

Jan 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

There seems to be little doubt about global warming, at least with regard to the birthday festivities in New York, where the weather was occasionally rainy but never cold. The now-traditional ASH Wednesday supper was held at O'Casey's, and the Christopher Morley walk was led by Jim Cox and Dore Nash on Thursday morning (with lunch at McSorley's).

The Baker Street Irregulars' Distinguished Speaker at the Williams Club on Thursday evening was Laurie R. King, who offered new and interesting Sherlockian scholarship, and announced that Mary Russell will return to Sussex in her next book, which "will have something to do with bees." Laurie also reported that Mary is not pregnant. Laurie's lecture will appear in The Baker Street Journal this year (see below for information on how to subscribe).

The William Gillette Luncheon attracted a sizeable crowd on Friday at Moran's Chelsea Seafood Restaurant, where Paul Singleton, Andrew Joffe, Sarah Montague, Elyse Locurto, and Curtis Armstrong presented dramatic views of how the telephone was viewed and used at 221B Baker Street. And the traditional open house at Otto Penzler's Mysterious Bookshop offered the usual opportunities to browse and buy.

Paul Singleton arranged for an early-evening gathering at the Hotel Duane's Grille Room (where the first gathering of The Baker Street Irregulars was held on Jan. 6, 1934); the premises are now known as Morgans Bar, and there is talk ("not by me," Paul notes) of making this an annual ritual.

The Irregulars and their guests gathered for the BSI's annual dinner at the Union League Club, and Julie Rosenblatt delivered the cocktail-party toast to the woman: Candace Lewis (who went on to dinner at the Club with other ladies who have been honored in past years). The dinner featured the usual toasts and traditions, Paxton Whitehead's reminiscences about the play "The Crucifer of Blood", Dan Posnansky's report on a letter that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote about America and Americans, a spirited competition called "Pericolo" (aka "Sherlockian Jeopardy"), and much more.

Mike Whelan (the BSI's "Wiggins") announced the Birthday Honours, and Irregular Shillings and Investitures were awarded to Warren Randall ("Harold Stackhurst"), Dayna McCausland ("Lady Clara St. Simon"), Mike Homer ("Enoch J. Drebber"), Mike Berdan ("Henri Murger"), Maggie Schpak ("The Soup Plate Medal"), Mattias Bostrom ("The Swedish Pathological Society"), and Elaine McCafferty ("Eliza Barrymore"). Mike Whelan also presented the BSI's Editor's Medal to Peter Blau, Steve Doyle, Mitch Higurashi, and Bill Hyder, in recognition of their services as editors of books published by the BSI in the manuscript and international series.

The Gaslight Gala, held at the Manhattan Club, celebrated "The Villains in the Canon" with performances by the Sherlettes (songs such as "Hello Selden", "Don't Mess with Mr. Milverton", and "Get Me to the Court on Time"), toasts, dramatics (Joanne Zahorsky-Reeves and Robert Reeves in "Feeling Skittish: Holmes & Moriarty's First Date"), a game ("Sherlockian Squares"), songs, raffles (a hand-painted tote bag donated by Laurie Frasier Manifold and a hand-painted sweatshirt donated by Cynthia Wein), and an auction.

Jan 06 #2 On Saturday morning the dealers room at the Algonquin was (as usual) crowded with sellers and buyers, and at 12:30 The Clients of Adrian Mulliner (devotees of the works of both Wodehouse and Watson) gathered for a Junior Bloodstain, which featured a dramatic reading of Anne Cotton's "Sherlock Holmes and the Horrible Hound" (with Anne starring as the Hound).

The BSI's Saturday-afternoon cocktail party was held at a new location: the New York City Bar Association, conveniently in the same block at the Algonquin Hotel. There was a spacious room for wining and dining and conversation, and a comfortable auditorium for the entertainment. Mary Ann Bradley

introduced the ladies who have been honored as the woman, and Al and Betsy Rosenblatt reported poetically on the events of the previous year and the previous evening. Harold Billings won the Morley-Montgomery Award (an attractive certificate and a check for \$500) for the best contribution to The Baker Street Journal last year, for his article on "The Materia Medica of Sherlock Holmes". The John H. Watson Fund's raffle prize, kindly donated by Jerry and Chrys Kegley and The Curious Collectors of Baker Street, was a collection Sherlockian jewelry hand-crafted by Maggie Schpak, and the Fund benefitted from energetic bidding in the traditional auction.

The Watson Fund (administered by a carefully anonymous Dr. Watson) offers financial assistance to all Sherlockians (membership in the BSI is not required) who might otherwise not be able to participate in the birthday festivities. The generous donors to the auction were Bill Dorn (his Sherlockian calendar for 2007, signed by all who were featured in it), Laurie King (naming rights for one of the good or bad characters in the next Mary Russell novel), and the Denizens of the Bar of Gold (a Street Dozen of artistic pillows created by Alice Zalik).

A Saturday evening event was the "Lost in New York with a Bunch of Sherlockians" dinner at Kennedy's, where S'ians from six nations joined Chrys Kegley and The Curious Collectors of Baker Street for additional festivities. And on Sunday morning a convivial group of visiting long-weekenders gathered at the Oldcastle Pub & Restaurant for a brunch arranged by the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes.

I've not reported on everything, I hasten to add; if you want more details than I've provided here, there will be much more in The Baker Street Journal, which is published quarterly and costs \$26.50 a year (\$29.00 outside the U.S.), and checks (credit-card payments accepted from foreign subscribers) should be sent to the BSJ (Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331); and there's an option offering a subscription to the BSJ and to the Christmas Annual for \$36.50 (or \$40.00 foreign). You can also subscribe at the BSJ web-site at <www.bakerstreetjournal.com>, where there's additional interesting material such as some of the papers written by past winners the Morley-Montgomery Awards, articles from recent issues of the BSJ, and information about the BSI's publications.

And if you would like to see two slide shows of photographs taken at some of the events during the birthday festivities, Scott Monty has kindly provided two slide shows at <www.bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com>; there's a link in his entry for January 23.

Jan 07 #3 "Holland is a creation of such exquisite period evil that Dickens and Conan Doyle would have gladly fought naked on the frozen Thames for the chance to create her." According to Michael Holden, in the Guardian (Dec. 23), about a character in the television dramatization of Philip Pullman's new novel "The Ruby in the Smoke" that aired on BBC-1 on Dec. 27. One can only hope that the program is broadcast by "Masterpiece Theatre" on PBS-TV: Holden also wrote that "If you can only watch one bloodcurdling Victorian costume drama this Christmas--this should be it."

There were familiar names on the Queen's New Year's honours list: Michael Holroyd received a knighthood for services to literature; Peter Greenaway, Penelope Keith, and John Wood were appointed CBE (Companion of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire); and Hugh Laurie was appointed an OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire).

Holroyd wrote about the battle between Adrian Conan Doyle and Hesketh Pearson about Pearson's biography of Sir Arthur; Peter Greenaway wrote and directed the film "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1982), filmed at Groombridge Place, which was the inspiration for Birlstone Manor; Penelope Keith was the receptionist at the massage parlor in "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1978); John Wood played Sherlock Holmes in the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of Gillette's play; and Hugh Laurie read "The Hound of the Baskervilles" on

BBC Radio 2 in 2002 (and as Dr. Gregory House in the Fox television series *Lives in a house* numbered 221B).

Helen Wesson died on Sept. 7, 2006. She was an energetic amateur journalist and (with her husband Sheldon) a fine printer, and her enthusiasms included miniatures and Sherlock Holmes: Helen presided over two Sherlockian societies: The Trained Cormorants of Gifu (she had visited the trained cormorants while she lived in Japan) and the H.W., and she exhibited her Sherlockian miniature rooms (the sitting-room and some of his London hideaways) at the Red Circle's miniature meeting in 1983.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London and the Old Court Radio Theatre Company have issued a new CD, with dramatizations of "The Mazarin Stone" and "The Veiled Lodger" (dramatized by M. J. Elliott); as with their first CD (Jun 06 #4), the actors and scripts are excellent. Available from the Society (Mole End, Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE, England); £5.00 post-paid to the U.K., £6.00/€9.00 to Europe, £9.00/\$12.00 elsewhere (sterling checks should be payable to Roger Johnson and dollar checks to Jean Upton; euros in currency, please).

Further to an earlier item (Sep 00 #4) about the copy of Conan Doyle's *THE GREEN FLAG AND OTHER STORIES OF WAR AND SPORT*, brought to the Antarctic in 1910 by Capt. Robert Falcon Scott (it's still there, preserved in the small hut from which he launched his ill-fated attempt to reach the South Pole), Saul Cohen wrote in *Baker Street Miscellanea* (winter 1982) about a volume of Sherlock Holmes stories brought to the Antarctic by Xavier Mertz on the Australasian-Antarctic expedition led by Douglas Mawson in 1911-1913; Mertz did not survive, but Mawson did, and found Mertz's book, which has now been discovered in Mawson's Hut at Cape Denison. According to a report in the Dec. 22 issue of the *Melbourne Age*, conservationists working on preserving the hut have found the book: a copy of *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*.

Jan 07 #4 Much has been written about (and by) Felix Dennis, the British entrepreneur, publisher (he owns Maxim), poet, and (the Sunday Times "rich list" estimates) the 65th richest individual in the UK. He has a web-site at <www.felixdennis.com>, and a Garden of Heroes on his 730-acre estate in Warwickshire. It's a sort of bronze Madame Tussaud's, according to an article in the *Guardian* (Nov. 3, 2002) with one-and-a-quarter life-size statues of people he admires, including Galileo, Muhammad Ali, Dorothy Parker, Icarus, Charles Darwin, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

SPONGEBOB DETECTIVE PANTS: THE CASE OF THE MISSING SPATULA, written by David Lewman, and illustrated by Harry Moore (New York: Scholastic, 2006; 12 pp., \$5.99), has SpongeBob and Patrick investigating a mystery.

Further to the report on <www.switchpod.com>, "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" has been added to their list of Sherlockian items available for listening on-line. Patrick Horgan reads the stories, and reads them well. They also have some of the old Rathbone/Bruce radio broadcasts.

Arthur Hill died on Oct. 22, 2006. He worked for the Canadian Broadcasting Co. in radio theater while still in school, and acted on stage, screen, radio and television in England and the United States, winning awards for his appearance as George in the original Broadway production of Edward Albee's "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" in 1962. He played Preston Giles on television in 1984 in "The Murder of Sherlock Holmes" (the pilot for the series "Murder She Wrote").

"Sherlock Holmes investigates a wailing, soul-sucking ghost that turns out to be a banshee," according to a press release spotted by Ken Lanza. "Will Holmes be clever enough to find out the beast's secrets and stop its terri-

fying reign?" Stay tuned: "Sherlock Holmes and the Banshee" is one of the new films greenlit for development for the SCI FI Channel, which is launching a new slot called "SCI-FI Saturday: The Most Dangerous Night of Television".

Peepolykus [pronounced people-like-us] is a British theater company that is touring with John Nicholson and Steven Canny's dramatization of "The Hound of the Baskervilles"; their schedule is available at <www.peepolykus.com>. Three actors perform all of the roles "with style, grace, and a number of false beards," and the company asks their audiences to "refrain from bringing meat products into the auditorium."

Spotted by Jim Suszynski: "That's the trouble with detective work. . . . Too many clues are worse than none at all." The quote's from FREDDY PLAYS FOOTBALL, accompanied by Kurt Wiese's illustration of Freddy in Sherlockian costume, in THE WIT & WISDOM OF FREDDY AND HIS FRIENDS, by Walter R. Brooks (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2000; 253 pp., \$23.95); with a new introduction by Michael Cart [discounted to \$4.98 at Daedalus Books and presumably elsewhere. The Friends of Freddy are at Box 912, Greenbelt, MD 20768, and they have a web-site at <www.freddythepig.org>.

