

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Hilary Mason died on 5 September at the age of eighty-nine. Her most notable performance among many was as the blind psychic in Nicholas Roeg's 1973 film *Don't Look Now*. In 1992 she played Miss Ruddock in *The Last Vampyre* with Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke. (Richard Dalby adds: 'Her husband was Roger Ostime, Holmes in *The Baker Street Boys*, 1983.') Peter Blau notes that **Gordon E Kelley**, author of *Sherlock Holmes: Screen and Sound Guide*, died on 23 October. **Marian Grudeff**, responsible with Raymond Jessel for (most of) the songs for Jerome Coopersmith's 1965 musical *Baker Street*, died on 4 November. **John Hallam**, who died on 14 November, aged sixty-five, played Black Gorgiano in Granada's 1994 production of *The Red Circle*, but he's likely to be remembered as the brutal squire in the 1979 TV serial from Catherine Cookson's *The Mallen Streak*. M J Elliott passes on news of the death at sixty-seven in early November of **John Gilbert**, who created the role of Sherlock Holmes for Jim French's Imagination Theatre.

In time for Christmas, Breese Books (Baker Street Studios Ltd, Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX) have issued two new Holmes novels. *Sherlock Holmes and the Chilford Ripper* by Roger Jaynes begins with a telegram to Dr Watson from a former colleague at Netley, desperate to consult Holmes about a series of murders in a small Essex town. The earlier victims were men, but the brutal methods of the killer suggest a link with the Whitechapel murders of 1888. The American author achieves the Watson style, and makes good use of his knowledge of late Victorian England and north-east Essex in particular. Inspector Lestrade is present, and treated as a dedicated and sensible police detective — which is nice. The plot is clever, with ramifications reaching to high levels of government, and all in all *The Chilford Ripper* is a highly entertaining read.

Sherlock Holmes: The Ghost of Baker Street is actually a long overdue mass-market edition of the late Val Andrews' self-published 2002 book *The Baker Street Ghost*, of which I said in DM 225: "Scriptwriter Greg Hargreaves, obliged to leave the USA by the unwelcome attentions of Senator McCarthy and the House Committee on Un-American Activities, rents a flat in London — in Baker Street to be precise — and finds that there's a resident ghost. But this is not, in the usual sense, a 'ghost story'. The relationship between Hargreaves and Holmes reminds me a little of that between Jeff Randall and the late Marty Hopkirk. The result is a completely fresh view of Sherlock Holmes, a fascinating picture of the British film and TV industry in the early 1950s, a portrait of Orson Welles, and a clever murder mystery. Val Andrews is at his best when writing about the world of entertainment, in which he worked as writer and performer for fifty years. You can hear the port wine and cigars in Welles's dialogue, as the author knew him and worked with him; and I'm sure Val Andrews won't mind my mentioning that the character of Greg Hargreaves was inspired by the late Cy Endfield." This new edition is a thoroughly professional production, of course, and it opens with the lyric (slightly garbled) of the music hall song 'The Ghost of Sherlock Holmes'. Val meant this to be the first of a new series of novels, exploring different territory, but it looks as if *The Ghost of Baker Street* must serve as his worthy farewell.

Both books are priced at £7.50 or €12.50 or \$18.50. There's a website at www.baker-street-studios.com.

The Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes by Alan Stockwell (Exposure Publishing, Diggory Press, Three Rivers, Minions, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 5LE; £7.95 or \$12.95) was first published in 2003. In DM 235 I said: '... a very enjoyable collection of fifteen stories by an author new to me, Alan Stockwell. The style is an acceptable simulacrum of Dr Watson's, and Mr Stockwell clearly knows his period and his Canon. He also has an engagingly inventive imagination. I particularly like his explanation of the case of Mr. James Phillimore, who, stepping back into his own house to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world.' The same goes for this new edition, which contains three extra stories (but appears to have dropped one of the original ones, 'The Vanishing Nobleman'). The titles are less reminiscent of the Canon than of the classic American radio series of the forties, but 'The Disappearing Bubbles', 'The Red Nosed Artist' and 'The Intermittent Jig-Saw Puzzle' maintain the high standard. The cover bears a handsome photograph of a statue of Holmes by Peter Quinn, owned by Lynne Godden, our former Merchandising Officer and a neighbour of the author's. Mr Stockwell has a website at www.mrsherlockholmes.co.uk.

