

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Jean Upton, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: district.messenger@yahoo.com

No. 413 July 2021

As COVID restrictions are being lifted, we cautiously await the possibility of in-person events in the near future. Check the Society's website for news and updates: www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk.

Our member, **Steve O'Neill**, is also a member of the **Lewis Carroll Society**. He advises that the Society is giving a free online talk on 21 July 2021 entitled *Into The Looking-Glass Wood* as part of the **Roger Lancelyn Green Lecture Series**. Everyone is welcome to attend. Further details of the lecture can be found here: <https://lewiscarrollsociety.org.uk/>. (Roger was a member of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London from the beginning until his death in 1987. His son, the late Richard Lancelyn Green, became the leading authority on the life and work of Arthur Conan Doyle.)

Paul Thomas Miller has initiated the first **Doyle's Rotary Coffin Treasure Hunt**. There are sixty challenges to fulfil and Paul says, "You will have six months starting on 27th June and finishing on 27th December to collect as many of the photos on the list as you can. At the end of the six months send an email to DoylesRotaryCoffin@outlook.com with your name (or an online name/nickname), score and any photos you'd like to share. At some point in early January I'll publish the results on the DRC website. Along the way, please share your photos on social media with the hashtag #DRCTreasureHunt so we can all share the fun." <https://sites.google.com/site/doylesrotarycoffin/2021-drc-treasure-hunt>

The **National Archives** have a number of interesting items relating to Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which you can explore on their website <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>. To commemorate the anniversary of ACD's death on 7th July, they have provided a clever online **jigsaw puzzle**, based on the 1951 Sherlock Holmes Exhibition poster: <https://www.jigsawexplorer.com/online-jigsaw-puzzle-player.html?url=aHR0cDovL2xpdmVsYi5uYXRpb25hbGFyY2hpdmVzLmdvdi51ay93cC1jb250ZW50L3VwbG9hZHMvMjAyMS8wNy9XT1JLLTI1XzI0M18xOTUxLXNjYWxlZC5qcGc~&color=white>

St Hilda's College, Oxford will be holding its 28th **Crime Fiction Weekend** on 13th to 15th August. This

will be the second year that the event has been held online. Launched in 1994, it offers the opportunity to hear favourite authors exploring the genre, their own work, and the writers who inspired them. "Our theme: *Oxford: the capital of crime fiction*. Down these mean, cobbled streets have walked far more than just Morse. Join us on a journey through the Oxford of Charles I, Peter Wimsey, Endeavour, and even Shakespeare himself: a spired city of lofty ideals and grave motives, of High Tables and low intentions." For more information and to register go to: <https://www.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk/content/2021-st-hilda%E2%80%99s-college-crime-fiction-weekend>

The Swedish audiobooks platform **Storytel** has signed a deal with the Conan Doyle Estate for three new stories by **Anthony Horowitz**. According to the press release, "Under his creative lead, three new stories will be written by a team of writers and the audio-first versions will be released on all Storytel markets in spring 2022." Storytel is also negotiating with print publishers and for television and movie adaptations of the new adventures.

MousePlanet, a website that serves as "an independent consumer guide to Disney travel and vacations" has provided a fascinating article on the origins, development and portrayal of the character Ratigan in *Basil: The Great Mouse Detective*. https://www.mouseplanet.com/12965/Where_Is_the_Love_for_this_Disney_Animation

The **Baker Street Irregulars** continue to offer interesting interviews in their **Fortnightly Dispatch**: "Be sure to check out the latest video podcast about [John Bennett Shaw on The Fortnightly Dispatch](#) at YouTube. Other recent interviews include Ross Davies, Monica Schmidt, and Sean Wright."

Mark Jones and Paul Chapman's podcast *Doings of Doyle* focuses on the non-Sherlockian works of ACD at www.doingsofdoyle.com. Their latest post examines "How the Brigadier Held the King and How the King Held the Brigadier" and there's a report on the *Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* conference that was held at Napier University in September 2020.

The name of **John Murray** is familiar to most Sherlockians. The publishing house was founded in London in 1768, and the company went on to become

the well-known publisher of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's books. They recently announced the introduction of a new imprint, **Baskerville**, for the publication of new crime and thriller authors.

