

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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In the last issue, readers were given the challenge of naming the three canonical adventures in which **The Langham Hotel** is mentioned in order to win a copy of *Jack the Ripper: Case Closed* by **Gyles Brandreth**. We received a bumper crop of entries with the correct answers of: *The Sign of Four* (Mary Morstan's father stayed there), *'A Scandal in Bohemia'* (The King of Bohemia could be found there under the name of Count Von Kramm) and *'The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax'* (The Hon. Philip Green used the hotel as his London address). The five winners drawn from the deerstalker are: **Dougie Johnstone, Mark Jones, Jim Peters, Tim Salisbury and Nick Utechin**. They will shortly receive their prizes from publishers **Corsair/Little Brown**. Congratulations to all, and thank you to everyone who entered.

The Poor Folk Upon the Moors (The Sherlock Holmes Society of the West Country), who celebrated their 25th anniversary last year, had a tour of Dartmoor Prison Museum on Saturday 24th June, and held their Annual Henry Drew Memorial croquet match on Sunday 25th June, followed by birthday celebrations for their president, **Vosper Arthur**. There must be something about the West Country air (or perhaps the scrumpy), because it was Vosper's 99th! If you fancy a trip to Devon, or live in the surrounding area, it's worth considering membership in the Poor Folk. For details contact the Poor Folk's chairman, **Geraldine Beare** at gjwriter@gmail.com

The Retired Beekeepers of Sussex (based in Brighton) have shared news of their upcoming walk on the **South Downs** on 23rd July - "*Our annual field trip to the so-called retirement cottage and its surroundings.*" Space is limited, so RSVP is essential. For any queries or to register, email retiredbeekeepers@gmail.com. See <http://retiredbeekeepers.tumblr.com/post/161935293363/a-walk-on-the-south-downs-beachy-head-to-east-dean>

The Rookies website www.tinyurl.com/k4w8rw4 reports that the Royal National Institute for the Blind is planning a mini-exhibition which will include a newly commissioned bust of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. You can see images and a brief video on the website. Dame Jean Conan Doyle bequeathed her copyrights to the RNIB, which later sold them to the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd.

Packwood Haugh School in Shropshire is celebrating its 125th anniversary, and is organising a number of events including a Sherlock Holmes Day. Head of History, Nick Weston, is seeking speakers on Victorian/Sherlockian themes who would like to participate in the activities. If you're interested, contact Nick at NPW@packwood.salop.sch.uk

We all think that Sherlock Holmes is amazing, but someone has taken the sentiment quite literally. **Wistow Maze** in Leicestershire, which changes its configuration from year to year, is now in the shape of Sherlock Holmes's profile. The maze reportedly covers eight acres with three miles of paths to follow. <http://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/the-theme-of-this-year-s-wistow-maze-has-been-announced-and-we-reckon-you-ll-be-impressed/story-30387032-detail/story.html>

Catherine Cooke has forwarded the news that **Baker Street** and Gloucester Place will be returning to two-way traffic flow, as they were in Holmes's day. Works are due to start on 24th July, and will be carried out in stages. The work on Baker Street is expected to commence early in January 2018. Over the next 18 months there will be temporary lane closures and turning restrictions - something

to bear in mind if you're planning to visit the area over the next year or so.

Swisspasses, the ticketing agents for the **Swiss Travel System**, have informed us of a Sherlock Holmes tour that they have put together, which could be of interest if you are travelling to Switzerland between now and 22nd October. Details and prices are available on their website, including a slide show, video and maps. <http://www.swisspasses.com/excursions/packages/sherlock/index.htm>

News from **Alan Clarke**: "**ACT Company** (based in Bedfordshire www.actcompany.co.uk) are staging a new play entitled *Sherlock Holmes: The Case of The Whitehall Widower*. In this newly written and exciting play, inspired by the much beloved characters created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Scotland Yard are up against a killer who is slaying high profile politicians. He must be stopped at all costs, but Lestrade and his team are baffled and under tremendous pressure to make an arrest - so is it time to bring in a maverick genius who can solve the unsolvable? This promises to be a visually stunning play with some surprises. Book your tickets now to see Holmes, Watson, Lestrade, Mycroft, Irene Adler, Mrs Hudson, Langdale Pike and Shinwell in action. Perhaps even the Napoleon of crime himself may make an appearance! (Not suitable for children). Performances run from 25th to 29th July 2017, 7.45pm at The Little Theatre, Dunstable. Tickets via www.ticketsource.co.uk/actcompany or on 0800 206 1887."