Jan 07 #5 Those who wonder where Lauriston Gardens really was have difficulty finding a suitable location in London, but it is easier discovering a source for the name: in Edinburgh. Lauriston Place was just round the corner from one of the houses in which Conan Doyle lived when he studied under Dr. Joseph Bell at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. An article in the Edinburgh Evening News (Jan. 20) notes that the Infirmary moved to a new site in Lauriston Place in 1879, and to a new hospital in Little France in 2002; Lauriston Place is being redeveloped as part of planning for a new district in Edinburgh, and preservationists are objecting to a proposal to replace the Red Home, where the Infirmary's nurses once lived, with an L-shaped restaurant and civic square.

Dorothy Stix spotted Sherlockian artwork in the game DIAMOND DETECTIVE (the trophy for getting to Inspector level is a badge with a portrait of Sherlock Holmes); it's one of the games available at <www.gamehouse.com>, and you can download and play it free for 60 minutes.

The Mystery Writers of America have announced the nominees for Edgars (to be awarded at their gala banquet on Apr. 26 in New York). The nominees include Steve Hockensmith's HOLMES ON THE RANGE (best first novel by an American author), Daniel Stashower's THE BEAUTIFUL CIGAR GIRL: MARY ROGERS, EDGAR ALLAN POE AND THE INVENTION OF MURDER (best fact crime), E. J. Wagner's THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM BASKERVILLE HALL TO THE VALLEY OF FEAR (best critical/biographical), Nancy Springer's THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS: AN ENOLA HOLMES MYSTERY (best juvenile), and Steven Dietz's SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE FINAL ADVENTURE (best play). Stephen King, whose pastiche "The Doctor's Case" was published in the anthology THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (1987), will receive the MWA's Grand Master award. Their web-site at <www.mysterywriters.org/pages/awards/nominees07.htm> lists the nominees in all the categories.

Jay Pearlman reports that The Mini-Tonga Scion Society is alive and well: the up-dated web-site at <www.hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/mini1.htm> offers news of the world of miniatures, and colorful photographs of Sherlockian miniatures.

<www.sulgravemanor.org.uk/history/manor_through_ages.htm> links to a web-site about Sulgrave Manor, home of George Washington's ancestors; Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a member of the British Peace Centenary Committee that helped raise the money needed to buy the house in 1914 as part of the celebration of the centenary of the Treaty of Ghent, which was the peace treaty that ended the war of 1812. Thanks to Gayle Harris for reporting the site.

Robert Anton Wilson died on Jan. 11. He was renowned as the author of the

"Illuminatus" trilogy; MASKS OF THE ILLUMINATI (1981) featured Joyce, Einstein, Crowley, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, and many (marginal) allusions to Sherlock Holmes and the Canon.

I've mentioned MySpace before, and Mary Russell has her own profile there, at <www.myspace.com/maryrussell>. Her capsule biography states that she's 99 years old, because that's the limit at MySpace (she's actually 107 years old); Laurie R. King has complained at her own blog about MySpace's ageist policies <www.laurierking.blogspot.com>.

Jan 07 #6 Art Buchwald died on Jan. 17. He was a newspaper humor columnist for more than half a century. After the end world war II he went to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, where he was managing editor of the campus humor magazine (and wrote a parody featuring Hamhock Bones), and moved to Paris to write an entertainment column for the European edition of the N.Y. Herald Tribune. In March 1952 he interviewed Bill Rabe, then an Army officer in Europe, about the Old Soldiers of Baker Street (and in a later column published a letter in which Adrian Conan Doyle complained that his father had been neglected in Bill's interview); Sherlock Holmes was mentioned often in Buchwald's columns over many years, and he assisted Bill in the research that resulted in Bill's WE ALWAYS MENTION AUNT CLARA (1990).

Al Gregory <grimpen@nac.net> offers (e-mail only) his 2007 edition of "The ABC of the BSI" (an alphabetical listing of Investitures, with recipients, from "Abbey Grange" to "Young Stamford") and "The Florin Society" (couples in which both spouses have received Irregular Shillings).

SCANDINAVIA AND SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited and translated by Bjarne Nielsen (New York: The Baker Street Irregulars, 2006; 230 pp., \$39.95), is the second volume in BSI's International Series, which is intended to make available in English some of the fine Sherlockian scholarship published in other languages. The book offers contributions from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, covering a wide range of topics, including the history of the S'ian societies in Scandinavia, with fine artwork by Henry Lauritzen, Robert Storm-Petersen, and more recent artists. \$43.90 postpaid to the U.S. (\$44.90 elsewhere) from The Baker Street Journal, 2 Dettling Road, Maynard, MA 01754. You can also order on-line at <www.bakerstreetjournal.com>.

Roy Pilot, Gianluca Salvatori, and Enrico Solito are the editors of MANDATE FOR MURDER (New York: The Baker Street Irregulars, 2006; 177 pp., \$35.00), is the fifth volume in the BSI's Manuscript Series; there's a facsimile of the original manuscript, with a transcription and notes, accompanied by excellent scholarship on Italy, Italians, and artists by Philip Weller, John Genova, the editors, and others. \$38.95 postpaid to the U.S. (\$39.95 elsewhere); addresses as for SCANDINAVIA AND SHERLOCK HOLMES (above).

The last volume of Leslie S. Klinger's SHERLOCK HOLMES REFERENCE LIBRARY is THE CASE-BOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Indianapolis: Gasogene Books, 2007; 264 pp., \$26.95), with a thoughtful introduction by Chris Redmond. The annotations and appendices are as always based on old and new Sherlockian scholarship, and the nine volumes in the complete series are a splendid resource for those who want more information than is available in THE NEW ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES and older annotated editions. \$30.90 postpaid (\$32.90 outside the U.S.) from the publisher (Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268).

Reported: Roger Jaynes, author of SHERLOCK HOLMES IN A DUEL WITH THE DEVIL (Nov 02 #1), has a second pastiche SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE CHILFORD RIPPER (London: Breese Books, 2006; 150 pp.); Val Andrews' new pastiche SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GHOST OF BAKER STREET also is available from Breese Books (156 pp.). Each book costs £7.50 postpaid (to the UK)/€12.50 (Euroland)/\$18.50 (elsewhere), and their address is Endeavour House, 170 Woodland Road, Sawston, Cambridge CB2 4DX, England <www.baker-street-studios.com>.

Jan 07 #7 Alan H. Foster ("A Commission from the Sultan of Turkey") died

on Oct. 18, 2006. He had a long career in corporate financial planning and risk management, and then was a professor of finance, ethics, and corporate strategy at the University of Michigan. He was a member of The Speckled Band of Boston and The Amateur Mendicants of Detroit; he received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1965, and he won the BSI's Morley-Montgomery Award for the best paper published in the Baker Journal in 1966.

Philip Weller writes that a more complete map of La Gaiola (featured in his article in MANDATE FOR MURDER (The Baker Street Irregulars' manuscript-series volume for "The Red Circle") (Jan 07 #6) is available on request as an e-mail attachment; his address is <221b@acd-221b.info>.

The new issue of the Sherlockian E-Times is at hand from Joel and Carolyn Senter (Classic Specialties) with news from the Sherlockians by Invitation Only Society, and offers of Sherlockian merchandise; the newsletter's URL is <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07-1.htm>, and you can request an e-mail subscription at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

Jim Cox prepared a "Christopher Morley Souvenir Portfolio" for the Christopher Morley Walk during the birthday festivities, with photocopies (some in color) of a "selection of curiosities" drawn from his collection. \$12.50 postpaid from James D. Cox (2240 15th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116).

Reported in the Guardian (Jan. 9): Bottom and Titania, the Ancient Mariner and the Albatross, and Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, are the famous couples from literature featured on a multi-media "Literacy Collection" CD-ROM for Windows offered to schools by 2Simple Software (Enterprise House, 2 The Crest, Hendon, London NW4 2HN, England) <www.2simple.com>.

Jon Lellenberg reports an excellent account of the battle of Maiwand at the web-site <www.britishbattles.com/second-afghan-war/maiwand.htm>; Dr. Watson is mentioned near the end, under "regimental anecdotes and traditions".

<www.oddcast.com/home/demos/tts/frameset.php?frame1=talk> is a fascinating demonstration of modern technology: type and click and listen (in different languages and voices). You can type quotes from the Canon, of course. Or anything else you want to hear.

And a few commercials: a 17-page list of the Investitured Irregulars, the Two-Shilling Awards, the Women, and the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes costs \$1.30 postpaid. An 82-page list of 851 Sherlockian societies, with names and addresses for contacts for 430 active societies, is \$4.85 postpaid. A run of address labels for 357 individual contacts (recommended to avoid duplicate mailings to those who are contacts for more than one society) costs \$10.65 postpaid (checks payable to Peter E. Blau, please). The list of BSIs and others also is available from me by e-mail (at no charge), and both lists are available at Willis G. Frick's "Sherlocktron" home page at <www.members.cox.net/sherlock1/Sherlocktron.html>.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Feb 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The Sherlockian birthday festivities lasted much longer than the long weekend in New York: the annual dinner of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London took place at the House of Commons on Jan. 20. Mike Whelan awarded Jonathan McCafferty membership in The Baker Street Irregulars (as "Barrymore").

Harvard's Houghton Library will host a symposium and mount a major exhibition honoring Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 2009, marking the 150th anniversary of his birth. The symposium will be held May 7-9, and the exhibition will run from May 4 to Aug. 15, featuring material from the Houghton's collections, the Baker Street Irregulars archives, and private collections. More

information on the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Sesquicentennial Celebration will be available at hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/doyle_symposium.html.

"The Uncanny Appearance of Sherlock Holmes" (a new musical written by Brad Krunholz for the North American Cultural Laboratory) will be performed at the NACL Theatre in Highland Lake, N.Y., on Mar. 2 and 3 (the world premiere on Mar. 2 is a fund-raiser) (845-557-0694) and Mar. 9 and 10 at Humber College in Toronto (416-564-6622) www.nacl.org/sherlock.htm.

John Baesch spotted an article in The Times (Jan. 27) about an auction, at Bonhams in London on Mar. 6, of more than 350 outfits tailored by Angels, the leading costumier for films shot in Britain. The items offered in the auction include a black Victorian-style cape/coat worn by Jeremy Brett in the "Sherlock Holmes" series (estimated at £2,000-2,500), a dressing gown worn by Brett in the series (£1,000-1,200), and a khaki linen shirt worn by Christopher Lee in "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (£100-140).

Michael Dirda reviewed A. N. Wilson's new BETJEMAN: A LIFE in the Washington Post's Book World (Jan. 28), and has reported (although not in his review) that the Betjemann patented tantalus (which has been described as a device designed to prevent the servants from tippling of pilfering) was invented by the poet's grandfather George Betjemann.

One is reminded of the old story about the man who drew lines on the label of the whiskey bottle he kept in his hotel room, so that he would know that no one else was drinking from it. One day he returned to his room to find a note by the bottle: "Please do not draw lines on the label. It is a shame to have to dilute good whiskey."

Nostalgia Ventures has added a collection of 20 programs from the 1948-1949 Mutual Broadcasting System's "Sherlock Holmes" series to its collection of Old Time Radio Shows. The ten-disk boxed set stars John Stanley as Holmes and Ian Martin and Wendell Holmes as Watson in recordings restored from the original disks in the University of Minnesota's Edith Meiser Collection and hitherto unavailable, and retails for \$29.98. It's available in stores, or from the company (888-589-8885); the quality of the recordings is splendid, and it's delightful to listen to the programs. And it's nice to hear that Nostalgia Ventures plans to issue more programs from the season. There's more information about the series at www.nostalgiatown.com; click on "enter here" and search for "sherlock" and click on the cover and on "facts" to read commentary by Bill Nadel and Anthony Tollin.

Feb 07 #2 The February issue of Smithsonian magazine has an interesting article about artist Joseph Cornell's box construction "A Swan Lake for Tamara Toumanova: Homage to the Romantic Ballet" on display at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Cornell met Toumanova in 1940, and used feathers from her costume when he created the box in 1946. Toumanova, who died in 1996 (Jun 96 #2), portrayed the ballerina Petrova in the film "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970).

