

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Jean Upton, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: district.messenger@yahoo.com

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Winners of last month's competition to win a **Pusheen Detective** were **Catherine Cooke**, who received the appealingly squishy soft toy and **Anders Odensten** who won the cheery little clip-on mascot. Prizes were kindly provided from **Gund by Enesco**. Since Pusheen is a cat, readers were asked to provide quotes from three Sherlock Holmes adventures in which a cat is mentioned. Correct entries included passages from 'The Speckled Band', 'The Yellow Face', 'His Last Bow', 'Charles Augustus Milverton' and 'The Norwood Builder'. Interestingly, no-one chose my particular favourite from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, in which Watson comments upon Holmes' catlike love of neatness. If you would like to have your own Pusheen Detective, go to www.gund.com or look on Amazon. The toys are safe for ages one and up, so I'm intending to get one for my great-niece's first birthday – it's never too early to introduce someone to Sherlock Holmes!

The *Sherlock* team from Hartswood Films received well-deserved accolades at the Royal Television Society West of England Awards 2017. In the Drama category, the winner was *The Abominable Bride*, written by **Mark Gatiss** and **Steven Moffat**. Awards also went to the *Bride's* Director **Douglas MacKinnon**, to **Suzie Lavelle** for Cinematography, and Composers **David Arnold** and **Michael Price**. Congratulations to everyone!

I've always found it curiously reassuring to see a shelf full of old Penguin paperback books with their familiar cover designs. Penguin has reproduced its classic green cover of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* on a surprisingly robust folding umbrella - mine coped admirably with the wind and rain of Storm Ewan - (£14.99), a slightly squat mug, which is less likely to tip over while having a cuppa at one's desk (£8.99), a capacious, high quality canvas tote bag (£12.95) and a handsome notebook, slightly larger than a standard paperback, with sturdy covers (£8.99). All items are available from many bookstores and directly from the **Penguin Shop** at <https://shop.penguin.co.uk>

Jeff Falkingham has posted a blog (dated 12 March) regarding what he terms a 'feud' between ACD and Samuel Clemens. Titled *Doyle vs. Clemens: A New Perspective*, the item can be found at www.greatriverauthors.com/blog.html

Chris Beetles Gallery (8-10 Ryder Street, London SW1Y 9QB) has an interesting selection of paintings for sale by ACD's father, Charles Doyle and uncle, Richard Doyle, the creator of the iconic cover of Punch magazine. Visit the gallery or view the paintings online at www.chrisbeetles.com

Douglas Johnstone has discovered that the 1937 *Der Hund von Baskerville* is now available on DVD in German with English subtitles that can be switched on or off. Douglas states: 'Picture and sound are good. The subtitles contain a few errors of names, some atrociously modern Americanisms and some peculiarities which are neither idiomatic English nor American. They are also in bright yellow, which is intrusive and detracts from the picture. Nevertheless, they allow you to follow what is happening (the screenplay wanders quite a bit from the book). Extras on the DVD are some Nazi newsreels, which, frankly, I could have done without!' The DVD can be ordered from www.rarefilmsandmore.com for \$14.99 + postage.

Catherine Cooke reports on a new website that will be of interest to anyone wanting to know more about Victorian London. *Charles Booth's London*, launched by LSE (London School of

Economics), makes available the famous poverty maps and the descriptive police notebooks arising from Booth's groundbreaking study, *Inquiry Into the Life and Labour of the People in London* (1886 – 1903). The new site allows visitors to view, interact and download the poverty maps, and geo-locate the police notebooks against the maps. The notebooks are also available to browse and download. The site provides contextual information about Booth, the *Inquiry*, and Victorian London in general. According to Catherine, 'The slider at the bottom moves between Booth and the modern streets. You can see the data, or not, using the notebooks. I find it fascinating.' The site can be accessed at <https://booth.lse.ac.uk/>

The Rosenbach Museum and Library, located at 2008 Delancey Place, Philadelphia, PA 19103, counts amongst its many treasures the original manuscript of 'The Adventure of the Empty House'. Its annual dinner, to be held on 4th May, will have a Sherlock Holmes theme with a talk by author **Dan Stashower**. The event will take place at the **Rittenhouse Hotel**, which stands on the site where the **Lippincott** family (of Lippincotts Publishing) had their home, and was visited several times by ACD. For more information and to book go to <http://rosenbach.org/events/its-elementary-a-sherlock-holmes-rosenbachanal/>

Up for auction recently (and not for the first time) was what was catalogued as 'a rare selection of moustache hair belonging to **Conan Doyle**, neatly enclosed with a folded piece of envelope, itself within an envelope. Pencilled upon the central section of this outer envelope, in the hand of Conan Doyle's wife, **Jean Leckie**, is written "my beloved moustache hair". The lot sold for £500, and I couldn't help but be reminded of the horror story by **Robert Bloch** entitled 'The Man Who Collected Poe'. Yes, the punchline is what you'd expect...

