

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](mailto:district.messenger@yahoo.com)

No. 363 April 2017

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's own Mini-Festival in the capital is rapidly approaching, and applications for events must be received by **10th May**, along with appropriate remittance. This year's events include:

- Thursday 26th May – Tea at the House of Lords
- Friday 27th May – AGM and Pub Quiz
- Saturday 27th May – Bus Tour of London led by Dr. Watson
- Sunday 28th May – Visit to the Wallace Collection
- Monday 29th May – Visits to Linley Sambourne House and Leighton House

Details of all events may be found on the Society's website.

A reminder that beginning on 1st May and running throughout the month, the **Crowborough Community Festival** will be featuring events related to its former resident, Arthur Conan Doyle and his various literary creations. Check their website at [www.crowboroughcommunityfestival.org](http://www.crowboroughcommunityfestival.org) for updates and to book tickets.

And another timely reminder that the annual **Victorian Cricket Match** takes place on 18th June, with the gentlemen of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London taking on the 'Gold Bats' of the PG Wodehouse Society, playing to 1895 rules. The match will be held at **West Wycombe Cricket Club** from 11:30am to 6:00pm. This is an informal event open to everyone. Bring your own picnic lunch and seating, and enjoy a lovely day out in good company. For further details and directions go to [www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk](http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk). **Please Note:** In past years the match has necessarily been cancelled because of uncooperative weather. If this is the case, a notice will be posted on the website, so please check before you set out on your journey.

Catherine Cooke reports that the National Library of Scotland has an exhibition running until 2nd July. '**Laws were made to be broken: Blackwood's at 200**' is the title of a display on the history of **Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine**, which was founded in 1817 and ceased publication in 1980. Correspondence relating to its contributors, such as Arthur Conan Doyle and Robert Louis Stevenson, is part of the display. Catherine states, 'Even if you can't get up to the exhibition, the website is interesting.'

<http://www.nls.uk/news/archive/2017/03/blackwoods-display>

**The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes** is now on its way to Sydney, Australia. From 3rd June to 8th October it may be visited at The Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo. For more details go to [www.maas.museum](http://www.maas.museum) or [www.sherlockholmesexhibition.com](http://www.sherlockholmesexhibition.com)

There's going to be a bit of a wait if you want something nutritious at **Simpson's**. The iconic restaurant on The Strand closed on 17th April for a 6 to 10 week restoration and refurbishment of the entrance and Grand Divan. Originally opened in 1828 as a chess club and coffee house, it is now owned by **The Savoy**. It is reported that the ceilings, chandeliers and furnishings will be restored to give it a 'country house' ambience. They state that the re-launched restaurant will serve an entirely

new menu of traditional British dishes 'with a contemporary twist', but the original carving trolleys, dating from 1848, will still be used for tableside service. [www.simpsonsinthestrands.co.uk](http://www.simpsonsinthestrands.co.uk)

The publisher and theatrical licensing company **Samuel French** has closed its bookshop on Fitzroy Street. Over five years, their rents had increased by nearly 300%, which made it no longer viable to retain the premises. This is a very sad state of affairs for a business that has traded in London for 187 years. Customers are assured that they will still receive the same knowledgeable, personal service via telephone or internet. According to their website at [www.samuel french.co.uk](http://www.samuel french.co.uk), they also accept messages sent by carrier pigeon. The email address is [customerservices@samuel french.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@samuel french.co.uk)

The name of **Kiran Shah** will be familiar, even if the face isn't. He played Tonga twice; first, in Granada TV's adaptation of **The Sign of Four** in 1987 and again in the TV film **The Crucifer of Blood** in 1991. Holmesians who are also Whovians will have spotted his name in the credits of the **Doctor Who** episode broadcast on 22nd April, **Smile**, in which he played an Emoji-robot.

