

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: rojerjohnson@yahoo.co.uk

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2008 is (astonishingly) the fortieth anniversary of **The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**. This month men were honoured with full membership for the first time: 16 Americans, two Canadians, and one Englishman — me. The full list is at <http://www.ash-nyc.com/>. (My ASH investiture is 'Shinwell Johnson', by the way.)

At the **Baker Street Irregulars** annual dinner, Wiggins announced the following investitures: **Betsy Rosenblatt** ('Lucy Ferrier'), **Dana Richards** ('The Priory School'), **David Morrill** ('Count von Kramm'), **Barbara Roisman Cooper** ('Mary Maberley'), **Randall Stock** ('South African Securities'), **John Genova** ('Harry Pinner'), and **Guy Marriott** ('The Hôtel du Louvre'). **Sherry Rose-Bond** received the Two-Shilling Award, and the Eddies (the editors' medals) went to **Roy Pilot**, **Al Rosenblatt**, and **Christopher & Barbara Roden**.

At our Society's annual dinner, Freda Howlett presented the Tony Howlett Award to **Derek Hinrich**.

And in the Queen's New Year's Honours List, **June Lancelyn Green** received the MBE for services to the community in Merseyside.

Wordsworth Editions (8B East Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9HJ) have published a welcome paperback edition of **David Stuart Davies's** *Sherlock Holmes and the Hentzau Affair*, priced at just £2.99. As I said when the book was first published in 1991, what we have, as the title suggests, is a sequel to *The Prisoner of Zenda*. A sequel: not the official sequel that Anthony Hope gave us, under the title of *Rupert of Hentzau*. David has speculated on what might have happened if Sherlock Holmes had been brought into the affair, and a jolly good job he's made of it, re-creating Hope's world of romantic intrigue and the vivid characters that inhabit it. *The Hentzau Affair* is a less reflective, less elegaic tale than *Rupert of Hentzau*, with a much happier conclusion: a comedy rather than a tragedy, and a cracking good read.

You Know My Methods, Watson (The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, PO Box 204 Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada; www.batteredbox.com; Can\$20.00) is the latest volume from **David Hammer**, an amiably discursive collection of articles and talks. Mr Hammer is a notable Holmesian scholar: see, for instance, his account of the Molly Maguires, and his investigation of John Francis Moriarty, Arthur Conan Doyle's contemporary at Stonyhurst and a likely inspiration for the Napoleon of Crime (though he wasn't a mathematician but, like Mr Hammer, a lawyer). He regales us with tongue-in-cheek theories, such as the identification of Inspector MacDonald with... no, no spoilers! — and with some curiously undignified experiences from his many years as a Sherlockian. And he reminisces fondly about friends, living and dead, among them Michael Harrison, Richard Lancelyn Green, and Donald Izban. His editor, Susan Diamond, notes that David Hammer, 'like the late John Bennett Shaw, is both a stellar Sherlockian and an excellent raconteur'. I couldn't have put it better myself.

In the last DM I mentioned **Old House Books**, (The Old Police Station, Pound Street, Moretonhampstead, Devon TQ13 8PA; 01647 440707; www.OldHouseBooks.co.uk), who specialise in facsimile editions of guidebooks and maps. Before me now is *Baedeker's Great Britain 1890: A Handbook for Travellers* (£15.99) a solid, beautifully produced volume of what I suppose was regarded as 'pocket size' a century ago. I use maps and guides of the late 19th and early 20th

centuries both for research and for simple pleasure, as I love to explore the London and the England of Holmes and Watson. Here we have, *inter alia*, practical information for the Victorian visitor to Britain, a brief outline of English history (and a page about Wales and the Welsh, though nothing about the Scots), and a good chapter on English architecture. But the bulk of the book, nearly 600 pages, takes us all around the country, from Land's End to John O'Groats and beyond, plus 50 pages of maps and plans, most in full colour. I find that when Violet Hunter went to Winchester to take up her position in the Rucastle family, the journey from Waterloo was 66½ miles, taking between 1¾ and 2½ hours. Her second-class fare would have cost her 9/8d. Originals of this sort of book are getting hard to find, and harder yet to find in good condition. This Old House edition is cherishable in its own right. The reproduction is clean and crisp, the print and the maps enticingly legible, and the whole book splendidly bound. Other publications of immediate interest from Old House Books include *Baedeker's London & Its Environs 1900* (£14.99), *Murray's Modern London 1860* (£13.99), *Bacon's up to date Map of London 1902* (£9.99), *London Railways Map 1897* (£9.99), *Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888* (£12.99)... not to mention *The Lady's Dressing-Room 1892* (£12.99) and *Enquire Within upon Everything 1890* (£14.99)!