An upcoming production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* at **Theatre Royal Windsor** includes **Philip Lowrie** from **Coronation Street** as Dr Watson. The show runs from 17th – 21st April, and tickets can be booked through the Box Office on 01753 853 888 or online at www.theatreroyalwindsor.co.uk

The Wipers Times, written by **Ian Hislop** and **Nick Newman** will be at **The Arts Theatre** in London from 21st March to 13th May. During World War I, an abandoned printing press was discovered amidst the chaos of enemy bombardment at the Somme. It was used to produce a cheerful, subversive newspaper for the troops called the Wipers Times (the title based on a phonetic mangling of Ypres). There is a Sherlockian connection with the newspaper, as it included early parodies of Sherlock Holmes. The play has been on tour elsewhere in the UK and has received rave reviews. We're looking forward to seeing it soon. <https://artstheatrewestend.co.uk>

Another version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* will be performed by **The British Comedy Company** on Sunday 30th April at 2:30 at The Michael Room, St Michael and All Angels Church, Bath Road, Chiswick, W4 1TT (near Turnham Green tube station). It is described as "A thrilling parody", For more information go to www.britishcomedycompany.co.uk

Martyn Sutton reports that **St Oswalds Church**, Thornton-in-Lonsdale, where ACD married for the first time is staging a production on Saturday June 17th at 7:30pm of *The Singular Exploits of Sherlock Holmes* by the **Don't Go Into the Cellar Theatre Company**. Tickets are \$10 including refreshments. There

will be a prize of £100 for the best-dressed character from a Sherlock Holmes plot in the audience. <http://www.dontgotothecellar.com/best%20cellars.htm>

St Mary's Church in Ingleton has also booked the company to perform there on November 4th, including the best-dressed competition. For members of the Society travelling to the area, Martyn has negotiated a discount for stays of three days or more at **Harling House** in Ingleton, a B&B in a large Victorian house, rated as the No. 1 place to stay on Trip Advisor. When booking accommodation, enter the code **SHC15**. The following message will be displayed: 'Sherlock Holmes Society members – 15% for 3 nights or more, deducted when balance paid. Not valid on Bank Holiday and not in conjunction with other offers. www.harlinghouse.co.uk

Maya Margasinska and Katarzyna Kowalska have shared the following information: 'We have great pleasure to inform you that the first edition of the Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson fan convention will be held in Poland. We hope that it will become an annual and international event. The first **Sherlockon** will take place on 27 May 2017 in Warsaw. The total income of the organization will be donated to charity. For more details, contact Maya and Katarzyna at sherlockonpolska@gmail.com

The MX Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories Part VI: 2017 Annual edited by **David Marcum** (MX Publishing, £37.99 / \$48.95 hbk) is a real bumper of a book at over 650 pages, with 35 new adventures. It includes forewords by **Colin Jeavons** (Inspector Lestrade to Jeremy Brett's Holmes) and **Nicholas Utechin** (former editor of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*) and introductory notes from **Roger Johnson** (current editor of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*), **Steve Emecz** (Publisher) and the Head Teacher of Stepping Stones School, **Melissa Farnham**. The book is available from www.mxpublishing.co.uk or on Amazon. Proceeds from the book will be donated toward the restoration and maintenance of Undershaw, which is now the home of **Stepping Stones School** for children with disabilities.

Arthur & Sherlock: Conan Doyle and the Creation of Holmes by **Michael Sims** (Bloomsbury, £18.99 hbk, eBook £12.99) Extensively researched, this book traces ACD's early life and the various influences that led him to create Sherlock Holmes. Serious Doyleans who already own every existing biography might not feel the need to add this to their collection. However, someone who is new to the Great Game will undoubtedly find this an interesting and valuable resource. It includes 12 pages of bibliography and further reading. *District Messenger* subscribers can claim a discount when ordering from www.bloomsbury.com by quoting **SHERLOCK** at checkout.