The actor **Tim Pigott-Smith** died on 7th April, age 70. In 1974 he made his Broadway debut in the RSC's production of **Sherlock Holmes** with **John Wood** in the title role. Tim went on to play Holmes in the 1986 BBC Radio adaptation of **The Valley of Fear**. He had a wide and varied acting career, but undoubtedly his most memorable character was the villainous Ronald Merrick in **The Jewel in the Crown**. Less well known than his acting career was his aptitude as an author and a Sherlockian. He wrote three children's books about the Baker Street Irregulars, **The Dragon Tattoo** (2008), **The Rose of Africa** (2009) and **Shadow of Evil** (2009) and he attended the Society's annual dinner in 2010. In the 2017 New Year Honours List Tim was awarded the OBE for services to drama.

**Howard Ostrom** brings news of a short film, adapted from his own essay, available to view on YouTube. **The Diogenes Documentaries 'Silent Doyle'** explores Doyle's non-Sherlock Holmes works that were adapted for silent film from 1915 – 1927. The documentary is directed, edited and narrated by **Ross K. Foad**, with voice talents from **Chris Whiteford** and **Philip Barton**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Re5gO4Hy4vO&t=25s>

For a completely different viewing experience, I stumbled across a clip from **Drunk Histories** (Comedy Central UK) in which comedian **Tom Parry** provides the inebriated narration for ACD's involvement in the Oscar Slater case. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cD9mAtyj1RM>. Conan Doyle is played by actor/presenter **Bradley Walsh** and **Julian Rhind-Tutt** plays Slater. There is also a clip about the Cottingley Fairies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9je7yXScx4>.

The BBC television comedy **Mrs. Brown's Boys** does not suit everyone's taste, but it has been popular enough to spawn a spin-off comedy/chat show entitled **All Round to Mrs. Brown's**. An ongoing feature of the new programme is a dubious business

venture set up by Mrs. Brown's clueless younger son, Dermot, and his equally dim friend, Buster. Each week, the boys coerce a celebrity into helping them run one of their seat-of-the-pants London tours. Episode 4, broadcast on 15th April, had actress Emilia Fox attempting (but failing miserably) to provide a reasonably intelligent Sherlock Holmes walking tour. The group ended up at the **Sherlock Homes Pub** (giving nice views into Holmes and Watson's sitting room), with one of the boys authoritatively assuring the tour group that the pub was Holmes's favourite place to drink. The episode is available to view on BBC iplayer.

## COMPETITION

Last month we reviewed *Arthur & Sherlock*, the new book by **Michael Sims** which traces how ACD came to create Sherlock Holmes. Courtesy of the publisher, Bloomsbury, we now have five copies to give away as competition prizes. To win a book, simply name five of the original Sherlock Holmes adventures that include a number in the title. Answers must reach me no later than ACD's birthday, **22nd May**. Winners will be announced in the next issue.

In 2009, the actor and theatre historian **David Timson** recorded the complete, unabridged Sherlock Holmes stories for **Naxos Audiobooks**, which is considered by many to be the best of its genre. In October 2009, he presented 'Theatrical Threads' for the Richard Lancelyn Green Memorial Lecture. David is now having a bit of a clear-out and is selling a small selection of his Sherlock Holmes books. The list of titles includes a number that would be of particular interest to anyone who is just beginning to assemble a Sherlockian library and lacks some of the influential foundation works of the earlier scholars. These include Michael Harrison's *The World of Sherlock Holmes*; Vincent Starrett's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*; SC Roberts' *Holmes and Watson – A Miscellany*, and about a dozen more titles. David states that fair offers will be accepted, but 'a good home is most important.' If you're interested, contact him at [davidjtimpson@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:davidjtimpson@tinyworld.co.uk)