The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach have just celebrated their Diamond Jubilee, which was marked by, among other things, a picnic at a lighthouse, a meal at the only McDonald's in the world with a Sherlockian theme, and a large-format 48-page booklet, full of personal reminiscences, photographs, newspaper cuttings and so forth. I love to learn about other Holmes societies, and especially the people who founded, nurtured and developed them. Some of the Cormorants are almost legendary (Dean and Shirley Dickensheet, Don Hardenbrook, Robert Patrick, Irving and Mary Jaffee, crime writers John Ball and Stuart Palmer, Doylean scholar Al Rodin) and others, such as Vinnie Brosnan, Jim Coffin, John Farrell, and June and Ross Kinnee, are friends to many of us. Among the honorary members I note not only August Derleth, but John Gielgud and T S Eliot — and Luther Norris, who introduced me to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London and, indirectly, to the Baker Street Irregulars. Proof reading isn't all it should be (T S Eliot's name has only one l), but *The Trained Cormorants 60th Anniversary Commemorative* is a pleasing read. It costs \$20.00 postpaid from Vincent Brosnan (1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA). It might be wise to ask about overseas rates: sherlockinla@cox.net.

Just out is *A Remarkable Mixture* edited by Steven Rothman, marking fifty years of the **Morley-Montgomery Award** for the best essays in *The Baker Street Journal* (The Baker Irregulars, 2 Dettling Road, Maynard, MA 01754, USA; www.bakerstreetjournal.com; \$35.00 plus postage). I hope to review the book in the next DM, along with *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes: 75th Anniversary Edition* by Vincent Starrett, edited by Ray Betzner (Gasogene Books, PO Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268, USA; \$29.99), and possibly *The Quintessential Sherlock Holmes*, a deluxe illustrated omnibus of Richard L Boyer's good Holmes stories (Alexander Books, 65 Macedonia Road, Alexander, NC 28701, USA; SherlockHolmesLives.com; \$75.00).

Hugo Koch has uncovered an unexpected original for Neville St Clair *alias* Hugh Boone. He has generously sent me six copies of his booklet *The Real 'Man with the Twisted Lip': Francis Thompson*, which are free to the first six applicants within the UK (a 'large letter' stamp would be appreciated).

I mistyped the URL of **Jeff Falkingham's** website last time. Find out about his fine book *Sherlock Holmes and the County Courthouse Caper* (Beaver's Pond Press, 7104 Ohms Lane, Suite 216, Edina, MN 55439, USA; \$17.00) at www.cccaper.com.

Leslie Klinger notes that ‘several new annotations [to *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*] appear in’ the March issue of *Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine*. [**I’m not having much luck with the website at www.fictionwise.com/eBooks/eBook54354.htm?cache.*]

Sidney Paget died in January 1908. Catherine Cooke has an interesting article on Westminster Libraries’ **Sherlock Holmes Collection** website at www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/special/sherlock.cfm about two portraits by Paget, one of which may have inspired an illustration in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. And running until 5 May at **Church Farmhouse Museum** (Greyhound Hill, Hendon, London NW4 4JR; www.barnet.gov.uk/index/leisure-culture/museums-galleries/current-exhibitions.htm) is the first ever exhibition devoted to the artist, *The Case of the Influential Illustrator: Sidney Paget’s Sherlock Holmes*.

Roger Llewellyn is back in David Stuart Davies’s new play *The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes*, opening on 6 March at the **Mill Studio, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre**, Guildford (01483 440000; www.yvonne-arnaud.co.uk), and there till 8 March. Then: 26 **Theatr Brycheiniog**, Brecon (01874 611622); 28 **Grand Theatre**, Swansea (01792 475715; www.swansea.gov.uk/grandtheatre); 2 April **Armagh Theatre**, (028 3752 1821; admin@themarketplacearmagh.com); 3-5 April **Baby Grand, Grand Opera House**, Belfast (028 9024 1919); 15 April **Greenwich Theatre**, London (020 8858 7755; boxoffice@greenwichtheatre.org); 17 April **Maltings Arts Theatre**, St Albans (01727 844222; maltings.arts@stalbans.gov.uk); 19 April **Theatre Royal, Margate** (01227 787787; admin@theatreroyalargate.co.uk); 24 April **Arlington Arts Centre**, Newbury (01635 244246; boxoffice@arlingtonarts.co.uk); 26 April **Forest Arts Centre**, New Milton, Hants (01425 612393; forest.arts@hants.gov.uk); 30 April **Middlesbrough Theatre** (01642 815181; boxoffice@middlesbrough.gov.uk). 2 May **Playhouse**, Alnwick (01665 510785; info@alnwickplayhouse.co.uk). More next time.

From 23 to 26 April, Thistles Musical Theatre Company will stage *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes* (aka *Sherlock Holmes: The Musical*) at **The Kenneth More Theatre**, Oakfield Road, Ilford, Essex. Credit card bookings on 020 8553 4466.

BBC Worldwide (Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT) has more treats in store for us. *The Collected Adventures and The Collected Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* are out now as boxed sets of CDs, with *The Return* due in September and *His Last Bow* in November. These, of course, are the superb Radio 4 dramatisations with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams. The individual 4-CD sets are still available, but there’s a considerable saving on the Collected boxes, especially in the BBC Shop sale at www.bbcshop.com. And there’s more. March will see the release of *The Unopened Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, a series of six ingenious new adventures first broadcast on Radio 5 in 1993, with Simon Callow and Nicky Henson as Holmes and Watson — these plays remind me of the best of the American radio series of the 1940s, with Rathbone and Bruce. And in April 2009 we’ll have a boxed selection from the classic BBC series with Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley, newly introduced by Nicholas Utechin. Marvellous!

