

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Please keep visiting our website, which is being updated frequently with news, important information and many items of interest: [www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk](http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk). You will find current updates on events that have either been cancelled because of COVID restrictions, or rescheduled as a Zoom meeting.

At our combined AGM / Film Evening on 13th November, Chairman David Jones announced the newest Honorary Members of our Society. They are: über-Sherlockian **Peter Blau**; **Michael Cox**, producer of Granada TV's *Sherlock Holmes*; and our former Chairman, Membership Secretary, and Merchandising Officer **Robert Ellis**.

**A Case of Identity: How Cinema Helped Create Sherlock Holmes** is a free on-line event being offered by Brent Culture Service on 10th December 6:30 - 7:45pm. Join historical film detective Will Bird to uncover the earliest adaptations and discover how the many actors from all over the world helped to shape Holmes's character. Book online for this free event at [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-case-of-identity-how-cinema-helped-create-sherlock-holmes-tickets-121709505407?aff=erellivmlt&keep\\_tld=1](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-case-of-identity-how-cinema-helped-create-sherlock-holmes-tickets-121709505407?aff=erellivmlt&keep_tld=1)

Last month we reported that **Bert Coules'** new show *Watson: The Final Problem* would have a one-off performance on Saturday 28th November. Bert has been back in touch with an update: "Given the current lockdown, the one-off performance of *Watson: The Final Problem* at the Grove Theatre in Eastbourne has been rescheduled for Saturday 12th December at 7.30pm." For full details for booking go to: <https://www.groveeastbourne.com/watsonthefinalproblem>

**Zach Dundas**, author of *The Great Detective: The Amazing Rise and Immortal Life of Sherlock Holmes* says: "Greetings from the Pacific slope. I have been meaning to alert the SHSL ranks to my new podcast, which links true crime and the history of the American West. It gets into some wild true stories. Very discerning minds will detect trace elements of *The Valley of Fear* as the story unfolds. And, in fact, this project did actually grow directly out of *The Great Detective* book research, as I touched on the evolution of crime fiction during World War I."

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/death-in-the-west/id1482417987>

**Mark Jones** brings the welcome news that his podcast with **Paul M. Chapman**, *Doings of Doyle*, is slowly returning from its COVID-induced hibernation. Episode 7 was launched on 29th October and consists of a discussion with *Canadian Holmes* editor **Mark Alberstat** on the topic of *Conan Doyle and Sport*. The episode can be heard at [bit.ly/DODoyle](http://bit.ly/DODoyle) and the accompanying show notes are available at [bit.ly/DOD7sn](http://bit.ly/DOD7sn).

Are you pondering over what gift to get for your favourite Sherlockian (or to add to your own wish list)? **Randall Stock** has released his annual list of best books and DVDs for 2020 about Holmes and Conan Doyle. He has been posting these helpful compilations since 2009, and includes explanations of his choices. The list is now online at

<https://www.bestofsherlock.com/sherlock-gifts.htm>

**Steve Mason** brings news that The Beacon Society has launched *Sherlock's Spotlight*, a gazette for younger Sherlockians, which will be produced on a quarterly basis. The publication will be distributed by email to all Beacon Society members and other scion societies, with encouragement to share it with children, teachers and parents. Steve adds: "Sherlockians who would like to help us in this effort are welcome to provide us with stories, articles, artwork, etc., which is age-appropriate, for us to use in future issues of the gazette." Send an email to [mason.steve8080@gmail.com](mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com) if you would like to subscribe. Under-18's must provide a parent/guardian email.

Spotted by **Aziz Adam** is *The Greatest Detective Ephemera Kit* by Steampunk Tuesday With Ian. Available from <https://mikedekainart.com/tag/sherlock-holmes/> at £4.50 for digital download only (you print it yourself), it is "a 12-page hi-res (300dpi) digital art journal ephemera collection of fun and quirky images, tuck spots, journaling cards, tags and pocket covers for art journals, mixed media projects and scrap booking."

**Robin Rowles**, who is a City of London Guide Lecturer, says: "Please find links to a recording of the Gresham Lecture, *Policing Late Victorian London*, which I'm sure will be of interest to the Society's members. The Convenors of this event have given permission for it to be shared." <https://www.history.ac.uk/people-place-and-community-seminar-policing-late-victorian-lambeth-a-police-constables-notebook>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2efWjIEccms&feature=youtu.be>

If Lockdown is lifted you might wish to participate in **The Streets of Sherlock In Person Walk** on 3rd December from 12.30 - 13.30. "Get to know the origins of the Quarter's most famous character Sherlock Holmes, with Blue Badge Guide Mark Conroy. Meet us at the Baker Street entrance to Portman Square Garden. Spaces are limited - please email us on [info@bakerstreetq.co.uk](mailto:info@bakerstreetq.co.uk) to book a space."

Earlier in the year we reported on fundraising efforts to mark the grave of artist **Frederic Dorr Steele**, who provided the memorable illustrations of Sherlock Holmes for *Colliers Magazine*. **Burt Wolder** has been in touch to share an update: "Thanks to your contributions, a striking black granite

stone has been installed in the Steele/King family plot at the Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands, New York. A spring 2021 ceremony is in the planning stages. We are looking forward to sharing the details.” The episode of the *I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere* podcast on 15th November features an interview about the Frederic Dorr Steele Memorial with Linda Hunt, Terry Hunt and Andrew Malec. The podcast is available on iTunes and all other podcast platforms. Episodes can also be heard online at <https://www.ihearofsherlock.com>.