Mark Alberstat reports that the Spence Munros are celebrating their 25th anniversary, and are commemorating the event with a lapel pin. US\$3.25 postpaid to North America; \$4.65 elsewhere. His address is 5 Lorraine Street, Dartmouth, NS B3A 2B9, Canada; markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca is his PayPal account.

Further to the item (Jul 06 #4) on the campaign to upgrade the protection of Undershaw, the house where Conan Doyle lived from 1897 to 1907, the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport has decided against the proposal. The rejection letter said that "the building lacks the level of special architectural interest which would justify a Grade 1 listing," and that "the integrity of the original design has been compromised," according to the BBC. The Victorian Society, which led the campaign, noted that the department also said that "the writer does not occupy a significant enough

position in the nation's consciousness," and "cannot be said to be an author of the standing of...Charles Dickens or Jane Austen." The Victorian Society has appealed, and anyone who wants to object to the decision against the upgrade to Grade 1 listing should write to Tessa Jowell (Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport); her address is: Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH, 5DH, England <tessa.jowell@culture.gsi.gov.uk>.

An editorial in The Guardian (Feb. 8) quoted T. S. Eliot (a "recognized expert on national culture long before the Department of Culture was thought of") as having written: "perhaps the greatest of the Sherlock Holmes mysteries is this: that when we talk of him we invariably fall into the fancy of his existence." "If Undershaw cannot be saved on Doyle's account, the paper suggested, "then it should be on Holmes's; whom he alone could have created." Tessa Jowell responded (Feb. 13), writing that it is "an unremarkable late-19th-century domestic house with a later extension and with many of the original internal features long gone," and that the building most closely associated with Holmes is 221B Baker Street, adding that she "would be only too pleased to consider listing that building" should a request be made.

Roger Johnson spotted "The Valley of Fear" in Bucks County, which is a far classier part of Pennsylvania than the Vermissa Valley. There's a web-site at <www.valleyoffear.com>.

Richard D. Lesh ("The Fatal Battle of Maiwand") died on Feb. 1. Dick was a professor of fine arts at Wayne State Teachers College in Nebraska, and the founder and sparking-plug of The Maiwand Jezails, and he led the society's long campaign to erect a monument to Dr. Watson on the battlefield. He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1965, and their Two-Shilling Award in 1990.

Feb 07 #3 "How much do I owe for 'borrowing' this book for 42 years and 8 months?" Stephen N. Sampogna wrote to his high school library in Richmond, Va., on Dec. 18. The book was a copy of the Doubleday edition of THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES (1960) that Sampogna had neglected to return to the library when he graduated in 1966. The fines totalled \$152.70, according to the librarian, who also noted that Sampogna probably had paid for the lost book in order to graduate, and waived the fines. The book is now displayed in the library, next to his letter and his 1966 yearbook photograph, and a giant sign that reads "It's never too late."

THE ANTHONY BOUCHER CHRONICLES: REVIEWS AND COMMENTARY 1942-1947, edited by Francis M. Nevins (Shreveport: Ramble House, 2005; 470 pp., \$24.00), is an annotated bibliography of Boucher's reviews and commentary published in the San Francisco Chronicle; he was the author of THE CASE OF THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS (1940), one of the founders of The Scowlers and Mollie Maguires, and a member of the BSI. Nevins has contributed a long and insightful introduction, and a detailed index of the authors Boucher wrote about. There is Sherlockian content, of course, and much more. The publisher is at 443 Gladstone Boulevard, Shreveport, LA 71104 <www.ramblehouse.com>.

Ramble House also plans to publish two pastiche collections: THE UNIVERSAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, by Richard A. Lupoff, and THE SECRET ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, by Gary Lovisi; \$30.00 hardback, \$18.00 paperback, and \$25.00 hand-made).

Calvin H. Plimpton died on Feb. 3. He served as president of Amherst College from 1960 to 1971, and then as president of the American University of Beirut; he also was a member (as "Mr. Mortimer") of The Five Orange Pips, and his paper on his Canonical namesake was published in The Baker Street Journal in Sept. 1977.

Susan Jewell spotted a "charm school" advertisement for Tiffany & Co. in the N.Y. Times (Jan. 24); they say it's a buggy, but it's obviously a hansom cab viewed straight on. Diamonds, emeralds,

and sapphires, set in platinum, \$1,150 (item 21671738) (800-526-0649) <www.tiffany.com>.

It occurs to me that there are more and more URLs in this news-letter, and that more and more of my readers have computers and access to the Internet, where some interesting things can be seen. Such as the first movie of a Pope, at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=ai8DEwmZF34&url=>, kindly reported by Ann Lewis. The Pope was Gioacchino Pecci, Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903); it was at his express desire Sherlock Holmes investigated the sudden death of Cardinal Tosca.

"This is the real eggshell pottery of the Ming dynasty," Holmes explained (in "The Illustrious Client"). "No finer piece ever passed through Christie's." The most expensive piece of artwork ever sold at auction in Asia is a tiny ceramic bowl, made during the reign of the Qing dynasty emperor Qianlong (1736-1795); it brought £9.8 million at Christie's in Beijing last November, according to an article in The Times (Nov. 29), spotted by John Baesch. The Manchu-led Qing dynasty conquered the Han-led Ming dynasty in 1644 and ruled until 1912.

Feb 07 #4 The December issue of the quarterly newsletter of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has Julie Mckuras' discussion of the manuscript of Conan Doyle's story "Billy Bones" (held in the Children's Research Literature Collection), Jens Byskov Jensen's article about Carl Muusmann's pastiche "Sherlock Holmes på Marienlyst" (published in Danish in 1906 and in English in 1956), Tim Johnson's report on the growth of the collections, and much more; copies of the newsletter are available from Richard J. Sveum, (111 Elmer L. Andersen Library, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455) <sveum001@tc.umn.edu>.

The latest issue of Beaten's Christmas Annual is at hand from The Sound of the Baskervilles in Seattle), with scholarship (including Samuel Fry's article on "Three Friends: Holmes, Stefansson & Doyle"), quizzes, reviews, a burlesque radio play, and news of the society; copies of the 46-page booklet are available from David Haugen, 3605 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332; \$10.00 postpaid.

Ian Richardson died on Feb. 9. He began his acting career in 1958 and was a founding member of the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1960; he was perhaps most famous as Francis Urquhart in "House of Cards" (1990), and for asking for Grey Poupon Dijon mustard in television commercials. He was awarded a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in 1989. Richardson was Sherlock Holmes in "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and "The Sign of Four" (1983), and Dr. Joseph Bell in "Murder Rooms: The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes" (2000).

Joe Eckrich planned to publish a booklet containing all of the talks given at "Holmes Under the Arch II" in 2005, but reports that he will not be able to complete the project. And due to a water leak and a crashed computer he has only a partial list of those who paid for the booklet; please let him know how many copies you ordered: his address is 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026 <jeckrich@sbcglobal.net>.

A run of the first 80 volumes of The Strand Magazine in publisher's cloth, offered at an eBay auction in January, when the final bid of £1,850 did not meet the reserve, was offered again, this time with no reserve, on Feb. 8, when it sold for £1,673 (not including the shipping costs: the total weight was estimated at 100 kilograms).

Single issues of The Strand Magazine can also be interesting: "Royal Editions" (bound in light blue silk over bevelled boards, and on thick paper) were published when the magazine had special articles about Queen Victoria and her family; there were at least three such issues (for Mar. 1891, Dec. 1892, and Nov. 1893). Copies of the latter two issues brought £258.00 each at eBay on Jan. 29.

Of course if you're truly interested in The Strand Magazine, you might consider a run of the magazine offered by Vincent Brosnan from the collection of Theodore G. Schulz: 100 volumes of the British edition, plus 464 single issues in wrappers; 19 volumes of the U.S. edition, plus 201 single issues in wrappers; and a complete run of The New Strand in single issues, all for \$20,000 plus shipping. A colorful brochure is available from Vinnie (1741 1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056 (858-630-2013) <sherlockinla@cox.net>.

Feb 07 #5 The winter issue of The Magic Door (the newsletter published by The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library) has Cliff Goldfarb's report on fragments of an issue of The Strand Magazine found at the site of an excavation in Egypt (abandoned by an archaeologist rather than buried with a pharaoh), and much about the ACD@35 conference held at the library last year. Copies of the newsletter are available from Doug Wrigglesworth (16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1H4, Canada) <doug.wrig@sympatico.ca>.

And for those who want to plan ahead: Canadian crime writer Peter Robinson will present this year's Cameron Hollyer Lecture at the Library on Apr. 14; the lecture will be preceded by the annual general meeting of the Friends, and followed by a Bootmaker Pub Night.

Sid Fleischman's THE GIANT RAT OF SUMATRA, OR PIRATES GALORE (2005) is now available in paperback (New York: HarperCollins/Greenwillow, 2006; 194 pp., \$5.99); intended for children ages 10 up, it's a well-written and interesting story about "the most notorious pirate ship in the Pacific." It's not Sherlockian, although Fleischman does acknowledge his debt to the Sherlock Holmes story for the name of the ship (and its ferocious figurehead).

E. J. Wagner, author of THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Jun 06 #2), will be one of 12 speakers in a Forensic Science Seminar at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston. The lectures are free and open to the public, and she will speak on "Superstition, Science, and Sherlock Holmes: The Development of Forensic Science During the Gaslight Era" on Apr. 13.

"Holmes and Watson in pursuit of the Hound" isn't the caption of this illustration, which John Lockwood found in National Police Gazette (Sept. 15, 1894). It's "Fitzsimmons Begins Training" and it shows him ("the Australian middle-weight") taking "a lively sprint with his trainer" at New Orleans. That's Bob Fitzsimmons, who began his professional career in Australia in 1883, and went on to make boxing history as its first three-division world champion.

Don W. Baranowski's SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE ADVENTURE OF THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER (West Conshohocken: Infinity Publishing, 2006; 164 pp., \$12.95) is the story that Watson told to Mary Godwin when he was courting her, long before he met Mary Morstan (and before she met and married Percy Bysshe Shelley); it was at Watson's request that she left Holmes and Watson out of the story when she wrote her famous novel. There are some problems with chronology, of course: her novel was published in 1818, and she died in 1851.

Philip J. Carraher's SHERLOCK HOLMES IN NEW YORK: THE ADVENTURE OF THE NEW YORK RIPPER (West Conshohocken: Infinity Publishing, 2005; 203 pp., \$14.95) is the third of his pastiches about Simon Hawkes, the alias Holmes used in disguise in New York during the Great Hiatus; the first of them was SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE ADVENTURE OF THE DEAD RABBITS SOCIETY (Oct 01 #6). This time Holmes is pitted against a serial killer who may be London's Jack the Ripper. The publisher's web-site is <www.infinitypublishing.com>.

Feb 07 #6 "All smokers should be prosecuted as nuisances, and the manufacture and sale of tobacco should be prohibited," George Ber-

nard Shaw announced, according to a story in the N.Y. Times (Dec. 5, 1926). Asked to comment on this, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle remarked: "Sherlock Holmes would smile at that."

Stanford University's Community Reading Project is again publishing Sherlock Holmes stories by mail and on the Internet in serial facsimile (Dec 06 #1). "The Empty House" (with notes by Mary Eichbauer) is now available at <sherlockholmes.stanford.edu/2007/2007_issue1.pdf>.

Randall Stock noted a story in the Wall Street Journal (Feb. 9) about plans to reissue Playboy on six DVDs, one for each decade. The first two decades will be issued in October, accompanied by 200-page books, at \$100 each (a lot more than you'll pay now for the magazine's first three issues (all had Sherlockian content). The Playboy disks will be created by the same company that created THE COMPLETE NEW YORKER on eight DVDs (Oct 05 #1).

