

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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The Compliments of the Season!

Those of you who will be visiting London from now until 6th January might care to pay a visit to the **Sherlock Holmes Pub**, where Holmes's sitting room has been arranged with *disjecta membra* from 'The Blue Carbuncle,' including Henry Baker's hat and goose.

Radio Times has been running an online poll to determine the **Favourite Sherlock on Screen**. You can place your vote at: <https://www.radiotimes.com/news/2018-12-04/best-sherlock-holmes-vote-tv-film-poll/> Rather alarmingly, Peter Cook is one of the contenders, and if your choice is Douglas Wilmer you will need to submit a written nomination.

The New York Times recently asked its readers (via Twitter) for their experiences of petty crime in London. Unsurprisingly, the responses were somewhat less than serious. One person reported that a red-headed man hired him to copy out the Encyclopedia Britannica, but it turned out to be a scam.

The current issue (December 24 & 31 2018) of **The New Yorker** has a Sherlockian cover illustration by Barry Blitt entitled *Elementary*, which you can view here: <https://t.co/HAi83pEC19>

Oscar Ross reports that the December 2018/January 2019 issue of **Philosophy Now** has a Holmes-themed cover and article, 'A Forgiving Reason: The Secret of Sherlock Holmes's Success' by Tim Weldon. You can access it here: <https://philosophynow.org/issues/129>

The rumour mills have been busy again, and there are murmurs of a return of **Sherlock** in a new series: <https://www.radiotimes.com/news/tv/2018-12-07/sherlock-season-5-new-series-speedys-cafe/>

Congratulations to **Jeff Falkingham**, author of *Murder in Minnesota! Two Sherlockian Tales*, who has received a Sigerson Award from the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota for his essay 'War of Words' about a feud between Arthur Conan Doyle and Samuel Clemens. Further details (including the award-winning essay itself) can be found at: <http://www.cccaper.com/more.html>

Netflix is planning a new Sherlock Holmes series called **The Irregulars**. According to its writer, **Tom Bidwell**, "Sherlock Holmes [in Conan Doyle's books] had a group of street kids he'd use to help him gather clues, so our series is what if Sherlock was a drug addict and a delinquent and the kids solve the whole case whilst he takes credit. It's my dream project and my oldest idea (I've been pitching it for ten years)."

<https://www.radiotimes.com/news/on-demand/2018-12-20/netflix-the-irregulars-sherlock-holmes/>

An assortment of signed letters and postcards from Arthur Conan Doyle went to auction on 30th November at Bubb Kuyper in Haarlem, The Netherlands. The estimate was €1,500 – 2,500, and sale price was €1,500. View the lot at: https://www.bubbkuyper.com/index.php?keyword=doyle&limitstart=0&option=com_virtuemart&view=category&virtuemart_category_id=0&abcveilingnr=69

Thanks to **Dean Richardson** for the following information: "Flicker Alley has (finally) announced the release of the 1929 German version of **The Hound of the Baskervilles** on February 1 as a dual Blu-ray/DVD. A surprise extra is the 1914 German **Hund** by the same director (Richard Oswald)! You can (and should) order it here:"

<https://www.flickeralley.com/classic-movies-2/#!/Der-Hund-Von-Baskerville/p/125716170>

Rain or Shine Theatre Company are currently touring with their comedy production of **Sherlock Holmes and the Curious Case of Dr. Jekyll and Miss Hyde**. "After the success of 2016's **The Hound of the Baskervilles**, and 2017's **Dracula: A Pain in the Neck**, Rain or Shine are dying to bring you yet another fantastic evening of entertainment with their own individual comedic style! The dynamic duo returns to solve one of the Victorians age's biggest mysteries, **The Curious Case of Dr Jekyll & Miss Hyde**. This Winter join Sherlock Holmes, his trusty sidekick Watson, and watch a case unfold that is less elementary, and more fantastical than ever before. Rain or Shine will once again be reinventing the classic Sherlock Holmes characters using their now-signature 'Morecambe & Wise-ish comedy' style for another season of mystery, mayhem, but above all multi-role madness!" Although they are nearing the end of their tour, there are still a few dates and venues left in January.

