download through Ross K. Foad's *No Place Like Holmes* site: <http://www.nplh.co.uk/news/in-search-of-sir-arthur-conan-doyle-new-essay>

Upcoming publications:

Priebe, Trisha, *A Sherlock Holmes Devotional: Uncovering the Mysteries of God* (Shiloh Run Press, 1st July)

Michell, Allan, *Sherlock Holmes and The Menacing Moors* (MX Publishing, 15th July)

Thomson, June, *Sherlock Holmes and the Lady in Black* (Allison and Busby, 23rd July)

Brown, Barry S., *Mrs. Hudson in New York* (MX Publishing, 29th July)

And finally: the familiar Blue Carbuncle problem recurs when the BBC discover they were paying royalties to the wrong man for an appearance as Horner. Apparently, there were two Neil Fitzpatricks and they could never tell them apart:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/11635140/BBC-makes-elementary-mistake-paying-wrong-man-Sherlock-Holmes-royalties.html>