There's an interesting exhibition of "Victorian Bestsellers" at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York through May 6; none of Conan Doyle's books are on display, but you can see a copy of Isabella Mary Beeton's THE BOOK OF HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT (1861). Their web-site's at <www.themorgan.org>.

"Which word or phrases do you most overuse?" was one of the questions posed to Ellen DeGeneres in the "Proust Questionnaire" in the Mar. 2007 issue of Vanity Fair. "I say 'By Jove!' way too much," she replied. "Either I do or Sherlock Holmes does. Whoever it is, it has to stop." How many times does Sherlock Holmes use that oath in the Canon? Is there any other oath he uses more often?

Dave Morrill spotted the first issue of THE HELMET OF FATE: DETECTIVE CHIMP (DC Comics, \$2.99); it's the first of five-part series, and Detective Chimp is in Sherlockian costume. You can see the cover, and the first six pages, at <www.dccomics.com/comics/?cm=6623>.

Paul Spiring reports a new web-site devoted to Bertram Fletcher Robinson at <www.bfronline.biz>; there are plans to publish ON THE TRAIL OF DR. ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: AN ILLUSTRATED DEVON TOUR, by Spiring and Brian Pugh; A CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF BERTRAM FLETCHER ROBINSON, by Spiring and Philip Wel-ler, and monographs on Dr. George Turnavine Budd (by Pugh) and Robinson (by Spiring).

Thanks to Joe Coppola for spotting the television film "Written in Blood" (2002). The film stars Michael T. Weiss, Peter Coyote, Maureen Flannigan, and Luke Williams, and was written by David Keith Miller; a serial killer leaves clues taken from the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Al Gregory has reported nice news for those who have charged foreign-currency transactions to their credit cards: credit card companies have agreed to pay up to \$336 million to people who were charged excessive transaction fees from 1996 to 2006. Needless to say, lawyers will receive a lot of the money. There's a lot more information at <www.ccfsettlement.com>, and you can call 800-945-9890 to request a claim form.

Feb 07 #7 "The Backyardigans" is a 30-minute animated series broadcast by Nickelodeon cable, and Pablo ("a precocious penguin") is seen in Sherlockian costume in "Whodunit?" (which first aired in 2006 and is repeated frequently) and in THE MYSTERY OF THE JEWELLED EGGS, adapted by Lara Bergen from a teleplay by Janice Burgess (New York: Simon Spotlight, 2007; 24 pp., \$3.99). Thanks to Jim Suszynski for spotting the book.

The BBC America Shop continues to expand its Sherlockian offers: they now have a framed color reproduction of the poster for John Barrymore's movie "Sherlock Holmes" (1922); item 14003 (\$59.98) (Box 681, Holmes, PA 19043) (800-898-4921) <www.bbcamericashop.com>.

Four Southern Sherlockian societies (in Atlanta, Nashville, Birmingham, and

Greenville) will hold their Third Annual Gathering of Southern Sherlockians at the Sheraton Read House in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Apr. 14-15. More information about the event is available from Kent Ross at 6875 Fielder Road, Rex, GA 30273) <kenthross@aol.com>.

Miklos Rozsa's "Concerto for Violin and Orchestra" was written for Jascha Heifetz and premiered by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in 1956; it was then used in the score for Billy Wilder's "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970). Now Rozsa expert Nic Raine has reconstructed and orchestrated the score for the film, and it has been recorded by the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra and will be released on Apr. 18, the 100th anniversary of Rozsa's birth; an added feature on the CD is more than 20 minutes of music composed for scenes that were cut from the final version of the film. The special pre-release price of the CD "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (Tadlow 004) is £12.95 postpaid (world-wide); Tadlow Music (57 High Street, Tadlow, Royston, Herts. SG8 0EU, England) <www.tadlowmusic.com>.

The next gathering of The Sherlock Holmes and All That Jazz Society will be held on May 6, as part of the West End Jazz Band's 6th Annual Hudson Lake Train Trip Concert and Buffet; Hudson Lake is an easy train ride from Chicago; more information is available from Donald B. Izban (1012 Rene Court, Park Ridge, IL 60068) (874-292-1270). You can hear samples of the band's music at their web-site <www.westendjazzband.com>.

The International Guild of Miniature Artisans held its annual show at the Marriott Marquis in New York in February, and one of the dealers was Ferenc J. Albert (449 Capri Court, Marco Island, FL 34145) (239-642-2357); he specializes in handblown glass miniatures, and offers an attractive one-inch scale (that's 1 inch = 1 foot) tantalus; \$132.00.

Greg Darak reports that the 1991 television films "Sherlock Holmes and the Leading Lady" and "Sherlock Holmes: Incident at Victoria Falls" (starring Christopher Lee and Patrick Macnee) are now available in two-disk DVD sets from Madacy Home Video (\$14.98 each).

The February issue of Classic Images has a full-color cover photograph of a six-sheet (81" x 81") poster for "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (1939) that will be sold at auction on Mar. 31 by Heritage Auction Galleries (3500 Maple Avenue, 17th floor, Dallas, TX 75219) (800-872-6467) <www.ha.com>; it is the first known copy of the poster, estimated at \$10,000-15,000.

Feb 07 #8 FACTION PARADOX: ERASING SHERLOCK, by Kelly Hale (Des Moines: Mad Norwegian Press, 2006; 187 pp., \$17.95), is the last novel in a series "based on the spin-off range as created by Lawrence Miles," who invented the Faction Paradox cult in his "Doctor Who" novels; it's set in 1882, and "Rose Donnelly, maid-of-all-work, disguises herself as a boy in order to follow the callow, yet brilliantly determined Sherlock Holmes in his pursuit of a thief." Rose is a time-traveller, and there's considerable sex and violence (the book's not for the faint-hearted). There's much more about the Faction Paradox series at <www.madnorwegian.com>.

That's a mug shot of Gene Morrison, who conned British courts for almost 26 years, falsely claiming to be a forensic investigator and testifying for the prosecution in 700 court cases. Morrison described himself as "Sherlock Holmes" and was paid at least £250,000 for giving evidence from the witness box and writing reports he based on cut-and-paste information from the Internet. His qualifications included three advanced degrees he bought at <www.affordabledegrees.com>. And he received a five-year sentence for his deception.

<www.comicart.dk/group.asp?group=267&page=&sub=239> is the URL for the web-site of Peter Hartung, a Danish dealer who is selling original artwork from Nis Jessen's spectacular edition of A STUDY IN SCARLET (Jul 05 #6); he also offers copies of the signed and numbered special edition of the book.

Derek Waring died on Feb. 19. He began his acting career on stage and continuing in films and on television; he played Henri Fournay in "The Second Stain" in the Peter Cushing series on BBC-1 (1968), and Dr. Watson in Leslie Bricusse's "Sherlock Holmes: The Musical" in Exeter (1988) and London (1989).

Sorry about that: the CBE mentioned in the report on the Queen's New Years' honours list (Jan 07 #3) is the abbreviation for Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

The Serpentine Muse, published by The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes, now has an annual award: the WHIMSEY [Whimsy Is My Specialty, Enjoy Yourself] award for the most whimsical piece published in the preceding volume. The award was established by Al Gregory in memory of his wife Jan Stauber, and this year's winner was Regina Stinson, who received a Canonical check for \$221.17 during a ceremony at the William Gillette Luncheon in January.

There has been considerable publicity recently about scanning books to make them available on the Internet: Google and Microsoft and other archives are working on such projects, and Sandy Kozinn notes that John Kendrick Bangs' amusing R. HOLMES & CO.: BEING THE REMARKABLE ADVENTURES OF RAFFLES HOLMES, ESQ., DETECTIVE AND AMATEUR CRACKSMAN BY BIRTH can be read page-by-page at <www.archive.org/details/holmesbeing00bangrich>. It's an interesting site: with a little exploration you can find books by Conan Doyle, plays by William Gillette, John Dickson Carr's biography of Conan Doyle.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Mar 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The Practical, But Limited, Geologists will honor the world's first forensic geologist at dinner on Wednesday, Apr. 4, at George's Greek Cafe (318 Pine Street in Long Beach, Calif., during the annual meeting of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists; drinks at 7:00 and dinner at 8:00. Come one, come all, as they say, and watch geologists and Sherlockians try not to confuse each other. Dinner will cost \$27.00 per person, and there will be a cash bar (beer and wine). Please let me know if you're going to attend my e-mail address is <blau7103@comcast.net>.

An on-line poll at <www.worldbookday.com> asking people in the United Kingdom and Ireland to name "the books the nation cannot live without" wound up with Jane Austen's PRIDE AND PREJUDICE in first place. THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES was 89th, behind Mitch Alborn's THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN and ahead of Enid Blyton's THE FARAWAY TREE.

Further to the report on the manuscript of "The Illustrious Client" (Jul 06 #3), formerly owned by Dame Jean Conan Doyle and now by the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh, the winter 2006 issue of Discover NLS has Owen Dudley Edwards' interesting four-page article about the manuscript, and the story (which had an alternative title: "The Adventure of the Blue Saucer"). The postal address is George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EW, Scotland, United Kingdom, and <www.nls.uk/about/discover-nls/issues/discover-nls_03.pdf> is the URL for the issue.

"The Secret of Sherlock Holmes" (the play that Jeremy Paul wrote for Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke) will be performed by Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Mass., Sept. 28 to Oct. 28, with Michael Hammond as Holmes and Dave Demke as Watson; the theater address is 70 Kemble Street, Lenox, MA 01240 (413-637-1199) <www.shakespeare.org>.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GRAND HORIZONTALS, by Frank J. Morlock (Encino: Black Coat Press, 2006; 223 pp. \$20.95), is a collection of seven plays that involve Holmes with French courtesans and Fantomas, Father Brown, Police

Com-missioner Theodore Roosevelt, and Count Dracula (not all in the same play, of course).

Further to the item "Smoking Ban will Leave Theatre world Fuming" (Jan 06 #3) about a ban on smoking by actors working in film, television, and theater in Scotland, the ban was of some interest to the producers of a BBC-4 program that aired on Mar. 1. "Reichenbach Falls" (based on a story by Ian Rankin) starred Alec Newman as Jim Buchan (a younger and more modern version of Rankin's John Rebus) and Richard Wilson as Arthur Conan Doyle; according to a report by Hugo Rifkind in The Times (Feb. 21), Newman's cigarettes were emptied out and filled with jasmine incense; "He never actually takes a drag," said a producer, "He can't."

Noted by Karen Murdock: The Chess Store (20811 NW Cornell Road #200, Hillsboro, OR 97124) (888-810-2437) offers two Sherlockian chess sets: a hand-decorated set with board (\$429.00) <www.thechessstore.com/product/163SSJ> and a different brown-and-ivory antiqued-finish set without board (\$199.95) <www.thechessstore.com/product/SH163SA>.

Mar 07 #2 The publisher of Andrew Lycett's new biography CONAN DOYLE: THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, due from Weidenfeld & Nicolson in August (416 pp., £20.00), has started publicizing the book at their web-site <www.orionbooks.co.uk/Item-details.aspx?id=34072&T=HB>. The American edition is due from Free Press in November, and you can pre-order the book at <www.amazon.co.uk> and <www.amazon.com>. Lycett also has written bio-graphies of Ian Fleming, Rudyard Kipling, and Dylan Thomas.

The new issue of the Sherlockian E-Times is at hand from Joel and Carolyn Senter (Classic Specialties) with news from various societies, and offers of Sherlockian merchandise (including an attractive new necktie); the URL is <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07-3.htm>, and you can request an e-mail subscription at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

David Stuart Davies reports that SHERLOCK is closing. Despite David's fine editing and the magazine's interesting content, the publisher wasn't able to find enough paying readers. But David won't be bored: he is now editing a "Mystery & Supernatural" series for Wordsworth Editions, and nine books are planned for 2008, including a collection of new Sherlock Holmes stories by modern authors.