In 2011 **Thomas Wheeler** published *The London of Sherlock Holmes* which, when used as an e-book with a GPS app, enabled the user to follow detailed walking routes of Holmes's city. An updated Kindle version, *The Mapped London of Sherlock Holmes*, became available in 2015. Thomas now reports 'As you may remember, I had included a Victorian overlay in *The Mapped London of Sherlock Holmes*, but when Google Maps withdrew their support I deleted the map. Now the **National Library of Scotland** has revised the project and the map is back. [www.maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#](http://www.maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#) The website is special in that it offers a variety of modern London base maps and a variety of historic overlay maps. I suggest Background Map: OpenStreetMap and Victorian overlay: London1.1.056,1893-1895. Then, a double click on the 'spy' feature on the lower left of the web page will select the size of Victorian area you wish to search.' Thomas Wheeler's books are available from MX Publishing or on Amazon.

**MX Publishing** has a number of new Sherlock Holmes titles available including *Sherlock Holmes and the Nine Dragon Sigil* by **Tim Symonds**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Edinburgh Haunting* by **David Wilson**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Hole in the Devil's Tail* by **Victor Messick**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Menacing Monk* by **Allan Mitchell**; *Sherlock Holmes and Hitler's Message of Death* by **Peter Macek**; *Sherlock Holmes and the Whitechapel Murders* by **Mark Sohn**; *The Vatican Cameos* by **Richard T Ryan**.

MX is also holding a competition to win a signed first edition of *Sherlock Holmes and the Portal of Time* by **Michael Druce**. To enter the competition or to order books go to [www.mxpublishing.co.uk](http://www.mxpublishing.co.uk). You can also order on Amazon.

In the early days of rail travel, passengers could purchase a 'yellowback novel' at the station, to while away the hours of their journey. These cheap paperbacks were the foundation of the success of **WH Smith**, who are celebrating their 225th anniversary with a commemorative yellowback edition of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, available from their website for £5.19 <https://www.whsmith.co.uk/products/the-adventures-of-sherlock-holmes-whsmith-225th-anniversary-yellowback-edition/9781784873141>

John Kelleher, who writes under the pen name of **JP Crenshaw**, informs us that he has written a pastiche with Mrs. Hudson as the main character. *Mrs. Gwendolyn Hudson, Detective – The Case of the Endangered Fiancé* is available on Amazon as an e-book for £2.37. Kindle Unlimited subscribers can access it at no charge.

We know that there is at least one scion society dedicated to Sherlockians who are ham radio enthusiasts. **Paul Signorelli** reports that he has contributed to the hobby's literature with 'Sherlock Investigates Radio Failures' published on the **Ham Radio on the Internet** site <http://www.eham.net/articles/38606> Another article 'Sherlock Investigates Death on the Trail' in *The QRP Quarterly*, Fall 2014, pp. 26-27, published by the **Amateur Radio Club International**.

## Periodicals received:

*The Bilge Pump - The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star* April 2017 (Steve Mason; [mason.steve@epa.gov](mailto:mason.steve@epa.gov)).

*Canadian Holmes* Spring 2017 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark and JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kington Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada; [markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca)).

*Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, March 2017 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA).

*The Illustrious Clients News*, April 2017 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA; [IllustClients@gmail.com](mailto:IllustClients@gmail.com)).

*Mayday Mayday*, April 2017 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarne Way, Belfast BT5 7RP; [oscarross@hotmail.com](mailto:oscarross@hotmail.com)).

*The Passengers' Log*, 6 January 2017 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill; [hotspur221@outlook.com](mailto:hotspur221@outlook.com), [www.sherlock.on.net](http://www.sherlock.on.net))

*The Petrel Flyer* Autumn/Winter 2016-2017 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Fran Martin; [franziskah@shaw.ca](mailto:franziskah@shaw.ca))

*Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, March 2017 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net)).

*The Serpentine Muse*, Spring 2017 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA).

*The Sherlockian E-Times*, 18 April 2017 (Carolyn & Joel Senter, Clifton Avenue, OH 45219 [sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com](mailto:sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com))

Jean Upton