

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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The gift-giving season is snapping at our heels, but there's plenty of help at hand to please your favourite Sherlockian:

The Society's own online Shop <https://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/shop-2/> offers a wide variety of items including scarves, pins, handkerchiefs, pens, ties, watches and many publications, including hard-to-find back issues of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*.

**Paul Gillings**, the Society Merchandising Officer, recently acquired an eclectic collection of Sherlock Holmes material. The items were offered to the Society by the family of an enthusiast, recently gone into care, who wanted to find a good home for the collection. Amongst the items are books, DVDs, posters, pipes (lots of pipes), figures (including Royal Doulton and a sought-after bloodhound figurine), movie scrapbook material, oil paintings and much more. Please contact Paul, who can provide a list and photographs of what is available. There is no fixed price for the items, but the Society has been asked to make a donation to charity from the proceeds, and the cost of postage will be required:

[shslmerchandise@yahoo.com](mailto:shslmerchandise@yahoo.com)

We all probably have at least one deerstalker for fun, but if you'd like one that you'd actually be proud to be seen wearing, **Peter Christian** offers a superb Harris Tweed version that we can recommend highly:

<https://www.peterchristian.co.uk/lovat-sherlock-deerstalker-harris-tweed-hat/> There's also an unusual gentleman's waistcoat imprinted with antique pistols: <https://www.peterchristian.co.uk/pistols-waistcoat/>

With temperatures dropping and heating costs rising, you might be tempted to splash out on a very Holmes-like traditional dressing gown in 100% wool. We've discovered **The Carrier Company**, a small family business in Norfolk, who can provide a splendid handmade version in attractive colours: <https://www.carriercompany.co.uk/>

What about the much-discussed tie worn by **Jeremy Paxman** on *University Challenge*? Go to [navy tie with sherlock holmes design tie with signature floral design to rear – Frederick Thomas Handmade Mens Ties](https://www.fredrickthomas.com/tyes/signature-floral-design-to-rear) They also do one with a Baker Street sign motif.

For more ideas, **Randall Stock's** annual list of nominations for the best Sherlock Holmes books/DVDs of the year is online at [www.bestofsherlock.com/sherlock-gifts.htm](http://www.bestofsherlock.com/sherlock-gifts.htm) He also offers recommendations of older Sherlockiana, with helpful explanations of his choices.

**Peter Blau** reports: "Bignell Wood, the country home that Conan Doyle bought as a birthday present for his wife Jean in 1924, is for sale [www.tinyurl.com/2f73mewf](http://www.tinyurl.com/2f73mewf); the asking price is £2,950,000. Read all about it at the realtor's

website, which includes a downloadable and colourful brochure."

If you haven't been able to visit the exhibition *Sherlock Holmes in 221 Objects from the Collection of Glen S. Miranker*, the Lilley Library in Bloomington, Indiana has posted a slide show on its website of many of the treasures. The exhibition continues at the Lilley Library until 16<sup>th</sup> December. [www.sherlockin221objects.org/the-lilly-library](http://www.sherlockin221objects.org/the-lilly-library)

The Blackeyed Theatre's tour of Nick Lane's excellent new adaptation of *Sherlock Holmes: The Valley of Fear* is now on tour. However, if you can't get to see it in the theatre, it is streaming online until Sunday 22nd January. [Sherlock Holmes: The Valley of Fear \(ticketco.events\)](https://www.ticketco.events/sherlock-holmes-the-valley-of-fear)

And a reminder that *A Sherlock Carol* continues at the **Marylebone Theatre** until 7th January 2023. Holmes assists the grown-up Tiny Tim to investigate the mysterious death of his reformed benefactor, Ebenezer Scrooge... "But it's a dark and treacherous Christmas Eve, and once again the night is haunted by the spirits of the past, present, and future." [www.marylebonetheatre.com](http://www.asherlockcarol.co.uk/) <http://www.asherlockcarol.co.uk/>

**Russell Merritt** is asking for assistance in tracking down an intriguing item. In 1907, Arthur Conan Doyle was given a **Medjidie Medal** by the notorious Sultan Abdul Hamid II – but, where is it now? Russell explains: "It was a distinguished service medal that sultans handed out to their British allies during the Crimean War; but ACD's has several claims to interest, since when he received it in 1907 Anglo-Ottoman relations had disintegrated. Jean Leckie was given another medal with a different name." He has so far written to the estate in Switzerland and to the ACD Society, but has received no data so far. If you can assist with any information, please contact him at [russmer41@gmail.com](mailto:russmer41@gmail.com)

**Robin Rowles** has discovered that the film *They Might Be Giants* (1971) will be released on Blu-Ray in January 2023, with the original 98-minute cut and the shorter TV/DVD version. [https://www.powerhousefilms.co.uk/products/they-might-be-giants-le?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=1e5eb4924&\\_ss=r](https://www.powerhousefilms.co.uk/products/they-might-be-giants-le?_pos=1&_sid=1e5eb4924&_ss=r)

If you've always thought that the Sherlock Holmes Museum on Baker Street was a jolly little place to visit and purchase souvenirs, you might want to learn a bit more about the people who are getting your hard-earned cash. **Peter Blau** spotted an item in the *Daily Mail* on 17th October headlined "Boss of Sherlock Holmes Museum Continues 'Bitter' High Court Battle with His Little

Brother Who Is Refusing to Move out of £1million House Which Has Been His Home for 25 Years” [www.tinyurl.com/dkkr9hn3](http://www.tinyurl.com/dkkr9hn3). The article reports on the seemingly never-ending legal battles involving John Aidiniantz and members of his family, arguing over (amongst other things) the profits from the Sherlock Holmes Museum.

