

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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We send best wishes to all of our readers, and hope that you are keeping safe and well.

With his usual sagacity, **Stephen Fry** has tweeted the following: "OK. Until this thing is over we've all got to be helpful, friendly and kind to each other, understood? Hatchets buried. Grievances forgotten. Disputes resolved. Feuds ended. Strangers smiled at. When the final whistle is blown we can go back to being mean and beastly. Agreed?"

Our Society, as well as many others worldwide, has had to cancel or reschedule events in order to avoid putting members at risk of the Coronavirus. "*Three-Minute Problems*," which was to be held on 20th March was cancelled and, based on current advice, our annual May Festival Weekend will not be held this year. For information on future events we recommend that you check the Society's website for updates: www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

We send congratulations to the **Crew of the Barque Lone Star** in Texas, who are celebrating their 50th Anniversary. However, they have had to postpone their party, which was to be held on 11th April. **Steve Mason** notes: "That celebration should not have a shadow of concern about potential virus spread, so we will be looking to hold the party in early summer (hopefully)."

And felicitations to our good friend, **Barry Cryer**, whose 85th birthday was on 23rd March. Barry was guest of honour at our 2001 Annual Dinner and, with his son Bob, is author of the very amusing novel *Mrs. Hudson's Diaries*, which they adapted for BBC Radio in 2018.

In January we challenged readers to 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.* The answer is, of course, *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror* starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. Correct submissions were entered into a draw to win a rather delectable Harris Tweed deerstalker, courtesy of **Peter Christian Gentlemen's Outfitters**. The lucky name pulled from our own battered deerstalker was that of our Czech correspondent, **Aleš Kolodrubec**, who says: "The deerstalker has safely arrived. It's really gorgeous! Now, I am ready for deerstalking or Sherlocking around." Proprietor of Peter Christian, Lord Trousers (AKA Nick Alderton) is a Sherlockian himself, and says: "I am really pleased that we were able to provide a prize for your competition. For what it is worth, my favourite Sherlock will always be Jeremy Brett; I mourn his loss to our screens." If you are overcome with envy, you can find Aleš's prize at <https://peterchristian.co.uk/> or www.peterchristianoutfitters.com/

From **Andrew Jupp** at the BBC: The *Sherlock Holmes* 1966/67 radio series with **Carleton Hobbs** was to be repeated on Radio 4 Extra from April 23 for nine (week) days. However, recent

events have made it necessary to postpone the broadcast. We will provide an update when details become available.

Catherine Cooke has passed on a message received from the organizers of the upcoming *Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* conference: "With regret, we are obliged to postpone the *Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* conference at Napier University, scheduled for 25th to 27th June. Individual messages will be sent to all who submitted a proposal. Our sincere apologies to everyone who was hoping to attend. Dates for the rescheduled conference later in the year will be posted as soon as possible on the conference website at <https://edinburgh-conan-doyle.org/events/>, and we hope to see many of you then. The Conference website is being updated."

Oscar Ross has discovered that the **Customs House** in Belfast is up for sale. He says: "The Custom House is one of two candidates for the title of the Belfast post-office where James Browner posted his gruesome packet (it is close to the docks where the *May Day* would have berthed). The Queen's Square post-office was housed in the building's west wing (substantially altered at a later date). In August 1886, two years prior to the most likely date of the case, a new GPO opened at Royal Avenue, the city's new main thoroughfare. As a consequence of this, Queen's Square, which had been the town's chief post-office since 1857, was demoted to branch status (it later closed). My own vote for the title goes to the Royal Avenue. That building was demolished in the late 1980s and its successor, at a different location, met with the same fate. The current main post-office in the city centre is in High Street, which incidentally was the site where John Getty McGee invented and first sold his famous Ulster coat." www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/belfasts-historic-custom-house-on-the-market-as-taxman-moves-out-39029359.html

Geoff Bradley, editor of *CADS* (Crime and Detective Stories) found something for young Sherlockians: "A few days ago my young grandson was watching CBeebies when on came a cartoon series called *Dog Loves Books*. This particular episode was *Dog Loves Mysteries* and it started with Dog and his friend Pug opening a book and reading the story. It started in a fog-bound London street and became a story of Dog and Pug being separated. When Dog started searching for Pug, he came across Sherlock Holmes, who was searching for Watson. The story lasted 7 minutes and involved both Holmes and Watson and had a few of the familiar references (including the Giant Rat of Sumatra). Anyway, if you haven't seen it, you can catch it on iplayer at www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000g8mg/dog-loves-books-series-1-7-dog-loves-mysteries."