Steve Hockensmith's amusing Amlingmeyers pastiche "Wolves in Winter" (published in the Feb. 2006 issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine) was tied for sixth place in the magazine's "Readers Award" poll.

Variety has reported (Mar. 15) that Warner Bros. will "reimagine Sherlock Holmes as an action-adventure sleuth" in a film to be based on Lionel Wigram's unpublished Sherlock Holmes comic book; Wigram, formerly a creative executive at Warner, oversaw the first three "Harry Potter" films, and his "vision has Holmes losing some of his Victorian stuffiness and being more adventuresome, including playing up his skills as a bare-knuckle boxer and expert swordsman as he goes about solving crime." Wigram "intends to play up parts of the detective's character that have been largely overlooked" in previous adaptations of Conan Doyle's books for other media.

This likely is the same film reported on by the Daily Express in a story on Mar. 22 that noted "Hollywood insiders" saying that Russell Crowe is "lined up" to play Holmes. The story also says that Clive Owen is a contender for the role. Of course one should be skeptical of such pre-production gossip.

The latest issue of the August Derleth Society Newsletter has an intriguing cover: a black-and-white reproduction of the Dec. 1970 issue of the comic book CONAN THE BARBARIAN. And with good reason: that issue included a letter from Derleth praising the artwork of Roy Thomas, who drew Conan. There also is a review of the latest book from Arkham House: EVERMORE, edited by James Robert Smith and Stephen Mark Rainey (2006; 237 pages, \$34.95), with

15 essay about Edgar Allan Poe, one of them ("An Author and His Character") by Vincent Starrett. Their web-site is at <www.arkhamhouse.com>. The Derleth society also has a web-site at <www.derleth.org>; membership includes the newsletter and costs \$15.00 a year (Box 481, Sauk City, WI 53583. August Derleth is best known to Sherlockians for his stories about Solar Pons; he was also a friend of and literary executor for H. P. Lovecraft, a poet, and a prolific writer in horror and other genres.

Mar 07 #3 Further to the item (Feb 07 #1) about the sale of costumes at Bonhams on Mar. 6, Jeremy Brett's black Victorian-style cape/coat (estimated at £2,000-2,500) sold for £1,900 (plus Bonhams' 20% premium); his gray dressing gown (£1,000-1,200) sold for £1,600; and Christopher Lee's khaki linen shirt (£100-140) sold for £160. The sale highlight was the cloak Alec Guinness wore as Obi Wan Kenobi in "Star Wars" (1977), which sold for £54,000.

Liberation Entertainment plans to release 60-minute animations of the four long stories on DVDs in May (\$9.95 each); these are the animations produced by Burbank Films in Australia and released on videocassette in 1984; Peter O'Toole provided the voice of Sherlock Holmes. You can see samples of the films at <www.libent.com>.

Dr. William R. Hanson offers a Sherlockian FDC for "A Study in Scarlet" with a cachet showing a view of Salt Lake City from Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Apr. 1893), and his painting of the Hope party fleeing Salt Lake City. \$10.00 postpaid (to the U.S. and Canada) or \$11.00 (elsewhere); his address is 78 West Notre Dame Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801.

The 27th annual Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium will be held in Miamisburg, Ohio, on March 7-9, 2008; Cathy Gill (4661 Hamilton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45223) (513-681-5507) <chirpsworth@fuse.net> maintains the mailing list.

Adam Hime's catalogs are always interesting, not only for the descriptions but also for what he has to offer. Catalog 34 is available at his web-site at <www.biblioctopus.com> with (among other treasures) manuscripts of "Lady Frances Carfax" (\$500,000) and "His Last Bow" (\$375,000). They're still on offer in catalog 35, along with a Sidney Paget portrait of Holmes (\$60,000) and a copy of the first book edition of "A Study in Scarlet" (\$265,000).

Reported: Michael Quinion's GALLIMAUFRY: A HODGE-PODGE OF WORDS VANISHING FROM OUR VOCABULARY (Oxford University Press, 2006; £12.99/\$25.00); according to Dot Wordsworth's interesting review in The Spectator (Oct. 7) it has a section on carriages, "and takes as his guide Conan Doyle, since Holmes was forever clattering around in one." Quinion appears to be an author for people interested in language; he also has written BALLYHOO, BUCKAROO, AND SPUDS: INGENIOUS TALES OF WORDS AND THEIR ORIGINS and PORT OUTBOARD, STAR-BOARD HOME: AND OTHER LANGUAGE MYTHS

It has been a while since I have mentioned The Sherlock Holmes Collections web-site at <special.lib.umn.edu/rare/holmes.phtml>; it's a fine example of how useful on-line resources can be. It offers Ron De Waal's bibliography "The Universal Sherlock Holmes", seven supplements prepared by Tim Johnson, information about the collections, finding aids, exhibition catalogs, links to other important Sherlockian and Doylean web-sites and to a brochure for the "Victorian Secrets and Edwardian Enigmas" conference scheduled in Minneapolis on July 6-8, and much more.

Mar 07 #4 When biographical questionnaires were mailed to living members of the Baker Street Irregulars this month, a cover letter from Julie McKuras and Sue Vizoskie was omitted. The questionnaire is available

from them by e-mail and answers can be submitted by e-mail; they also have prepared a questionnaire relating to deceased Irregulars that you can request from Julie or Sue. They hope that friends and family will be able to provide information and memories about those who are "beyond the Reichenbach. If you have obituaries of deceased Irregulars, Julie and Sue would appreciate copies of those as well. Julie McKuras' address is 13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124 <mike9750@aol.com>; Sue Vizoskie's is 90 Ralph Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606 <svizoskie@aol.com>.

"Professor Moriarty's is for sale" (Apr 06 #1), and it now has been sold. Dale Easter opened the restaurant in Saratoga Springs (N.Y.) in 1984, and decided it was time to retire. According to a story in the Saratogian on Mar. 19 (at hand from Ken Lanza), the new owner is Jeff Ames, who plans to change the name of the restaurant to Cantina, and the menu to California-style Mexican cuisine.

"It is a bust to Longfellow, the American," Frank Cross told his wife Maude, "I believe he is more read than any poet in England." Frank and Maude discovered the bust in Westminster Abbey, A DUET: WITH AN OCCASIONAL CHORUS, and were careful to read the inscription: "This bust was placed among the memorials of the poets of England by English admirers of an American poet." A new stamp in our "Literary Arts" series honors Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) and one his more famous poems, "Paul Revere's Ride".

Roger Johnson notes in the March issue of The District Messenger that Redfield Arts is "in pre-production" on a film called "The Crimes of Sherlock Holmes" (it's to be the first of the series); the company's web-site is at <www.redfieldarts.com>, but they offer no information on script-writers or cast or credits or a date for beginning of filming. He also reports that YouTube has five minutes of video of Roger Llewellyn in excerpts from his one-man play "Sherlock Holmes - The Last Act!". The District Messenger is available at <www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/district.php> as well as by mail, and it's full of news from Great Britain and elsewhere in the Sherlockian and Doylean world.

Emory Lee has reported an EasyRead edition of THE VALLEY OF FEAR (244 pp., \$13.99) from <www.readhowyouwant.com>, and from <www.amazon.com>; the company publishes redesigned large-print editions of public-domain books.

Freddie Francis died on Mar. 17. He began his film career as a clapper boy at Elstree Studio, and became a prolific cinematographer and director; he directed "The Deadly Bees" (1967), from Robert Bloch's screenplay based on H. F. Heard's novel A TASTE FOR HONEY (Heard's "Mr. Mycroft" was in Bloch's script but not in the film; according to Bloch, the script was revised by Anthony Marriott, who took vast liberties with Bloch's adaptation, and he had never seen his "deformed offspring"). Francis also directed "The Case of Harry Crocker" and "The Case of the Deadly Prophecy" in the Sheldon Reynolds television series "Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson" (1980).

Mar 07 #5 A new biography of Harry Houdini has received considerable attention in the media after its authors announced that they are planning to exhume Houdini's body in hopes of determining whether the magician had been murdered. THE SECRET LIFE OF HOUDINI: THE MAKING OF AMERICA'S FIRST SUPERHERO, by William Kalush and Larry Sloman (New York: Atria Books, 2006; 592 pp., \$29.95), raises the possibility of murder, and suggests that Conan Doyle may have been involved, and of course that has been mentioned prominently in many of the news stories and reviews, which certainly reminds one of the continuing campaign to exhume B. Fletcher Robinson's body.

The Houdini story ran on the Associated Press and Reuters wires, and it was picked up by newspapers and magazines and television stations all over the world (you only need to run a Google search), and of course there were many

stories that Google didn't report, including an excellent (and amusing) debunking article by David Segal in the Washington Post on Mar. 24 (which may still be available on-line).

One of the experts involved in the exhumation plans is James E. Starrs, who edited the anthology *THE NOISELESS TENOR: THE BICYCLE IN LITERATURE* (Apr 96 #4), which includes "The Priory School", two excerpts from Christopher Morley, and a splendid Foreword by William Saroyan. He's also well known for forensic investigations of questions such as whether Alferd Packer dined on the party he was supposed to be guiding through the mountains (Starrs dug up the victims, and concluded that they had indeed been murdered, and quite likely butchered).

Getting back to the book, which suggests that when Houdini's first visited London and met with William Melville (who then headed Scotland Yard's Special Branch), Melville enlisted Houdini as a spy; Melville went on to head the British intelligence operation that became MI-5. And the book raises the possibility that Houdini's death was not accidental, but rather deliberate murder by a spiritualist organization that sought revenge for his unmasking of fraudulent mediums. The Washington Post article notes that the current publicity given to the plans for an exhumation does seem carefully timed to revive lagging sales of the book.

Bob Byrne, who has an interesting web-site at <www.holmesonscreen.com>, has launched an electronic newsletter: Baker Street Essays discusses the cases and their illustrations, and the first issue (16 pages, with colorful artwork) is available at the web-site.

<www.youtube.com/watch?v=38HgyxMThOw> is the URL for an interesting video compiled by Jeremy Holstein, using photographs and artwork showing William Gillette as visual accompaniment to the audio recording he made in 1936 of scenes from his play. It's the complete recording (rather than the shorter version issued on various records); you can click on "Part 1" and "Part 2" to hear the complete recording. The original recording was made by Harvard professor Frederick Clifton Packard at his home near Boston; Packard read Watson's lines and his wife Alice was Alice Faulkner. Packard went on to found the Harvard Vocarium, which in 2003 was named by the Library of Congress to the National Recording Registry, which is intended to "celebrate the richness and variety of our audio legacy."

Mar 07 #6 Yuichi Hirayama offers *JAPAN AND SHERLOCK HOLMES* (Jan 05) for those who like signatures: the copies are signed by all three editors and seven of the contributors. The book launched the Baker Street Irregulars' International Series, which makes available in English some of the fine Sherlockian scholarship published in other languages. The price is \$49.95 postpaid (checks for US dollars, and currency for pounds and euros, please); 2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181-0012, Japan); the number of signed copies is limited, so you might want to use e-mail to ask him if copies still are available <hirayama@parkcity.ne.jp>.

The Lambda Literary Foundation, which celebrates LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender] literature, reports that Laurie R. King's *THE ART OF DETECTION* is a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award (Lesbian Mystery). The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in New York on Mar. 31.

Tim Kline's *THE GAME OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTOR'S GUIDE* is the result of a decade of collecting, and it covers more than 150 games of all sorts, ranging from the card game issued by Parker Bros. in 1904 to current computer games, with stops along the way for board games, finger-print kits, and chess sets; there are photographs (almost all in color) of all the games, and identifications of the publishers. The 40-page booklet costs \$30.00 postpaid from Tim (1880 Marsh Lane #1608, Dallas, TX 75287). And Tim has started The Game Masters, a society for collectors of Sherlockian games; e-mail at <mrholmesk@peoplepc.com>.