Last month, **Howard Ostrom** informed us of a new play entitled *Sherlock Holmes and the Crimson Cobbles*, which was going to be performed at Chipping Norton in September. We have just learned that the play is also coming to the Mercury Theatre in Colchester on 27th and 28th September. For more details and to book tickets go to <https://www.mercurytheatre.co.uk/event/sherlock-holmes-and-the-crimson-cobbles/>

Luke Kuhns (author of *Welcome to Undershaw*) is working on a project for **Undershaw/Stepping Stones School**, and is looking for other authors to participate. The intention is to publish two articles a month on the school's website www.steppingstones.org.uk/ on the themes of Arthur Conan Doyle and his life and writings, Sherlock Holmes, Hindhead, and other relevant subjects. Articles should be a minimum of 500 -1,000 words, or 3,000-5,000 maximum. The project will kick off with items by David Marcum and Luke Kuhns. If you would like to participate or need more information, contact Luke at lukebenjamin Kuhns@gmail.com

Stepping Stones School is also planning a number of events and activities in the coming months, as well as special events in 2018 to celebrate ACD's birthday. Check their website's Events page for details and regular updates.

It's fascinating to compare the streets of today's London to those that were familiar to ACD and Sherlock Holmes. We can now get a glimpse of another major city during the exciting era that witnessed the birth of **The Baker Street Irregulars**. *The New Yorker* magazine has produced a remarkable split-screen video, showing a comparison of the streets of New York in the 1930s to the same locations as they appear today. See it at <http://video.newyorker.com/watch/eighty-years-of-new-york-city-then-and-now>

And while I'm on the subject of **The Baker Street Irregulars**, the **BSI Press** is holding a One Month Only (July) 50% discount sale on the following four titles: *A Remarkable Mixture; To Keep the Memory Green; The Grand Game, Volume Two;* and *The Remarkable Characters of Arthur Conan Doyle*. The sale runs from 1st to 31st July, or whenever the books sell out (whatever comes first). Sales are only through the website and PayPal (no cheques or mail orders). Books can be purchased singly or in any combination and the standard shipping charges apply. After July the books will revert to their original prices. To place your order go to: www.bakerstreetjournal.com where there will be a notice and links to the appropriate pages. It's worth browsing through the other titles they offer as well. You might just find the five volumes you need to fill that untidy gap on your second shelf...

Bonnie MacBird is being a busy MacBee, with two events coming up to promote her new book, *Unquiet Spirits*. On Wednesday 26th July she will be giving a talk at Westminster Reference Library, 35 Saint Martin's Street, London WC2H 7HP, for which tickets can be booked on Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/unquiet-spirits-a-sherlock-holmes-adventuretalk-by-bonnie-macbird-tickets-35476646605> At the **Edinburgh Fringe Festival** on August 7, 9, 11, 14 and 16, along with co-presenter, whisky expert **Charlie MacLean**, she will explore the subjects of *Unquiet Spirits; Whisky, Ghosts and Sherlock Holmes*. <https://edinburghfestival.list.co.uk/event/783533-unquiet-spirits-whisky-ghosts-and-sherlock-holmes/> Also at the Fringe I note that **Ann Treherne** (chair, the Arthur Conan Doyle Centre) will be presenting *Arthur Conan Doyle – The Spiritualist* on August 8, 10, 15, 17 and 22nd.

A great many people have been eagerly awaiting publication of the English translation of **Mattias Boström's** excellent book, *From Holmes to Sherlock*, which was originally published in his native language of Swedish. We are delighted to announce that it will be published in the United States by The Mysterious Press on 1st August under the title of *From Holmes to Sherlock: The Story of the Men and Women Who Created an Icon*. In the UK the same book will be published by Head of Zeus on 10th August, but under the amended title of *The Life and Death of Sherlock Holmes: Master Detective, Myth and Media Star*. You can place an advance order for either version on Amazon. Mattias reports that an audiobook is planned in the US with British narrator Shaun Grindell, and a UK paperback will be published in February 2018.