Hobbs and Shelley were my first Holmes and Watson, and theirs are the voices that helped define the characters for me. Merrison and Williams sound different, but — and this is essential — they sound *right*. There were eight writers for *The Memoirs*, but the others all took their cue from Bert Coules, whose scripts for *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of the Four* had established the format (which trusts the listener’s intelligence, often cross-cutting boldly between one story-thread and another and even between one time and another) and the characters. Watson is, properly, sensible and intelligent; Holmes is both as pleasing and as irritating as he should be, a flawed but likeable genius. It’s a real pleasure to have these now-classic productions available as high-quality recordings. (The set includes ‘The Second Stain’ to even up the numbers between *The Memoirs* and *The Return*.)

David Ian Davies has recorded an audio adaptation of my own play *The Great Detective*, which can be bought or downloaded from www.audible.com. Steven Rothman says of it: ‘*The Great Detective* is great fun. Roger Johnson’s play carefully selects vignettes from both the Sherlock Holmes Canon and Conan Doyle’s other writing...The play skillfully confuses reality and fiction. David Ian Davies is able to produce a series of wonderfully evocative voices, and the sound effects amuse. This is an excellent production of an enjoyable radio play.’

Henry Mancini’s grand score for *Without a Clue* is available on a limited edition CD (BSX Records, BuySoundtrax.com, Att. Customer Service, 2828 Cochran Street PMB #287, Simi Valley, CA 93065-2780, USA) from buysoundtrax.stores.yahoo.net/witcluorsoun.html. His equally enjoyable music for *The Adventures of the Great Mouse Detective* (i.e. *Basil the Great Mouse Detective*) is out on a Varèse Sarabande CD (11846 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 130, Studio City, CA 91604, USA) and is available from www.amazon.com and other outlets.

Due in February from Naxos AudioBooks (2nd Floor, 40A High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) is an unabridged reading by Glen McReady of *The Lost World*. Should be good!

An odd-looking DVD documentary called *The Madness of Sherlock Holmes: Conan Doyle and the Realm of the Faeries* by Phil Gardiner (Real2Can Films, info@real2can.com) is available from www.real2can.com/storedvd.htm for £11.99/\$23.95 plus postage.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) deals in a range of Holmesian collectibles, including his own fine resin sculptures. Drop him a line for details.

Tony Tenser, who died on 5 December aged eighty-seven, was an unashamedly commercial film producer (it was he who dubbed Brigitte Bardot a ‘sex kitten’), but his output did include Roman Polanski’s *Repulsion*, Michael Reeves’ *Witchfinder General*, and James Hill’s *A Study in Terror*. Our member **David Husain**, a distinguished chemist, winner of the RSC’s Tilden and Corday-Morgan medals, and Emeritus Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, died on 26 December at the age of seventy. A memorial service will be held on 1 March in Pembroke College Chapel. **Edward D Hoch** (pronounced ‘Hoke’) wrote more than 900 mystery and detective stories and a handful of novels. As well as his own many characters he wrote half a dozen ingenious Sherlock Holmes stories for *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*, the latest being in the current issue (February 2008, which features cover art by Philip Cornell). Ed Hoch died on 17 January aged seventy-seven.

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Autumn 2007 and Winter 2007 (Steven Rothman, 220, West Rittenhouse Square, #15-D, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA; subscriptions, PO Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA; correspondence for **The Baker Street Irregulars** should go to Michael Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278, USA). *Bohemian Newsletter*, no. 84 (**České společenost Sherlocka Holmese**, Aleš Kolodrubec, Milešovská 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic). *The Camden House Journal*, December 2007 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Communication*, no. 276, no. 277 and no. 278 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Wanda & Jeff Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 34698, USA). *The Illustrious Clients News*, December 2007 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 9 Calumet Court, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, December 2007 and January 2008 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 9832-8981, USA).

The Master’s Trestleboard, December 2007 (**The Master’s Masons**, Ron Fish, PO Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919-0004, USA). *The Passengers’ Log*, October 2007 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Rosane McNamara, 4/2a Merlin Street, Neutral Bay, NSW 2089, Australia) [**marking ten proud years of The Log — long may it roll!**]. *The Petrel Flyer*, January/February 2008 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Practice Notes*, December 2007 (**The Friends of Dr Watson**, Nino Cirone, Highcroft Cottage, 14 Totteridge Common, London N20 8NL). *The Scion*, Autumn 2007 (**The Musgraves**, Anne Jordan, Hallas Lodge, Greenside Lane, Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5AP). *The Serpentine Muse*, Winter 2007 (**The Adventureesses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Winter 2007. *The Soft-Nosed Bullet-in & Striking (T)Rifles*, Winter 2006/7 (**Von Herder Airguns Ltd**, Michael Ross, Hermeskeiler Platz 14, 50935 Köln, Germany). *The Solar Pons Gazette*, December 2007 (Bob Byrne, www.solarpons.com).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermactei Press*, December 2007 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Roger Johnson