Geocaching is a modern version of the 150-year-old letterboxing, which is a kind of treasure-hunt for those who don't care if the treasure is valuable; geocachers use Global Positioning System (GPS) devices to find the caches. Geocoins were created in 2001; each coin has a unique number, and thus can be tracked from one person to another on the Internet, similar to the dollar bills you may have seen with rubber stamps telling you to go to the web-site <www.wheresgeorge.com>. Tim Kline reports a Sherlockian geocoin offered by Star-Beam Enterprises (\$19.99) at eBay; these are collectibles, of course, and unlikely to turn up in a geocache.

"Who is chicsherlock? She is driven by wanderlust, an adventurous spirit that leads her hunting for the elusive." <www.chicsherlock.com> (spotted by John Baesch) is a web-site offering designer jewelry (and only the name is Sherlockian).

Something recent about an older film: "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970). According to Maurice Zolotow, in BILLY WILDER IN HOLLYWOOD (1977), In 1963, after the success of "Irma La Douce", Wilder proposed a Technicolor musical with starring Peter O'Toole as Holmes and Peter Sellers as Watson, but was unable to proceed with the project. This month entertainment wires reported that O'Toole, now 75 years old, said that "jealousies, uncertainties, and sexual confusion are not merely the domain of the young," adding that "You can't trust anybody. Billy Wilder once asked me to play Sherlock Holmes without reading the script. He told me I just had to trust him. I said, 'Even if you were Shakespeare, I still wouldn't trust you.'"

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Apr 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Ely M. Liebow ("Inspector Gregory") died on Mar. 30. He taught literature at Northeastern Illinois University for more than 40 years, and was famous (or perhaps notorious) for his deadpan humor; his autobiography at his NEIU web-site notes that "I was born at the age of 12 in a body-and-fender shop just this side of the village of Yehupitz. I was handed over (for two sub-machine guns) to Portuguese sailors seeking a new trade route to Chicago." He was a member of The Hounds of the Baskerville [sic] and many other Sherlockian societies in and near Chicago, and he received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1979 and their Two-Shilling Award in 1991. His excellent biography DR. JOE BELL: MODEL FOR SHERLOCK HOLMES (1982) has been reprinted by the University of Wisconsin Press (286 pp., \$26.95), and you can listen to an excellent memorial to Ely on the Internet at Wisconsin Public Radio's <www.wpr.org/webcasting/audioarchives_display.cfm?Code=uo>: a one-hour interview with Ely recorded shortly before his death.

The May issue of Miniature Collector Magazine has a well illustrated article by Mary Lou Santovec about miniatures created by Janice Brooks, including her replica of the sitting-room at 221B Baker Street (30595 Eight Mile, Livonia, MI 48152 \$5.99).

Further to the item (Mar 07 #2) about Hollywood pre-production gossip that Russell Crowe is "lined up" to play Holmes in an action-adventure film from Warner Bros., many web-sites later reported that the producers had instead chosen Nicholas Rowe, who starred in "Young Sherlock Holmes" (1985), as the lead. The story was launched by Scott Monty, and appeared on Apr. 1 in his blog at <www.bakerstreetblog.com>; it was quickly picked up and repeated by people who didn't bother to click on the "Background info" link that brings you to the Museum of Hoaxes list of "The Top 100 April Fool's Day Hoaxes of All Time".

Scott Monty's report about Nicholas Rowe wasn't the only April Fool's Day hoax on the Internet, of course; Dan Baines' announcement that he had found the remains of a mummified fairy while walking his dog in rural Derbyshire received considerable publicity, some of which mentioned Sir Arthur Conan

Doyle and the Cottingley fairies. Baines quickly acknowledged the hoax and put the fairy up for auction on eBay, where it was sold for £280. You can see photographs of the fairy at <www.lebanoncircle.co.uk/DeadFairy.htm>.

Marsha Pollak reports that Google now offers a news archive search that explores historical newspaper and magazine archives (some of the pay-per-view and some of them free) at <www.google.com/archivesearch>. There are about 26,500 hits for "conan doyle" and about 79,000 for "sherlock holmes".

ON THE WRONG TRACK, by Steve Hockensmith (New York: St. Martin's Minotaur, 2007; 292 pp., \$23.95), is the second in his series about Old Red and Big Red Amlingmeyer, Montana cowboys who enjoy the Sherlock Holmes stories as they appear in the 1890s, and attempt to solve mysteries on their own; the novel has lots of action, humor, and red herrings. There's a third novel in the works, and perhaps more short stories (three have appeared in Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine), and there are amusing samples of Hockensmith's work at his web-site at <www.stevéhockensmith.com>.

Apr 07 #2 It has been some time since I asked (Mar 01 #4) about Investitured members of The Baker Street Irregulars who have appeared in films, and there have been quite a few added to the list (which now includes both films and television): Curtis Armstrong, Elmer Davis, Al Gregory, Jerry Margolin, John Pforr, Donald Pollock, H. C. Potter, Mary Ellen Rich, Philip Shreffler, Richard B. Shull, Jean Upton, Bill Ward, and (possibly) Julian Wolff. Julie McKuras has found one more: Evan Wilson, who appeared (as himself) in the British television series "Palestine" (produced by Thames Television and broadcast on ITV in 1978).

The new CD "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (Feb 07 #7) is delightful, offering a reconstruction of the score, including scenes cut from the final version of the film. Ken Lanza notes that you can see video of a rehearsal at <www.tadlowmusic.com>, and you can hear some of the tracks from the CD at <www.screenarchives.com/title_details.cfm?ID=6676>. Ken also found the Miklos Rózsa Society at <www.members.iinet.com.au/agfam/miklos>.

There have been various reports on the Internet about Hercules, the world's biggest dog, according to the Guinness World Records; he's a three-year-old English mastiff who weighs 282 pounds and has a 38-inch neck, and he would certainly make a fine Hound of the Baskervilles.

But of course there's a problem: just because it's on the Internet doesn't mean it's true, and Hercules appears to be a hoax. The Urban Legends web-site at <www.snopes.com/photos/animals/hercules.asp> shows a photograph of Hercules and debunks the story, and the Guinness World Records web-site has no mention of a world's biggest dog.

Apr 07 #3 The Russian statue honoring Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (Nov 06 #7) was to be unveiled on Apr. 27, coinciding with an international festival of crime movies, according to the Russian news agency Novosti; their dispatch noted that the statue "could bring a welcome change to Moscow's sculptural landscape, which is dominated by formal monuments to statesmen, often with a controversial legacy."

Further to the report (Feb 07 #7) on the six-sheet poster for "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (1939) at auction at Heritage Auction Galleries last month): it is the first known copy of the poster, and there were five bidders, and it sold for \$31,070 (including the buyer's premium). You can see an image at <www.ha.com>.

Ken Lanza spotted Indy Magnoli's "Magnoli Collection of Prop Replicas" on the Internet <www.indyprops.com>; two of replicas on display are the passport Sherlock Holmes used in his travels in five of Universal's Rathbone/Bruce films in the 1940s, and the original document recounting the curse of the Baskervilles.

Michael Dibdin died on Mar. 30. His first mystery novel was the pastiche THE LAST SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY (1978), and he went on to win a Gold Dagger Award from the Crime Writers' Association in 1988 for RATKING, the first of his series about Italian detective Aurelio Zen.

Further to the report on the Peepolykus touring production of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (Jan 07 #4), the three-man company has received rave reviews, and they'll open at the Duchess Theatre in London on Apr. 16 for a ten-week run. Their web-site is at <www.peepolykus.com>; you can click on "more show info" to hear a four-minute segment about the show from the BBC Radio 4 program "Today". According to the Daily Telegraph's review, "Only the most po-faced Conan Doyle enthusiast will fail to enjoy this wonderfully barking spoof."

Reported: A READING DIARY: A PASSIONATE READER'S REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF BOOKS, by Alberto Manguel (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2004; 205 pp., \$22.00); with commentary on "The Sign of Four" as one of his books-of-the-month.

The manuscript of "The Adventure of the Three Gables" will be sold at auction at Sotheby's in New York on June 21. Previously owned by the Marquess of Donegall and then by Walter Pond, the 31-page manuscript has more than a hundred revisions by Conan Doyle, and is signed and bound in vellum. Sotheby's estimate is \$350,000-\$500,000. Walter Pond's Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 (a complete copy, with some repairs and restoration) will also be in the sale, estimated at \$75,000-\$125,000.

The spring issue of the Tonga Times (published by the Mini-Tonga Scion Society) has an excellent article about Ted Bergman's miniature of 221B Baker Street (with many photographs of the miniatures that fill five rooms), and other news from the world of Sherlockian miniatures. The newsletter costs \$11.00 for three issues/\$12.00 to Canada/\$14.00 elsewhere) from Jay Pearlman (1656 East 19th Street #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229), and the society has a fine web-site at <www.hometown.aol.com/minitongasociety/mini1.htm>.

Apr 07 #4 Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson investigate the murder of Lord Westerbrook (in Russian) in an amusing 18-minute animation that was written and directed by Alexander Bubnov and released in 2005; it's now available on the Internet at YouTube, but the best place to view it is at

Scott Monty's blog at <www.bakerstreetblog.com>, where you'll find links to the video (subtitled in English), the Russian script, and some preliminary artwork. Scott notes that according to YouTube, the film won the Best Dramaturgy Award and the third-best rating at the Open Russian Festival of Animated Film in 2006; the Mehr News Agency reported (Mar. 2), the awards at the 5th Tehran International Animation Festival included an honorary diploma for the film.

Bob Clark died on Apr. 4. Best known as the director of the adolescent sex comedy "Porky's" (1982) and the holiday-favorite adaptation of Jean Shepherd's "A Christmas Story" (1983), he began his film career as an assistant director on 1967 and went on to produce "Murder by Decree" (1979).

Francine Kitts notes that the "Solomon/Ex-Lambert" Stradivarius violin went to auction at Christie's in New York on Apr. 2; it sold for \$2,732,000 (including the buyer's premium), rather less than the \$3,544,000 someone paid for the "Hammer" Stradivarius last year (May 06 #8). Sherlock Holmes said that he paid 55 shillings for his Stradivarius.

This year's Canonical Convocation and Caper will take place in Door County, Wis., on Sept. 28-30; there's a web-site at <www.cccdoorcounty.com>, or you can request additional information from Jane Richardson, 3427 East Exchange Street, Crete, IL 60417 (708-672-4303).

There's a bit more to the report (Mar 07 #5) that plans are afoot to exhume Harry Houdini's body in hopes of determining whether the magician had been murdered. Houdini's grandnephew George Hardeen was in favor of the exhumation but a few days later the Associated Press reported that Bess Houdini's grandnephews John and Jeffrey Blood have objected, saying that "the family believes this is likely being done to promote sales" of the book by William Kalush and Larry Sloman.

THE EMPRESS OF INDIA, by Michael Kurland (New York: St. Martin's Minotaur, 2006; 310 pp., \$24.95), is the fourth in his series about Professor Moriarty, and it's well done indeed (as are the first three: THE INFERNAL DEVICE, DEATH BY GASLIGHT, and THE GREAT GAME); in this one, Holmes is hired by the Bank of England to protect a shipment of gold en route to Britain from India and almost immediately disappears, leaving the story to Moriarty (who is of course suspected of doing away with Holmes). Moriarty and Moran wind up on the same ship with the gold, and a nice assortment of intriguing supporting characters, and adventures and surprises. Kurland's web-site is at <www.michaelkurland.com>.

<vc.hul.harvard.edu:11080/vc/deliver/home?_collection=scarlet> is the URL for another example of how interesting digital collections can be. "Studies in Scarlet" (reported by Les Moskowitz) offers images of full text of more than 420 trial narratives, with "a number of trials of the wealthy and renowned," as well as a verbatim account of the trial of William Palmer in 1856 (Sherlock Holmes mentions Palmer in "The Speckled Band").

