



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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The latest issue of *The Serpentine Muse* provides the newest investitures in **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes** (ASH), awarded at their Autumn Luncheon. They are: **Michael Bush** ('An Obvious Fact'); **Carla Kaessinger Coupe** ('The Footprints of a Gigantic Hound'); **Jennifer Kneeland** ('A Touch of the Dramatic'); **Emily Miranker** ('The Corner of Goodge Street'); **Tracy J. Revels** ('The Speckled Band'); **Greg D. Ruby** ('A Case of Ancient Coins').

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London held its annual dinner on 11th January, at which **Judi Ellis** received the Tony Howlett Award. Congratulations also to **Bob Neill, MP** (our sponsor for many of the Society's dinners at the House of Commons) who received a knighthood in the New Year's Honours List, and **Catherine Cooke** who was awarded the British Empire Medal for Services to Libraries.

And just in from **Doug Wrigglesworth**: The Bootmakers of Toronto have awarded the 2019 Derrick Murdock Award to **Catherine Cooke** for her article in Volume 41 #2 of **Canadian Holmes**: "*Creating Reality – Conan Doyle's Concern to Present Fiction as Fact in The Lost World*"

At the **Baker Street Irregulars** dinner on 17th January, **Michael Whelan** (Wiggins) announced the following new investitures: **Frank Cho** ('The Duke of Balmoral'); **Walt Colby** ('Neil Gibson'); **Carlina de la Cova** ('Anthropological Journal'); **Nancy Holder** ('Beryl Garcia'); **Ken Ludwig** ('Jack Stapleton'); **David Richards** ('Colonel Warburton's Madness'); **Jim Webb** ('The Curious Incident of Sherlock Holmes in Japan'); and we're fairly certain that our Society's former President, **Freda Howlett**, holds the distinction of being the most senior recipient of the Irregular Shilling - at the age of 101 she is now 'The British Government'; **Andrew G. Fusco** was awarded the Two-Shilling Medal. **Ira Matetsky** received the Morley-Montgomery Award for '*Another Sherlockian Myth Debunked: Time to Turn the Page(t)?*' Next year's new Irregulars will receive their shillings from **Michael Kean**, who now takes on the responsibilities of Wiggins.

In the USA '*The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire*,' '*The Adventure of the Three Garridebs*,' and '*The Adventure of the Illustrious Client*,' first published in 1924, officially entered the public domain on 1 January 2020 as the 95-year copyright expired at the end of 2019. Only six stories are still under copyright: '*The Adventure of the Three Gables*,' '*The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier*,' '*The Adventure of the Lion's Mane*,' and '*The Adventure of the Retired Colourman*,' which enter public domain in 2022; and '*The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger*' and '*The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place*,' which enter public domain in 2023.

On 18th August **Royal Mail** will issue new stamps under the title '**Sherlock**' – but no other information is given at this time. You can keep an eye on the Royal Mail's Special Stamp

Calendar for more details as they become available. <https://blog.postofficeshop.co.uk/special-stamps-calendar-for-2020/>

COMPETITION

Many people of my acquaintance have discovered the joys of **Peter Christian**, a Gentlemen's Outfitter, whose eccentric and witty catalogues offer a range of "excellent quality clothing at a fair price." The newest catalogue includes a very handsome Harris Tweed deerstalker, "for hunting folks and detectives." The company's proprietor, **Lord Trousers** (well, I *did* say eccentric!), has generously offered one of these delectable headcovers as a competition prize. To enter, identify the feature film in which this scenario takes place: *Holmes and Watson are about to exit the sitting room at 221b. Holmes's hand strays toward his deerstalker, but, at Watson's protest, he instead chooses a more appropriate hat.* Answers to reach me at district.messenger@yahoo.com (or at the address shown above) no later than 29th February (it's Leap Year!) and the winner will be announced in our March issue. <https://www.peterchristian.co.uk/>

The first permanent granite statue in the United States to honour Sherlock Holmes was unveiled in Chester, Illinois on 7th December, as part of the Popeye and Friends Character Trail. **Michael W. McClure** provides photos and information at www.baskervilleproductions.com/statue, and you can hear him interviewed by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder on the *I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere* blog www.tinyurl.com/tu8l4py talking about "*Sherlock, Popeye, and More.*" You can read about **Derek Martin's** journey to the unveiling ceremony in the January 2020 issue of The Nashville Scholars' **Plugs and Dottles** at <http://www.nashvillescholars.net/writings.html>

Nicholas Utechin has recently seen *Tweedy and the Missing Company of Sherlock Holmes*, and gives the show his enthusiastic recommendation: "Slapstick, huge fun and accurate so far as *The Hound* is concerned." According to the website, "*Tweedy is putting on a large-scale theatre production of Sherlock Holmes. He's built the set, got the props and booked your local theatre for the show. There is only one problem – Tweedy has lost all the actors! Tweedy calls on his faithful friend Monsieur Loyal for help, and together the two of them must solve the mystery of the missing actors and also perform the whole show between the two of them. How hard can that be?*" Tweedy is a popular circus clown with Gifford's Circus and Cirque Berserk, and he is touring the show throughout February. You can find dates and venues at <https://tweedyswebsite.com/#tour>

Oscar Ross has alerted us that **Trinity College Dublin** is seeking applicants for a fully-funded four-year Provost's PhD Project doctoral award for "*Situating Sherlock: Mapping Space and Place in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes*" to begin in September 2020 or March 2021. The award

comprises the student's full tuition fees (EU or non-EU) and an annual stipend of €16,000. If you're interested in obtaining a PhD in Sherlock Holmes, you can learn more here:

<https://www.tcd.ie/English/assets/pdf/provosts-phd-award-2020-cc-final.pdf>

Books of interest:

Special Offer: On 20th February, Tauris Parke (an imprint of Bloomsbury) are publishing *Conan Doyle's Wide World: Sherlock Holmes and Beyond* by Andrew Lycett. "With extracts from Conan Doyle's own writings, this book reveals the thrilling real-life adventures of the creator of the world's most famous detective." For District Messenger readers, the publishers are offering a 25% discount code on the Bloomsbury website. You can use the link www.bloomsbury.com/conandoyle to view the book on the website. Once you have added the book to your basket and gone to checkout, there is an option to add in a discount code, which in this instance is **SHERLOCK25**. This will automatically apply the 25% discount to the book, bringing it from £20 to £15. This offer is running from now until the 31st March, and is available for use on pre-ordering the title.

The Baker Street Irregulars have three new titles:

Manuscript Series: *The Worst Man in London ("Charles Augustus Milverton")* a facsimile of the original manuscript with annotations and commentary edited by Daniel Stashower and Constantine Rossakis. 200 pp HBK \$39.95 plus shipping.

Professions Series: *Education Never Ends: Educators, Education and the Sherlockian Canon* edited by Marino C. Alvarez and Timothy S. Greer. Teaching, learning, education, and educators are all integral parts of the Canon. This book encompasses the entire field, providing an informative yet entertaining survey of the topic. 224 pp HBK \$39.95 plus shipping.

Upon the Turf: Horse Racing and the Sherlockian Canon edited by Candace J. Lewis, Ira Brad Matetsky, and Roger Donway. Horse racing, gambling, debt, scandal, and murder are all major threads in the Canonical tapestry. 216 pp PBK \$25.95 plus shipping.

Save on shipping when you order 2 or more books.

<https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/tag/books/>

Cenarth Fox, one of our Antipodean contacts, says 'My Sherlockian novel, *Sherlock Holmes – Playing the Game* is due soon. It will be launched in the Newcomb Library on February 8, almost 100 years to the day since Sir Arthur arrived in the "tiny town of Geelong". Today's population – 250K. I will be giving my one-man Sherlock Show at 10 am in the library.' The Newcomb Library is located at Bellarine Highway, Wilsons Rd., Geelong VIC 3219, Australia. <https://www.grlc.vic.gov.au/locate/newcomb-library>

Kelvin I Jones has just a few copies left of the hardback editions of *The Art of Detection*, *The Sherlock Holmes Ultimate Smoking Companion*, and *Upon The Chaldean Roots of the Ancient Cornish Language*. All are available at £9.00 each within the UK. US and Canadian customers must add £9.00 to cover the shipping cost of two books. Let Kelvin know if you would like signed copies. You can contact him by email at mycroft221@yahoo.com or direct message at www.facebook.com/siger_holmes Payment is preferred by PayPal (Kelvin Jones) but UK only customers may pay by cheque.

Obituaries

We were very sad to learn that **Bob Thomalen** has died at the age of 85. Peter Blau provides the following details: *Robert E. Thomalen ("The Three Garridebs", BSI) died on Dec. 5. Beginning in 1986 he presided over many "Autumn in Baker Street" (and one "Springtime in Baker Street") conferences, which he boasted combined "scholarship with friendship, emotion with reason, and explication with participation", and in 1987 was appointed "Cartwright" of the Baker Street Irregulars, receiving the BSI's Queen Victoria Medal when he retired in 1996. He received his BSI Investiture in 1983, and the Two-Shilling Award in 1988.*

There are some wonderful tributes to Bob at <https://www.ihearofsherlock.com/2020/01/remembering-bob-thomalen-bsi.html#.XidQnCPgqUk> which chronicle his many Sherlockian achievements, but also include the story of his heroic rescue of a magician whose trick involving fire went disastrously wrong, and Bob's legendary interpretation of the Quasimodo joke. He will be sorely missed.

In 1990, when **Mikio Kawamura** won the Japan Essayist Club Award for his book *The Personal History of Sherlock Holmes*, he generously donated £200 of the prize money to the Society. He had joined in 1984, when he was an executive with Mitsubishi. In 2009 he founded and sponsored our annual Tony & Freda Howlett Literary Award. Showsaku Mashimo reports that Mikio organised the AGM of the Japan Sherlock Holmes Club. He died in November, aged 84, and he too will be much missed.

Periodicals Received:

The Baker Street Journal, Winter 2019 (**The Baker Street Journal**, P.O. Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077-1934, USA; email@bakerstreetjournal.com)

The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, January 2020 (Steve Mason; mason.steve@epa.gov)

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, December 2019 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA)

The Illustrious Clients News, January 2020 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA; IllustClients@gmail.com)

Ineffable Twaddle, January 2020 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)

Plugs and Dottles, January 2020 (**The Nashville Scholars**, Jim Hawkins and Dean Richardson; seniorhawk@gmail.com)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermacti Press, December 2019 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net) <http://redcircledc.org/index.php?id=39>

The Serpentine Muse, Winter 2019 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Heather Holloway & Crystal Noll, P.O. Box 1802, Griffin, GA 30224, USA; SerpentineMuseASH@gmail.com)

Jean Upton