The Artie Conan Doyle Mysteries: The Gravediggers' Club by **Robert J Harris** (Kelpies, £6.99/\$9.95 pbk) is an entertaining story aimed at readers aged 8 to 12. Young ACD and his friend Ham investigate what initially appears to be a case of grave-robbing, but turns out to be something far more complex. The author has also woven some of Edinburgh's social history into the story, referencing Burke and Hare and Greyfriars Bobby, and provides a good geographical feel for the city as the two boys progress through the streets during their investigations. The publishers are offering a discount to *District Messenger* readers by quoting **Holmes17** when ordering from www.discoverkelpies.co.uk The discount is valid until the end of May.

The Whole Art of Detection: Lost Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes by Lyndsay Faye (Grove Atlantic/The Mysterious Press, www.groveatlantic.com £25.00 hbk). These 15 stories, written with intelligence and wit, fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge of Holmes and Watson's backgrounds and relationship, as well as providing full details of the cases that receive only passing mention in the Canon. This book ranks very high in the best of pastiche.

Sherlock Holmes and the Eisendorf Enigma by Larry Millett (University of Minnesota Press, \$25.95 / £20.80 hbk). Larry Millett is a native of Minneapolis and an architectural historian. This is the latest in his series of mysteries in which Sherlock Holmes travels to

various locations in Minnesota. A serial murderer, known as the Monster of Munich, eluded capture by Holmes during the Great Hiatus. The Monster soon lets his presence be known when Holmes, at Watson's recommendation, visits the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota for treatment of emphysema. Holmes is quickly on the trail, taking up residence in nearby Eisendorf for his investigation. Millett's knowledge of local history and topographical information makes this as fascinating and plausible as any story set in traditional London.

The Secret Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: Book Three by Gary Lovisi (Ramble House, www.ramblehouse.com \$15.00 pbk). This is Gary's third collection of pastiche. Out in May is **Mr. Holmes and Mr. Mac** (Starkhouse Press, published as a Black Gat Book, \$9.99 pbk www.starkhousepress.com). Gary describes this as 'featuring two short novels where Holmes teams up with the young Scotland Yard detective he admired so much in *The Valley of Fear*.'

Mysteries Suspended by Frank McPartland is a set of Sherlock Holmes stories originally published in 1992. Frank has been in touch with the news that the book has been re-launched as a Kindle download and paperback, published by Turnstone Press, available on Amazon.

Colin Dexter, who died on 21 March at his home in Oxford, aged 86, is celebrated as the creator of Detective Chief Inspector Morse, protagonist of 13 novels and innumerable TV and radio dramas. In 1992 he wrote a foreword for the Society's facsimile of the manuscript of 'The Lion's Mane', and spoke wittily at the launch of the book. In 1998 he was Guest of Honour at our Annual Dinner, at which each diner received a specially printed copy of Colin's Sherlock Holmes story 'A Case of Mis-Identity'.

Our distinguished Northern Irish member **Victor Hamilton** died on 20 February 2017, also aged 86. Pilgrims to Switzerland in 1987 and 1991 will remember Victor as Wilson the notorious canary trainer, and many will recall his Sherlockian grace in Latin, which he recited at our Annual Dinners and other events.

We shall miss **Jack Holman**, who portrayed Fitzroy Simpson on the Society's 2012 Swiss Trip. (Jack's late wife Eileen was Albert Kunz's invaluable assistant at the Swiss National Tourist Office in London.) Also recently deceased was **Tony Bendall**, a member since 2002.

Periodicals received:

The Bilge Pump - The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star March 2017 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov).

Ineffable Twaddle, March 2017 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com).

Mayday Mayday, February 2017 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP; oscarross@hotmail.com).

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, February 2017 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Sherlockiana, February 2017 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Denmark**, Svend Ranild; sr@ranild.dk).

The Sherlockian E-Times, 12 March 2017 (Carolyn & Joel Senter, Clifton Avenue, OH 45219 sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com)

The Torr, Spring 2017 (**The Poor Folk Upon the Moor**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramlinsberg, Switzerland. editor.poorfolk@gmail.com).

Jean Upton