Apr 07 #5 "The courts have decided that almost any act of license--from a scurrilous biography to filmed close-ups of writhing genitalia --is just what the Founding Fathers had in mind to defend when they wrote the First Amendment to the Constitution." That was written forty years ago by Alistair Cooke, in his foreword to SIX MEN (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); it's an excellent book, by a skilled writer, with biographical essays on Charles Chaplin, Edward VIII, H. L. Mencken, Adlai Stevenson, Bertrand Russell, and Humphrey Bogart, all of whom Cooke met during his long career as a journalist. And there's comment on Sherlock Holmes, although not where one might expect it; a few years later Cooke was quoted as saying that "The three most memorable men of the twentieth century so far are Winston Churchill, Adolf Hitler and Sherlock Holmes" (Aug 85 #1), but that's not the point Cooke makes in SIX MEN: the two-page discussion of Holmes is in the chapter on Bogart. "It is no accident that Bogart can now be seen as a direct descendant of Sherlock Holmes as are most fictional detectives

invented since Conan Doyle, in a moment of unconscious social perception, cast the original mold."

I mentioned (Feb 99 #5) but never got round to reviewing VISITORS FROM OZ: THE WILD ADVENTURES OF DOROTHY, THE SCARECROW, AND THE TIN WOODMAN, by Martin Gardner (St. Martin's Press, 1998/St. Martin's Griffin, 2000); the intrepid trio journey through Oz (where they are assisted by Sheerluck Brown, a private-detective bear who wears a deerstalker) and an alternate-universe wonderland to New York. Gardner does a fine job of capturing the style and humor of L. Frank Baum. Both editions are out of print, but readily available from Internet booksellers; don't confuse this book with THE VISITORS FROM OZ, by L. Frank Baum (Hungry Tiger Press, 2005), which is a reprint of Baum's "Queer Visitors from the Marvelous Land of Oz" with additional material that includes new illustrations by Eric Shanower.

Further to the report on Mary Russell's MySpace profile (Jan 07 #5), Laurie R. King notes on her blog <www.laurierking.blogspot.com> that Mary now has her own blog <blog.myspace.com/maryrussell>, on which she has some acerbic comments about her literary agent.

Iwao Takamoto died on Jan. 10. Takamoto learned to draw in an internment camp, and after world war II went on to a long career in animation with Walt Disney and with Hanna-Barbera, where he created Scooby-Doo in 1969.

Scooby-Doo has been seen in Sherlockian costume, on television in "The Hound of the Scoobyvilles" (1983) and on boxes of Nestle Scooby Doo Mystery Pops (in grocery stores now).

The author's given name and the title of Kinky Friedman's SPANKING WATSON (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999; 218 pp., \$23.00) might lead one to suspect that something truly interesting is going on, but that's not the case: the Kingster merely sets his Village Irregulars competing against each other to determine who's really Watson to his Sherlock Holmes. Of course it's Ratso who has been Friedman's Watson throughout the mystery series, and we have heard of Ratso before: his real name is Larry Sloman, who is a friend of Friedman and co-author with William Kalush of THE SECRET LIFE OF HOUDINI (Mar 07 #5 and Apr 07 #4).

Apr 07 #6 Laurie R. King's speech on "Meeting Mister Holmes" (presented during the January birthday festivities) has been published in the spring issue of The Baker Street Journal, which also has Sonia Fetherston's entertaining examination of high fashion in the Canon. The BSJ is published quarterly and costs \$26.50 a year (or \$29.00 foreign), and checks (credit-card payments accepted from foreign subscribers) should be sent to the BSJ (Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331). There's an option offering subscriptions to the BSJ and to the Christmas Annual for \$36.50 (\$40.00 foreign); the BSJ's web-site <www.bakerstreetjournal.com> also accepts subscriptions, and offers additional material, including papers written by past winners of the Morley-Montgomery Awards, articles from recent issues, and information about Baker Street Irregulars publications.

Sorry about that: Charles Prepolec has reported that the Dec. 1970 issue of the comic book CONAN THE BARBARIAN (Mar 07 #2) was written by Roy Thomas, and that the artist likely was Barry Windsor Smith.

Johnny Hart died on Apr. 7. He created the comic strip "B.C." in 1958, and achieved syndication in more than 1,300 papers. He also was co-creator of the comic strip "The Wizard of Id" with Brant Parker, and recognized by the National Cartoonist Society five times, including the Reuben Award as cartoonist of the year in 1968. This "B.C." strip appeared on June 22, 1982.

Brant Parker died on Apr. 15. He created the widely-syndicated comic strip "The wizard of Id" with Johnny Hart in 1964, and collaborated with others on the strips "Crock" and "Goosemeyer". He won seven awards from the National Cartoonists Society, including their Reuben Award in 1984 and their Elzie Segar Award in 1986. This "Crock" strip ran on Feb. 6, 1981.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

May 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

William Safire's column "On Language" in the N.Y. Times Magazine is entertaining and instructive, and occasionally Sherlockian or Doylean. On Apr. 22 he discussed the word "varmint" and cited various usages, including its appearance "in a 1907 A. Conan Doyle story as an adjective: 'thin, ascetic, varminty'." So: whom did he describe as varminty?

Further to the report (Jan 07 #3) about the copy of Conan Doyle's THE GREEN FLAG AND OTHER STORIES OF WAR AND SPORT brought to the Antarctic by Capt. Robert Falcon Scott (and it's still there, preserved in the small hut from which he launched his ill-fated attempt to reach the South Pole), the July issue of British Heritage has photographs of the hut, including one showing a visit by Princess Anne in 2003, when she launched a £10 million preservation appeal.

It has been quite a while since I mentioned London walks (Jul 83 #1); they are still in business, now with the name the Original London walks, and a web-site at <www.walks.com>; they offer some interesting Sherlockian walks, and Ripper expert Donald Rumbelow leading a walk through "Jack the Ripper's Haunts".

"The Fat Hound of the Baskervilles" was the headline on a story in the [London] Daily Mail (Apr. 10, 2006). "As spaniels go," the paper reported, "he is hardly a springer. In fact, weighing nearly seven stones [that's 98 pounds], Ashley is at best a sloucher. Given his girth, walkies can be only a short waddle for the dog whose life was in danger after he was fed huge amounts of sausages, bacon, and roast dinners." Eight-year-old Ashley has been rescued by Brenda Baskerville, who runs a dog-grooming shop in Cheshire and has limited Ashley to a strict diet: low-fat dog food and no treats between meals.

There were many Sherlockian nominees for Edgars from the Mystery Writers of

America (Jan 07 #5); the awards were announced at the MWA annual dinner on Apr. 26. E. J. Wagner's THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM BASKERVILLE HALL TO THE VALLEY OF FEAR won for best critical/biographical, and Steven Dietz's "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" won for best play. The nominees and winners are listed at the MWA web-site <www.mysterywriters.org>.

Cicada is an interesting magazine for ages 14 and up; the November-December 2006 issue has "The Blue Carbuncle" with attractive black-and-white illustrations by David Wyatt. \$9.95 postpaid; Box 9304, La Salle, IN 61301.

"Can Sherlock Holmes Restore the Reputation of Our Bungling Spies?" was the headline on a story in the Evening Standard (Apr. 14), spotted by Jon Lellenberg. Officers from MI5 and MI6 and civil servants dealing with intelligence material are being sent to a course at King's College in London, and the reading list includes "A Scandal in Bohemia" (in which Holmes warns not to "twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.")

May 07 #2 Steve Rothman has curated an exhibition on "Thinking about Haverford & Christopher Morley" at the Magill Library at Haverford College in Pennsylvania; Morley grew up on Haverford's campus, and the exhibition, which runs through Sept. 30, commemorates of 50th anniversary of the death of the "local boy made good." Christopher Morley was the founder of The Baker Street Irregulars, and THE STANDARD DOYLE COMPANY: CHRISTOPHER MORLEY ON SHERLOCK HOLMES (1990), edited and with an Introduction by Steve, is still in print from Fordham University Press (\$30.00).

Who was "thin, ascetic, varminty"? The "unspeakable Louis" (better known as Louis XI, fervent adversary of Charles the Bold), in the discussion of Sir Walter Scott's QUENTIN DURWARD in Conan Doyle's THROUGH THE MAGIC DOOR (and yes, it's a book rather than a story).

Stylometry (the study of linguistic style) has been used for centuries to determine who wrote what, and A. Q. Morton may have been the first person to apply stylometry to Sherlock Holmes stories, in 1978 (he compared a pastiche written by Nicholas Utechin and Austin Mitchelson with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories). Of course it's all much easier in the computer age: Peter Smith presented a paper on "Stylometric Analysis Using Discriminant Analysis: A Study of Sherlock Holmes Stories" at a conference in Tuebingen in 2002. Smith investigated whether there is any evidence to support the thesis that Conan Doyle may not have written all of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and concluded "there is absolutely no support for this." The URL for his paper is <www.uni-tuebingen.de/cgi-bin/abs/abs?propid=27>.

Sylvia Agnew opened her "Legend of the Hound Project" two years ago (Aug 05 #3), and she now offers a "Baskerville Dining Experience" at Lafter Hall, near Princetown on Dartmoor. According to a story in the Plymouth Western Morning News (May 5), the evening includes an atmospheric carriage ride, a five-course dinner with Sherlock Holmes, and mystery. More information is available at her web-site <www.baskervillecarriages.co.uk/index.php?tab=6>, with links to YouTube video.

Further to the item on the National Library of Scotland's plans to acquire the John Murray archives (Feb 05 #5), the Library won a £17.7 million grant from the national lottery, and received more from the Scottish Executive, but still needs to raise £6.5 million to complete the purchase. Actor Sean Connery and author Ian Rankin have now joined the campaign, and Connery has described the archives as being of "world class importance". The archives include the company's correspondence with its authors, one of whom was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Gyles Brandreth has written a novel OSCAR WILDE AND THE CANDLELIGHT MURDERS (London: John Murray, 2007; 352 pp., £12.99), and in an article in the Daily Telegraph (May 6) mentioned the meeting between Wilde and Conan Doyle at the Langham Hotel in 1889, and made an intriguing point: when Brandreth was in his early teens he knew John Badley, who had been a friend of Wilde; ac-

ording to Brandreth, "Badley told me that he and Wilde had both been members of an occasional dining society, the Socrates Club. When Conan Doyle, four years after his first meeting with Wilde, introduced his readers to Holmes' elder brother (in *The Greek Interpreter*), he set him in an armchair in a gentlemen's club named after another Greek philosopher, Diogenes."

May 07 #3 The new issue of the Sherlockian E-Times is at hand from Joel and Carolyn Senter (Classic Specialties) with a history of The Hansom wheels and photographs from a recent meeting, and from "A Gathering of Southern Sherlockians", and as always offers of interesting Sherlockian merchandise; the URL is <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07-5.htm>, and you can request an e-mail subscription at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

Bouchercon is a long-established world mystery convention, run by fans for fans, and named in honor of Anthony Boucher; Bouchercon 38 will be in Anchorage on Sept. 27-30, 2007 <www.bouchercon2007.com>, Bouchercon 39 is in Baltimore on Oct. 9-11, 2008 <www.bouchercon2008.blogspot.com>, and Bouchercon 40 will be in Indianapolis on (tentatively) Sept. 10-13, 2009.

Those who fondly remember "Kukla, Fran and Ollie" will surely want to visit The Unofficial Kuklapolitan Web Page at <www.kukla.tv>. Bill Vande Water reports that the URL <www.kukla.tv/magic.html> takes you to the "Magic Gift of Life" in which Helen Bolstad reports that Burr Tillstrom qualified for membership in the Mystery Writers of America thanks to Ollie's fondness for playing "detec-a-tive", and once went to a party honoring Anthony Boucher, where "shortly the two retired to a quiet corner, first, to swap Sherlock Holmes opinions, and second, to discuss learnedly plans for a space ship."

Reported: David Timson's excellent readings of the Canon for Naxos Audio-books have extended to THE VALLEY OF FEAR on five CDs (L19.99/\$34.98); the Naxos web-site <www.naxosaudiobooks.com> offers an opportunity to listen to a sample of the recording, and an MP3 download (L11.91).