Here's an early start for your Christmas Wish List: On 20th October Heritage Auctions in Dallas will be offering a single page from the manuscript of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* -

<https://historical.ha.com/itm/autographs/sir-arthur-conan-doyle-autograph-manuscript-leaf-from-the-hound-of-the-baskervilles/p/6243-17001.s>.

The page is item H31 in Randall Stock's "Best of Sherlock" census of pages from the manuscript, which you can view at www.bestofsherlock.com/baskervilles-manuscript.htm#h31

Jennie Paton has discovered a nine-minute clip on YouTube from the *Omnibus* television series which was broadcast weekly on the ABC network in the United States (not to be confused with the BBC TV arts series, which ran from 1967 to 2003). On 9th December 1956, the program included a 40-minute segment titled "The Fine Art of Murder" which featured a murder solved in different ways by detective-story writers and their heroes. You can see Dennis Hoey as Conan Doyle in the clip, along with Rex Stout, creator of Nero Wolfe. Fans of the Rathbone/Bruce films will know that Hoey played Inspector Lestrade in the Universal film series. www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAH27x79zDc

Books of Interest

Laurie R. King's *Castle Shade* (Allison & Busby, 384 pp hbk, £19.99) is the latest in her entertaining series about Mary Russell and her husband Sherlock Holmes. Following on from *Riviera Gold*, they travel to assist their new client, Queen Marie of Romania. Most of the action is based at Castle Bran in Transylvania, reckoned by many to be the 'real' Castle Dracula, so there's much to do with vampires, ghostly figures and local legends.

A member of our Society, **Ian Strathcarron**, provides news of his new book, *A Case of Royal Blackmail* by Sherlock Holmes (Affable Media, 304pp pbk £7.50) "The 24-year-old Sherlock Holmes recounts how he untangles the web of blackmail and deceit surrounding the 'complex romantic endeavours' of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, those of Lillie Langtry and her various suitors and the morass of 'scandal sheets' and libel cases surrounding the Prince's court of the time. Set in July 1879, 18 months before he met Dr. Watson, the action takes place in the vividly described London of Queen Victoria. Taken from his own case notes, Holmes also reveals the full story behind three previously untold cases: *Vamberry the Wine Merchant*, *Ricoletti of the Club Foot and the Abominable Wife* and a new discovery, *The Curious Case of Oscar Wilde's Amethyst Tie-pin*. Published with the endorsement of the Conan Doyle Estate and told in Holmes's own

words." Intelligently written with a refreshingly light touch, it's good fun for a summer read.

Nicko Vaughan's *Far from Holmes: An Irreverent Guide to All the Sherlock Holmes You Really Don't Want to Watch Yourself* (Telos; £12.99) is a very entertaining survey of some of the oddest and some of the worst screen adaptations.

Sherlock Holmes: The Hero with a Thousand Faces by David MacGregor (MX Publishing, Volume One 354 pp; Volume Two 348 pp, both available in hbk and pbk). The author is a playwright who uses his professional expertise to examine the evolution of Holmes and how he has been portrayed over the years across all media. Volume One covers 1887 to 1937 and Volume Two continues up to the present.

'I Should Like These Dates a Little Clearer' – A Chronological Study of the Recorded Cases of Sherlock Holmes by A.R. Colpo (independently published; £12.00) is an important addition to the dozen or so notable attempts to establish *when* each case happened.

Hot Key Books is publishing Nancy Springer's **Enola Holmes** series in the UK. The first in the series, *Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess*, was originally published in the US in 2007 by Penguin Young Readers and was re-published by Hot Key in 2020 to tie in with the film adaptation. The remaining five titles in the series, *The Case of the Left-Handed Lady*, *The Case of the Bizarre Bouquet*, *The Case of the Peculiar Pink Fan*, *The Case of the Cryptic Crinoline* and *The Case of the Gypsy Goodbye* were published in the US between 2007 and 2010 and Hot Key will re-publish them all in 2022.

Periodicals Received:

The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, July 2021 (Steve Mason; mason.steve8080@gmail.com)

Ineffable Twaddle, July 2021 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen; terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)

The Petrel Flyer, January – June 2021 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Brian Collins, editor; briancollins@telus.net)

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press, June 2021 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net)

The Whaling News, July 2021 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn, St. Charles, MO**; J Andrew Basford; pcairnes26@outlook.com)

Jean Upton