Robert Graham came back from the *ACD at 35* celebration in Toronto laden with goodies from The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (George A Vanderburgh, PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada; no prices are given for any of these books). *The Adventure of the Victorian Vulcan* by P Whitney Hughes is a clever brace of fantasies involving Holmes with Professor Challenger, Solar Pons, Mr James Phillimore and the USS Enterprise. *SH@35* features an essay by the wonderful Stephen Leacock, three new short adventures by Howard Engel, Robert Weinberg and Ed Hoch, and a neat little poem by Raymond Souster. Bruce Harris's *Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson: About Type* examines our heroes' personality types (and 'About' is a reference to types A and B). Finally *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* is a new edition of Ernest Dudley's play, adapted from the work written by J E Harold Terry and L Arthur Rose for Dudley's father-in-law Eille Norwood in 1923. This version toured Britain in 1994, with Michael Cashman and Frederick Pyne as Holmes and Watson. Great fun it was too. (I think the edition published that year by Ian Henry is still in print.)

This morning's post brought *Flat at 221B Baker Street: Holmes Meets Watson*, a novel by J R Cammarata (Outskirts Press Inc., 10940 S Parker Road-515, Parker, CO 80134, USA; \$15.95; £11.95). A quick glance shows a lack of punctuation throughout that suggests a Joycean stream-of-consciousness approach — probably not intended. I'll review the novel next time.

In this year's *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual: Quartering in the Fifties*. Nicholas Utechin draws on the correspondence between Colin Prestige and four distinguished American Sherlockians — Nathan L Bengis, Jay Finley Christ, James Montgomery, and Edgar W Smith — to illuminate the trans-Atlantic camaraderie of half a century ago. *Quartering in the Fifties* costs \$11.00 (or \$12.00 outside the USA) from *The Baker Street Journal*, Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA. Or you can order it on-line from the BSJ website at www.bakerstreetjournal.com. You should also consider a subscription to the BSJ itself. They take PayPal.

Following the success of their new edition of Jane Austen's books, on 18 December Headline Review (338 Euston Road, London NW1 3BH) will publish the Sherlock Holmes Canon as nine £4.99 paperbacks. See also www.rediscover-sherlockholmes.com. And a reminder of a lovely edition of the Canon, in six cloth-bound volumes, three containing two books each, and all featuring afterwords by David Stuart Davies (CRW Publishing, 69 Gloucester Crescent, London NW1 7EG; £5.99 each). Also from CRW, *The*

Complete Sherlock Holmes (CRW Publishing, £25.00), a splendid big cloth-bound volume containing the whole Canon, with a good selection of the *Strand Magazine* illustrations and a foreword by David Stuart Davies.

Headline Review has also published *Fragile Things: Short Fictions & Wonders* by Neil Gaiman (£17.99). One story, "A Study in Emerald", puts Sherlock Holmes in the world of Great Cthulhu, and, says Kim Newman, 'turns the assumptions of Arthur Conan Doyle and H P Lovecraft inside-out'.

www.sherlock-holmes.com/e-times14.htm is where you'll find *The Sherlockian E-Times*, the catalogue-newsletter from **Classic Specialties**. Or you can write to PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA. And there's always something of interest in the catalogues from **Nigel Williams Rare Books** (25 Cecil Court, London WC2N 4HE; nwrarebook@tcp.co.uk).

The Sherlock Memorabilia Company is still in business, though the shop in Baker Street has closed. Check the website at www.sherlockholmes.co.uk. The material from Granada TV's 221B set has been donated to the Lancelyn Green Bequest at Portsmouth.

I wasn't able to attend Christie's auction at in South Kensington on 6 June, so missed the sale of a first edition of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, inscribed to an unnamed god-daughter, 'With Arthur's love, Nov. 8th/92'. It went for a staggering £45,600!

At <http://sherlockholmes.stanford.edu> Stanford University gives a link to facsimiles of early Holmes tales in *The Strand Magazine*. They're in PDF format, with useful notes and commentaries, and they're free to download. (Thanks to Ray de Groat for this.)

At <http://ephemeris.alcuinius.net/holmesiacap.php> is something a little more unexpected — *Proxenetæ Functionarius*. That's 'The Stockbroker's Clerk', translated into Latin by Stanislaus Tekieli. Other stories so far by *Equitis Arturi Conan Doyle* are *Facies Lutea* ('The Yellow Face') and *Fulmen Argentum* ('Silver Blaze').