<http://www.rainorshine.co.uk/index.html>

Running until 12th January is *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, a two-hander comedy farce that is receiving great reviews. You can see it at the Drayton Arms Theatre, located above the pub at 153 Old Brompton Road in London, with matinees available on Saturday and Sunday. <https://thedraytonarmstheatre.co.uk/>

From **Geraldine Beare**: “Just been reading the latest London Library magazine. In it there is an article on miniature books and in the article is the following: ‘The Miniature Book Society (MBS) like nothing more each summer than to meet in Dublin or South Carolina and talk about books such as the new Complete Sherlock Holmes, published in 60 volumes by Miniaturbuchverlag of Leipzig, each 5.3x3.8cm, every word legible without the need for magnification.’ Amazing! I have a few miniature books but I would love to see these.”

David R. Parker has been in touch to say: “The book you mention on page 2 of DM 381, *A Study in Sherlock: Watson’s Notebook* by Raymond G Farney, is available as a PDF download for only \$5 from the Outskirts Press website <https://outskirtspress.com/AStudyInSherlock> (all 707 pages of it!). I should add that the PDF version at \$5 allows reading but NOT printing.”

Steve Emecz reports: “We’re delighted to confirm that we are sponsoring two tables at the BSI Weekend in January – for MX and our US partners Belanger Books. MX authors will be able to sell books from the dealer table during the weekend.” This could be a good opportunity for attendees to get their copies signed.

The Celtic Phoenix: A Sherlock Holmes Adventure by Kim Krisco, MX Publishing, 350pp, pbk £12.99. “An enigmatic jewelry case, holding human remains, arrives at the cottage of Sherlock Holmes, enticing him from his retirement refuge in the Sussex Downs. Holmes sets out on the trail of the murderer taunting him, joining forces with one of his former Baker Street Irregulars, Tessa Wiggins. The two find themselves battling forces arising from a time before England was a country – when the Celts were fighting for survival.”

A Most Diabolical Plot: Six Compelling Sherlock Holmes Stories by Tim Symonds, MX Publishing, 164pp, pbk, £8.99. “In the year 1903 - the exact moment is now lost to history - Sherlock Holmes proclaimed to the world he was quitting England’s capital to go into retirement on a small, wind-swept farm in the Sussex South Downs. His shocked comrade-in-arms, Dr. John H. Watson, was later to write, ‘The decision took me utterly by surprise. I thought I had become an institution around Holmes, like his Stradivarius, or the old, oily black clay pipe and his index books.’ Reluctantly, Watson wrote up three recent cases yet unpublished and returned to his medical practice. Holmes’ retirement didn’t last long. Once more, his faithful amanuensis, Watson took up his pen - and his Army service revolver. The result was three more of the most intriguing cases ever undertaken by the famous pair. All six

adventures have now been brought together in this special edition.”

Obituaries

Thomas D. Utecht died on 9 November. Thom discovered the Sherlockian world at a John Bennett Shaw workshop in 1984. He was a founder of the Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn, a member of the Three Garridebs and, along with Peter Crupe and the late Marlene Aig, was a founding member of The Occupants of the Full House. Thom received his Investiture (“Arthur Charpentier”) from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1994. He also joined a rather select group of gentlemen invested in The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes.

Roy Upton-Holder died on 16 November. He was the Founder and Chairman of The Deerstalkers of Welshpool, and led a campaign to have all of the Sherlock Holmes stories translated into Welsh, the first of which was ‘*The Speckled Band*’ (Y Cylch Brith). Roy’s efforts were recognised by BBC news, and you can see an interview with him here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-mid-wales-23865742>

Periodicals Received:

The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, December 2018 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov)

The Illustrious Clients News, December 2018 (The Illustrious Clients, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA; IllustClients@gmail.com)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, November 2018 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net)

Sherlockiana, Nr. 4 2018 (Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark; Sven Ranild, editor; redaktion@sherlockholmesklubben.dk)

The Shingular Exploits of an Amateur Holmesian (The Shingle of Southsea Holmesian Society; Paul Thomas Miller, <http://shingleofsouthsea.blogspot.com>)

The Whaling News, December 2018 (The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn, St. Charles, MO; J Andrew Basford; pcairnes26@outlook.com)

Jean Upton