From **Mark Jones**: "I thought I'd drop you a quick note about the *Doings of Doyle* podcast. We're now five months in and today have released an episode on "*The Man with the Watches*" and "*The Lost Special*". While we focus each episode on a different aspect of ACD's life and work and look at Sherlockian

connections along the way, this is the first time we have tackled directly works that are close to the Sherlock Holmes canon. The episode can be heard at our website, www.doingsofdoyle.com, or on a host of podcast platforms including Apple, Google and Spotify. Links here: bit.ly/DODoyle (episode), bit.ly/DOD5sn (show notes for the episode).” **Roger Johnson** comments: “I shall listen with particular interest to this episode, as I directed **Matthew Elliott's** excellent audio dramatisations of *The Man With the Watches* and *The Lost Special*.” You can find them at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/category/podcasts/

From **Jonathan Hopson**: “**Bonnie MacBird** will be speaking on “*The Mystery of Sherlock Holmes*” at the Detection Club’s next *Alibis in the Archive* conference held at Gladstone’s Library, 19th to 21st June.” www.gladstoneslibrary.org/events/events-courses-list/alibis-in-the-archive-2020
<https://macbird.com/see-bonnie-macbird-in-person-at-the-following-events-and-conferences/>

Visitors to Edinburgh are unlikely to see the Sherlock Holmes statue back on view until 2022, according to the following report: <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/traffic-and-travel/famous-edinburgh-paolozzi-sculptures-come-back-home-after-tram-works-what-about-bronze-pigeons-and-sherlock-holmes-statue-1385011>

Thomas Wheeler says, “One of the advantages of publishing a book on Amazon is that you can easily update the manuscript. I just did so for *The Mapped London of Sherlock Holmes*. The changes were minor and included: An explanation of the Royal Mail postal codes; A clearer explanation of how to use the National Library of Scotland’s 1895 London web site; The addition of a named character I missed in the *Adventure of the Blinded Soldier*. The point of this note is to ask readers to alert me to any other corrections or improvements I should make. I hope that the book will remain in print as long as there is an interest in Sherlock Holmes; in other words, forever.” londonsecrets@europe.com

Books of Interest

Stephen Payne has alerted us to a nicely produced paperback edition of *A Study in Scarlet*, with the news that Portsmouth is making copies freely available. It is published as part of the Portsmouth City of Stories project funded by the Arts Council England. The project aims to encourage local community engagement with the Portsmouth Archive Collection which includes the Conan Doyle Collection. As part of this funded project there is a 2020 Portsmouth Big Read for which Portsmouth City Council is producing a graphic novel version of *A Study in Scarlet*. This novel is aimed at Key Stage 2 learners and adults and is available to buy from Southsea Library and Portsmouth Museum.

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/news/free-copies-of-a-study-in-scarlet>
<https://www.visitportsmouth.co.uk/conandoyle/our-work/a-study-in-scarlet-graphic-novel>

New titles from **Wessex Press** www.wessexpress.com/:

The Annotated White Company (Indianapolis: Wessex Press, 2020, 410 pp., \$48.95) is annotated and introduced by Doug Elliott and Roy Pilot, with a foreword by Nicholas Meyer. It includes black-and-white illustrations by George Willis Bardwell and colour illustrations by N. C. Wyeth, plus appendices that offer more information about Arthur Conan Doyle, his notebooks and manuscript, and life in the 14th century.

The Sherlock Holmes Review: Anthology Volume One 1986-1987 (Gasogene Books, 2020; 131 pp., \$27.95) is a reprint of the journal edited and published by Steven T. Doyle, which includes contributions from Jeremy Brett and Peter Cushing, and many familiar names in Sherlockian scholarship.

Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle in the Newspapers, Volume 5, July-September 1894, edited and annotated by Mattias Boström, Mark Alberstat, and Leah Guinn (Gasogene Books, 2020; 204 pp., \$36.95) covers the period in which the press showed considerable interest in Conan Doyle’s books, travel, and his play *A Story of Waterloo*.

Obituaries

Of **Roy Hudd**, who died on the 15th March, aged 83, *The Guardian* says: “What was he – a comedian, an author, a radio satirist, a serious actor, a soap star, an archivist, or a leading authority on British music-hall and variety entertainment? Hudd was all of these...” In 1999-2000, he played Holmes, with Chris Emmett and June Whitfield as Watson and Mrs Hudson, in a daft, vulgar, very entertaining radio series, *The Newly Discovered Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*. On a more serious level, in 1994 he played one John Gedgrave to Jeremy Brett’s Holmes in Granada TV’s *The Dying Detective*, and in 2002 he was James Phillimore to Clive Merrison’s Holmes in *The Singular Inheritance of Miss Gloria Wilson* on BBC radio. Roy Hudd was President of the British Music Hall Society from 1992 until his death. In January he announced that he planned to donate his huge collection of Music Hall material to the University of Kent.

Orson Bean died on 7th February, age 91. Always a bit of a free spirit, he had a long and varied career as a magician, writer, comedian and actor, with appearances on stage, screen and television. He and his wife, actress Alley Mills, were prominent supporters of local theatre in Los Angeles. They sat on the board of trustees for the Pacific Resident Theatre in Venice, California, putting on and appearing in classic plays and contemporary productions. Peter Blau notes that Orson played Colonel Sebastian Moran/Sir Charles/Dr. Grimesby Roylott/Professor Moriarty in Susan L. Seder’s play *The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes* in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1988.

Periodicals Received:

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

The Moor, March 2020 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggstrom; bhc@telia.com)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, February 2020 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net, <http://redcircledc.org/index.php?id=39>)

Sherlockiana, Nr. 1 2020 (**Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark**; Sven Ranild, editor; redaktion@sherlockholmesklubben.dk)

The Whaling News, March 2020 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn, St. Charles, MO**; J Andrew Basford; pcairnes26@outlook.com)

Jean Upton