Switzerland, Japan and London already have public statues of Sherlock Holmes. Now a striking new one is to go up near the British Embassy in Moscow, on the Smolenska Embankment. And it includes Dr Watson, seated on a bench and waiting for Holmes, who is standing, to speak. Andrei Orlov, the sculptor, has based the two figures on the actors Vassily Livanov and the late Vitaly Solomin, who made the characters their own in a long-running series of Russian TV films. (Mr Livanov received an honorary MBE from the British ambassador last February.) [*Thanks to Marina Stajic for translating the Russian news report.*]

David Timson's superb recording of the Canon is nearing its conclusion. *The Valley of Fear* is due in April, and I'm greatly looking forward to it! (Naxos Audiobooks, 40A High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ; £19.00.)

Meanwhile, there are new CD audiobooks in five different series from Jim French's Imagination Theatre: *The Hilary Caine Mysteries* (written by M J Elliott), *Mr Darnborough Investigates* (by John Hall), *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *Raffles: The Gentleman Thief*, and *The Adventures of Harry Nile*. Great listening, all of them. See www.jimfrenchproductions.com. And if you fancy having a go at writing a radio play, check out the Second Annual Imagination Theatre Radio Script Competition. Details and instructions are at www.jimfrenchproductions.com, or e-mail Sable Jak at jrfpress@yahoo.com.

The first Sherlock Holmes recording by the Old Court Radio Theatre, 'The Yellow Face' and 'The Three Students', both dramatised by M J Elliott, with Jim Crozier and Dave Hawkes as Holmes and Watson, has been gratifyingly well received. The second, featuring 'The Mazarin Stone' and 'The Veiled Lodger', is now complete. The plays will shortly be posted on the Society's website at www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk, and copies of the CD will be available from me, post-paid, at £5.00 (Europe £6.00; elsewhere £9.00 or \$12.00).

At 6.00pm on Sunday 10 December, Paul Singleton will play Sherlock Holmes in a revised staged reading of Andrew Joffe's play *The Blue Carbuncle*, at **Workshop Theater Company's** little theatre at 312 West 36th Street, New York. Admission is free but seating is limited. Contact Paul for details at psingleton@pershing.com.

From 19 February to 3 March, **The Theatre Royal** in Windsor will stage *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, dramatised by Clive Francis. The play attracted highly favourable reviews at Nottingham Playhouse a couple of years ago. So far the only named member of the Windsor cast is Philip Franks as Watson. You can book on-line at www.theatreroyalwindsor.co.uk, or phone 01753 853888.

You can sample the new Frogwares game *Sherlock Holmes: The Awakened* at www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com.

Arthur Conan Doyle's former home, Undershaw, in Hindhead, remains very much under threat, as a report in The Times on 1 November makes clear. However, one of his early homes, Liberton Bank House in Edinburgh, has been saved from conversion to a fast-food outlet. It will now house Dunedin School, and there are plans to create a 'literary garden' in the grounds.

Family history researchers can now consult the 1851 and 1861 Scottish censuses on-line at www.ancestry.co.uk. Yes, Arthur Conan Doyle is there.

The Six Napoleons of Baltimore celebrate their sixtieth anniversary this year with a Diamond Jubilee Dinner on 13 December. The society takes its name from the six interested parties who turned up for the first meeting on 11 September 1946, and from the historical connection between Baltimore and Napoleon Bonaparte — a connection, says Bill Hyder, largely forgotten now. *Eheu fugaces*.

Periodicals received. *Antipodean Holmesian Society Newsletter*, November 2006 (**Antipodean Holmesian Society**, Ted Nye, 51 Irvine Road, The Cove, Dunedin 9077, New Zealand). *Bohemian Newsletter*, no. 70 (České společnost Sherlocka Holmese, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, October 2006 and November 2006 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Canadian Holmes*, Michaelmas (Autumn) 2006 (**The Bootmakers of Toronto**, Trevor Raymond, 4 Lyons Court, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 1P1, Canada). *Communication*, Special Employment Issue 2006 and November/December 2006 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *Explorations*, Autumn 2006 (**The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota**, John Bergquist, 3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122, USA). *The Illustrious Clients News*, October 2006 and November 2006 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA).

Ineffable Twaddle, November 2006 and December 2006 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA). *Mayday Mayday*, November 2006 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Passengers' Log*, Autumn & Winter Issues (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia). *The Petrel Flyer*, November/December 2006 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Quivers on the Web*, November 2006 (**221B**, Philip Weller, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 6RU). *The School Report*, Winter 2006 (**The Priory Scholars**, Horace L Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Scion*, Autumn 2006 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). *The Solar Pons Gazette*, December 2006 (www.solarpons.com, Bob Byrne, bob.byrne@solarpons.com). *The Whaling News*, September 2006 and October 2006 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, October 2006 and November 2006 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

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