A facsimile edition of the handwritten manuscript of *The Adventure of the Creeping Man* has been published by **Winchester University Press** in partnership with **Portsmouth City Council**. The original manuscript is part of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection Lancelyn Green bequest. Edited by **Professor Neil McCaw**, the book features the carefully photographed manuscript and a transcribed, annotated version of the story. An introductory essay examines the critical history of the tale and the manuscript, as well as a history of Conan Doyle's time spent in Portsmouth. The facsimile is available for £35 (including postage and packing) within the UK, or £50 outside of the UK. For more details and to purchase the book go to: <http://www.visitportsmouth.co.uk/conandoyle/thecreepingman> From the same website you can also have a browse through the collection.

Meanwhile, **Brian Pugh** reports that a new plaque to Arthur Conan Doyle will be unveiled at **Elliot Terrace in Plymouth** on Saturday 9th September. No further details are available at present, but we will provide an updated report when information is made available.

Spoken arts label **Cadabra Records** has produced Bleak December's adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. It features a full audio cast which showcases **Sir Derek Jacobi** as Sherlock Holmes. There will be a deluxe vinyl-only release through Cadabra Records on July 28th in a limited run of 300 copies on 150-gram vinyl, packed in a deluxe heavyweight tip-on gatefold sleeve. The record features detailed liner notes by producer Anthony D.P. Mann of Bleak December and newly

commissioned art by Adam Burke. For details and to order go to www.cadabrarecords.com

Orlando Pearson has been in touch to say that Volume IV of his *Redacted Sherlock Holmes* series of quirky short stories will be published in the autumn. Volumes I – III are available from MX Publishing and on Amazon.

Obituaries:

Roy Barraclough died on June 1st, aged 81. He was a regular character, Alec Gilroy, in *Coronation Street* and did a double act with comedian **Les Dawson**, especially memorable in the beloved 'Cissie and Ada' drag sketches on Dawson's television programme. In 1993 he played Watson to **Robert Powell's** Holmes in the national touring production of *Sherlock Holmes the Musical*. More recently he played the part of Mr. Grainger in the one-off 2016 revival of *Are You Being Served?*

Peter Sallis died on 2nd June, aged 96. He appeared as Cleggy in every episode of the long-running series *Last of the Summer Wine* and was the voice of Mole in Cosgrove Hall's delightful adaptation of *The Wind in the Willows*. Some Sherlockians might have been lucky enough to see him play Watson to **Fritz Weaver's** Holmes in the 1965 Broadway musical *Baker Street*, in which he sang the signature tune "A Married Man". The younger generation will recognise him as the voice of Wallace in **Nick Park's** series of *Wallace and Gromit* films.

Eric Monahan, who died on the 9th June, was a member of our Society and, more notably, of The Poor Folk Upon the Moors, whose journal *The Torr* he edited from 1994 to 2001. As well as a score of entertaining short stories, he was, like Sherlock Holmes, guilty of several monographs on Holmesian topics, including *Banking and Finance in the Canon*, to which he applied the knowledge and experience of a professional lifetime. He was a very likeable gentleman and he will be much missed.

Periodicals received:

The Baker Street Bugle, June 2017 (**The Deerstalkers of Welshpool**, Joan and Roy Upton-Holder, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7BA; ruptonholder@gmail.com)

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

Canadian Holmes, Summer 2017 (**The Journal of the Bootmakers of Toronto**, Mark and JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada; markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca)

The Gaslight Gazette, Spring 1897 (sic) (**Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive.. Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA; dmycroft@bellsouth.net)

The Illustrious Clients News, May 2017 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA; IllusClients@gmail.com)

Ineffable Twaddle, June 2017 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)

The Practical Handbook of Bee Culture, Summer 2017 (**The Retired Beekeepers of Sussex**; retiredbeekeepers@gmail.com)

Proceedings of the Pondicherry Lodge, June 2017 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of India**; shsieditors@yahoo.in, shsieditors@gmail.com)

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

The Watsonian, Spring 2017 (**The John H Watson Society**; selena@johnwatsonociety.com)

Jean Upton