**Howard Ostrom**, who has set himself the task of documenting everyone who ever played Sherlock Holmes, has launched a fascinating new website:

<https://www.sherlock-holmes-on-screens.com>

### Books of Interest

*The Haunting of Alma Fielding – A True Ghost Story* by Kate Summerscale (Bloomsbury, 368pp hbk, £18.99) By the author of *The Suspicions of Mr Whicher*, here’s a real-life ghost story for Christmas. Nandor Fodor, from the International Institute for Psychical Research, investigates what appears initially to be remarkably energetic poltergeist activity, but discovers that there’s a darker and more complicated cause of the disruptions.

*The Magic Bullet* by Larry Millet (University of Minnesota Press, 368 pp pbk, \$14.95) The author is a native of Minnesota, and uses his knowledge of local history to great effect in his novels. Set in 1917, this is a locked room murder mystery which takes place in St. Paul. It’s a welcome return of aging detective Shadwell Rafferty, who calls upon his friend, Sherlock Holmes, to help crack the case. Holmes is in London, but his terse telegrams are all that Rafferty requires. Voracious readers of this genre will probably be able to guess what the murder weapon is, but the how and why takes longer to solve.

**Richard Kellogg** informs us that *Barry Baskerville’s Christmas Mystery* (Airship 27, 40pp pbk £8.28) is now available from Amazon. Illustrated by Gary Kato, this is the seventh in a series of mysteries for children. Schoolboy Barry uses all his skills of observation and deduction to identify a thief who has been stealing Christmas trees from the lawns of his neighbours. Kellogg says, “Young readers will learn about the methods used by Sherlock Holmes while improving their own problem-solving skills.”

### Obituaries

We were shocked and saddened to learn of the death of our friend **Dave Hawkes** at the end of October. Dave played Dr Watson in the series of fifteen audio plays for the Society, with actors drawn from Chelmsford Theatre Workshop, directed by Roger Johnson. A few years ago he played Holmes himself in a production of Tim Kelly’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. However, acting was Dave’s hobby; by day he was Senior Lecturer in Mental Health Nursing at Anglia Ruskin University. If you’re not already familiar with the audio plays, access them at <https://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/category/podcasts/>

**John Sessions** died on 1st November age 67. A fine actor and comedian, his many roles included Arthur Conan Doyle in *Mr. Selfridge* (2013), Professor Joseph Bell in *Reichenbach Falls* (2007), Kenny Prince in *Sherlock: The Great Game* (2010) and Mycroft Holmes in *Mr. Holmes* (2015).

**Geoffrey Palmer** died on 6th November aged 93. Although known mainly for his work in television comedy such as *Butterflies* and *As Time Goes By*, he also had a formidable career on stage, film and radio. In 1987 he appeared as Sherlock Holmes in *The Mask of Moriarty* at the Haymarket Theatre in Leicester. Oscar Ross adds: “He also played an actor who had played Holmes, in the final series of a gentle little comedy series, *Two Pipe Problems* on BBC Radio 4 in 2013. Here’s a handy episode guide to *Two Pipe Problems* - [https://www.comedy.co.uk/radio/two\\_pipe\\_problem/](https://www.comedy.co.uk/radio/two_pipe_problem/).”

James Bond fans might recall that in *In Tomorrow Never Dies* (1997), Palmer’s combative Admiral Roebuck sparred with Dame Judi Dench’s M, the head of the secret service. Dame Judi (who also appeared in *As Time Goes By*) described her co-star as “the naughtiest man I ever had the pleasure to work with.”

**John Fraser** died on 7th November age 89. Once known as “The most handsome man in Britain” he appeared in many major films and tv series. Fraser is probably best remembered as Lord Alfred Douglas (Bosie) in *The Trials of Oscar Wilde* (1960). He also appeared in the television series *Young Sherlock: The Mystery of the Manor House* (1982) as Sherlock’s Uncle Gideon, and played Lord Carfax in *A Study in Terror* (1965).

### Periodicals Received

*Baker Street in Baltimore*, October 2020 (**The Six Napoleons of Baltimore**, Greg Ruby, [SixNapoleonsOfBaltimore@gmail.com](mailto:SixNapoleonsOfBaltimore@gmail.com))

*The Baker Street Journal*, Autumn 2020 (**The Baker Street Journal**, P.O. Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077-1934, USA; [email@bakerstreetjournal.com](mailto:email@bakerstreetjournal.com))

*The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star*, November 2020 (Steve Mason; [mason.steve8080@gmail.com](mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com))

*Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, September 2020 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA)

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

*The Magic Door*, Fall 2020 (**Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4W 2G8; [www.acdfriends.org](http://www.acdfriends.org))

*The Moor*, October 2020 (**The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden**, Anders Wiggstrom; [bhc@telia.com](mailto:bhc@telia.com))

*Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, October 2020 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; [blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net))

Jean Upton