**Geraldine Beare** has reported on the joys of what one may discover on Talking Pictures TV: “On 26th October I watched, quite unintentionally, a lovely film on Talking Pictures, narrated by Basil Rathbone, called *Time to Remember* (1959) which covered the years 1896-1902. Halfway through, after the ad break, there was a five minute slot on Holmes and what looked like the interior of 221B Baker Street. Various items were flagged, such as the slipper, syringe, Dancing Men and so on. You can catch it on YouTube if you haven't seen it already.” The 221B interior film mentioned by Geraldine is from the 1951 Sherlock Holmes Exhibition at Abbey House. You can view the short BBC and Pathe films at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1pYFVV6hCg> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QhOsgqniSw>

## Books of Interest

### COMPETITION WINNERS:

Last month, Quercus Books provided three copies of David Lagercrantz's *Dark Music* to give away to readers who could tell me the name of August Derleth's Holmes-inspired character. The answer, of course, was Solar Pons. We received a lot of entries; winners drawn from the lucky deerstalker are **MC Black**, **Jim Peters** and **Sébastien Le Page**. Congratulations to all!

*The Monstrum Opus of Sherlock Holmes: A Compendium of Horrors Dr Watson Dared Not Tell*, edited by **Nathaniel Barker-Harris**, **Brad Keefauver** and **Rob Nunn**. (Independently published, 131pp, pbk £8.10) Essays from 17 authors argue that some of Sherlock Holmes's best-known cases were cover ups for much more sinister tales; they will try to convince you that Holmes and Watson had brushes with many different monsters in their adventures. Was Elsie Cubitt a zombie? Was Edward Rucastle a lycanthrope? Proceeds from this collection will benefit **The Beacon Society**. Available on Amazon.

*The New Sherlockian*, edited by **Kelvin I Jones** (MX Publications, 208pp, pbk £12.99) The first issue of *The Sherlockian* was published by Magico in 1986. An independent journal, it ceased publication after only five issues, despite having excellent content. Many of the original contributions are reprinted in this book, along with newer material by a number of respected authors.

*My Scientific Methods: Science in the Sherlockian Canon* edited by **Dana Richards** (The Baker Street Irregulars, 256 pages, hbk \$39.95 plus shipping) This is the latest volume in the BSI's *Professions Series*, in which aspects of science related to the Sherlock Holmes stories and characters, or to Conan Doyle, are examined in nineteen essays.

## Obituaries

We were sorry to learn that **Ann Wilmer**, widow of Douglas Wilmer, died on Wednesday 16th November. Ann was a delightful guest at a number of SHSL events, especially many Annual Dinners, when she accompanied her beloved Douglas. She often expressed her pleasure at how the Society continued to show its respect and appreciation for Douglas's classic portrayal of Sherlock Holmes.

It would be remiss not to mention the passing of actor **Leslie Phillips**, who died on 7th November, age 98. His professional stage debut was in 1937 at the age of 13, playing a wolf in *Peter Pan*, starring Anna Neagle, at the London Palladium. As his career in stage, film, radio and television progressed, he tended to be cast in light comic roles as a smooth-talking cad or roguish lady-killer. His trademark phrases, “I say, ding dong!” and “Well, helloooo...” (always managing to sound delightfully impure) have entered into popular vernacular. He appeared in many crime and mystery television series, including *The Ruth Rendell Mysteries* and *Midsomer Murders*, but is now likely to be best remembered as the voice of The Sorting Hat in the *Harry Potter* series of films. In 1997 he received a lifetime achievement award from the *Evening Standard*, and 10 years later another from the Critics' Circle. In 1998 he was appointed OBE, and in 2008 CBE.

### Periodicals Received:

*The Bilge Pump – The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star*, November 2022 (Steve Mason; [mason.steve8080@gmail.com](mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com))

*Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*, September 2022 (Suite 111, Elmer L Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, 222 21st Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455, USA)

*The Illustrious Clients News*, November 2022 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA; [IllustClients@gmail.com](mailto:IllustClients@gmail.com))

*Ineffable Twaddle*, November 2022 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen; [terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com](mailto:terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com))

*Mayday Mayday*, November 2022 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Belfast, Oscar Ross; [oscarross@hotmail.com](mailto:oscarross@hotmail.com))

*Papers on the Sundial*, November 2022 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff and Wanda Dow; [ha10tot@verizon.net](mailto:ha10tot@verizon.net))

*Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, October 2022 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA: [blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net))

*Sherlock's Spotlight*, Autumn 2022 (**The Beacon Society**; Steve Mason, editor; [mason.steve8080@gmail.com](mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com))

*Timeline*, November 2022, (The Official Newsletter of the **Sherlockian Chronologist Guild**; Brad Keefauver [bkeefauver@gmail.com](mailto:bkeefauver@gmail.com))

*The Watsonian*, Fall 2022 (**The John H Watson Society**; [publisher@johnwatsonsociety.com](mailto:publisher@johnwatsonsociety.com))

*The Whaling News*, November 2022 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn, St. Charles, MO**; J Andrew Basford; [pcairnes26@outlook.com](mailto:pcairnes26@outlook.com))

Jean Upton