If you're planning to attend the "Victorian Secrets and Edwardian Enigmas" conference in Minneapolis (and there's still time to register), the University of Minnesota Showboat Players are presenting Charles Marowitz's play "Sherlock's Last Case" this summer, and Friday, July 6, will be the night to see it; their web-site <www.showboat.umn.edu/sherlock.html> has more information (and they offer dinner), and you can buy tickets at the web-site or by calling the box office (651-227-1100). The conference web-site URL is <www.tc.umn.edu/~bergq003/norwegianexplorers/2007_conference.html>.

The new catalog from the BBC America Shop (Box 681, Holmes, PA 19043) (800-898-4921) <www.bbcamericashop.com> has more new Sherlockian items: a second Sherlock Holmes Marble Coaster Set (\$49.98) with four more Paget illustrations on coasters cut from Botticino marble imported from Verona, and a set of Victorian Binoculars (\$99.98) with a tripod connection and a tripod (the catalog notes that Holmes used Watson's "very excellent field-glass" during the events recorded in "Silver Blaze").

Further to the item (Oct 06 #1) about Jack L. Herman's play "The Unexpected Return of Sherlock Holmes" having been plagiarized from David Belke's "The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes" (1992), David Staples' interesting and amusing article in the Edmonton Journal (May 6) reveals that Herman Belke \$2500 in an out-of-court settlement. And what does Herman do when he isn't plagiarizing? He's a police officer in Portage County, Ohio, and was (until he was placed on paid administrative leave pending an investigation of his theft of intellectual property) the detective in charge of the sheriff's concealed-weapons permits.

May 07 #4 The March issue of the quarterly newsletter of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has Bob Katz's "100 Years Ago" tribute to THE CROXLEY MASTER (accompanied by a nice story about his Bar Mitzvah), Tim Johnson's report on a library benefit in Savannah that included a visit by Sherlock Holmes, and news from

and about the collections; a copy of the newsletter is available from Richard J. Sveum, (111 Elmer L. Andersen Library, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455) <sveum001@tc.umn.edu>.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: TA'ALUMAT HABALASH BEN HA'ALMAVET, by Michael Handalzalts (Tel Aviv: Mapa Books, 2007; 170 pp., NIS 64) is an attempt (according to a review by Dror Mishani in Haaretz) to solve "one of the greatest mysteries in the history of detective fiction and European literature over the last two hundred years: the secret of the success of Arthur Conan Doyle's London sleuth." The book is in Hebrew, and the title translates into English as SHERLOCK HOLMES: HOW REAL CAN A LEGEND BE.

Jerry Margolin notes that Debby Applegate has won a Pulitzer Prize for biography for her THE MOST FAMOUS MAN IN AMERICA: THE BIOGRAPHY OF HENRY WARD BEECHER (Jul 06 #1); Beecher's unframed portrait stood upon the top of Watson's books. Applegate spoke on "Henry Ward Beecher and Victorian America" at Amherst College last year, and you can listen to her one-hour lecture at <www.amherst.edu/~pubaff/events_multimedia/events/2006-09-25/applegate/>.

"As far as I know," Watson wrote (in "The Final Problem"), "there have been only three accounts in the public press: that in the Journal de Geneve on May 6th, 1891, the Reuter's dispatch in the English papers on May 7th, and finally the recent letters to which I have alluded." The 156-year-old news service agreed this month to be acquired by Thomson Corp. for \$17.24 billion. The new company will be called Thomson-Reuters Corp., and it will be the world's largest provider of financial market data and trading systems to investing professionals.

Members of The Sherlock Holmes Society of London celebrated Conan Doyle's birthday on May 22 with members of the cast of the Peepolykus production of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" at the Duchess Theatre (Apr 07 #3); there's a picture at <www.whatsonstage.com/index.php?pg=20/&story=E8821179993698>. And there's still time to see the play, which closes on June 23.

Lisa Polisar's THE GHOST OF MARY PRAIRIE (Albuquerque: Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2006; 273 pp., \$18.95) is a ghost story and a mystery, set in rural southern Oklahoma in 1961 and well written and nicely told. The protagonist is 15-year-old Jacob Leeds, who enjoys the Sherlock Holmes stories, and quotes from them from time to time.

LOCKED UP, an anthology edited by Sue Pike (Ottawa: Deadlock Press, 2007; 278 pp., CA\$15.95), offers "tales and mystery and mischance" along the Rideau Canal Waterway, which runs from Kingston to Ottawa and is celebrating its 175 anniversary this year; the stories are interesting, and especially Peter Calamai's "The Riddle of the Rideau Rifles" (set in 1894 and featuring a familiar investigator named Sigerson). Amazon may not have the book yet, but it's available from Sleuth of Baker Street, 1600 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M4G 3B7, Canada <www.sleuthofbakerstreet.com>.

May 07 #5 The Isle of Man works hard to attract tourists and film companies to the island; the web-site at <www.isleofmanfilm.com> has links that include a "film & television catalogue" with a listing for the Roxburgh/Hart "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (2002), filmed in Glen Maye, Jurby and Druidale. An article in the Daily Telegraph (May 12) lists locations elsewhere for films and television series featuring Inspector Morse, Miss Marple, Poirot, Foyle, and Kingdom.

The Friends of Gillette Castle State Park (67 River Road, East Haddam, CT 06423 <www.friendsofgillettecastle.org> publish the Gillette Gazette; the April issue has a two-page article "Tyke and Teddie Star as Will and Helen" (that's Tyke and Teddie Niver) and a report on plans to restore Gillette's electric locomotive. Membership costs \$20.00 a year.

Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley have edited ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, due from HarperCollins in Britain in Sep-

tember (L25.00) and from Penguin in the U.S. in November (\$37.95), and it's a book that Doyleans and Sherlockians will welcome: it's an annotated and illustrated collection of letters that Conan Doyle wrote to his mother and other members of his family, starting in 1867, when he left home to attend boarding school. The letters were among the family papers that were locked away for decades because of family disagreements; Dame Jean Conan Doyle received the letters shortly before her death and then bequeathed them to the British Library. Jon notes that the book reads like a far more candid autobiography than his MEMORIES AND ADVENTURES ("which was long on the adventures, but rather guarded where memories were concerned"), and he offers a teaser for Sherlockians: "what happened in October 1890 to make Conan Doyle resurrect Sherlock Holmes in short stories." Jon also notes that everyone should have both editions of the book, because there will be differences.

Randall Stock has an excellent web-page, with much more information about ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, at "The Best of Sherlock Holmes" at <members.aol.com/shbest/ref/conan-doyle-life-letters.htm#/letters>.

The second edition of Ely M. Liebow's splendid biography DR. JOE BELL: MODEL FOR SHERLOCK HOLMES (Apr 07 #1) has a British distributor, Roger Johnson has noted: the Popular Press, 3 Henrietta Street, London WC2E 8LU, England (L16.50), and of course it's also available at <www.amazon.co.uk>.

Lee Shackelford's play "Holmes & Watson" was performed last year in Maryland (Oct 06 #4), offering an interesting look at the relationship between Holmes and Watson after Holmes' return to London from the Great Hiatus, and some surprises; the latest version of the script is now available (Charleston: BookSurge, 2007; 131 pp., \$14.95), with helpful production notes.

Hans-Uno Bengtsson died on May 18. He was Assistant Professor of Theoretical Physics at Lund University in Sweden, a former Assistant Associate Professor at UCLA (where he won the "outstanding teacher" award three years in a row), and an enthusiastic Sherlockian: his articles appeared in The Baker Street Journal in the 1980s and 1990s, and his analysis of "The Depth which the Parsley Had Sunk into the Butter" (which was translated into English in the recent SCANDINAVIA AND SHERLOCK HOLMES) is a fine example of his application of physics to Canonical problems.

May 07 #6 One can find Sherlock everywhere, as Mycroft almost said, and while it might be difficult, there tend to be connections from just about anything to Holmes or Conan Doyle. As at Hearst Castle, at San Simeon in southern California, where one can visit the library of William Randolph Hearst, who collected books and manuscripts as well as furniture and tapestries and paintings. His manuscripts were sold in the 1940s, when the Hearst Corp. was in financial difficulties, and his holdings appear to have included "The Abbey Grange", Charles Augustus Milverton", "The Missing Three-Quarter", and "The Valley of Fear", plus "How the Brigadier Took the Field Against the Marshal Millefleurs", "The Last Galley", "The Marriage of the Brigadier", "Michal Clark", "The Leather Funnel", "The Refugees", "Rodney Stone", and "The Striped Chest". One of the best, and by far the most amusing, books about Hearst is Marion Davies' THE TIMES WE HAD: LIFE WITH WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST; she began recording notes for her memoirs in 1951, a few months before Hearst died, and the book was published in 1975 and is still in print in a paperback reprint. Basil Rathbone's in the book, but not as Holmes (he and Ouida came to one of Hearst's costume parties, with Rathbone dressed as the French ambassador). Marion Davies had a delightful sense of humor, about herself and others, and it shows in the book.

Martin Pope's play "Sherlock Holmes and the Dangerous Game" (an adaption of "The Illustrious Client") was performed in Long Beach (Nov 03 #4), and revived at the Maplewood Barn in Columbia, Mo., last year; according to a report at PLAYBACK:stl (May 29), Pope has plans to write a five-play cycle of Holmes plays, "culminating in a showdown between Holmes and Jack the Ripper," and is working on forming a theater company in Los Angeles, which he hopes will be the home for the series.

"My Dear Watson" was a three-act play written by Edward Chodorov in 1941; producer Oscar Serlin is reported to have offered the role of Watson to Nigel Bruce; Otto L. Preminger then acquired the play, offering the role of Holmes to Basil Rathbone and Brian Aherne; in March 1942, Philip Merivale was under consideration at Holmes, and Melville Cooper at Watson, but as Rathbone later wrote to Vincent Starrett, Adrian Conan Doyle was disgusted with the play and "has absolutely forbidden its production." Susan Dahlinger reports that the William Reese Company (409 Temple Street, New Haven, CT 06511) <www.biblio.com/books/70936591.html> is offering a mimeographed typescript of the play for \$500.

And a reminder: the Sub-Librarians Scion of the Baker Street Irregulars in the American Library Association will dine with the Red Circle of Washington on Monday, June 25, at the National Press Club in Washington; drinks at 6:30 and dinner at 7:30, and everyone is welcome. Dinner will cost \$41.00 including tax and tip, and there will be a cash bar and a choice of entrees (salmon, beef, or vegetarian plate). Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson will be dining with us, and there will be toasts and informal presentations by some of the visitors and locals. The deadline for reservations is Monday, June 18th (by phone) or Thursday, June 21st (by e-mail); payment in advance is neither requested nor required, but please specify your choice of entree when making your reservations.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Jun 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The British publisher of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley) reports that there will be readings from the book broadcast by BBC Radio 4 as its "book of the week" in five 15-minute episodes the week of Sept. 24-28; the program airs on the Internet at <www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/arts/book_week.shtml>, and you can "listen live" or "listen again" for six days afterward.

On Aug. 4, 2004, not long after it was revealed that the Richard Lancelyn Green collection, the Portsmouth News reported that pressure was mounting on the city council to have a building worthy of the collection, and "city museum boss" Sarah Quail said that "I'm absolutely certain that a collection like this could act as a catalyst for funding." Now (May 30) the paper has reported that "culture chiefs in Portsmouth are under fire for allowing the world's largest private collection of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia to collect dust." Simon Boshier, Tory spokesman for economic regeneration, said "we're sitting on a cash cow. It's like a goldmine but we've done nothing but stick it away in a dusty attic." And reporter Emily Pykett wrote "It is feared Portsmouth has broken the terms of the will which stipulated the collection should be catalogued in two years," adding that "This leaves the city open to a potential legal challenge from museums in Oxford and Edinburgh, which stood to get the collection if Portsmouth turned it down." Pykett also reported that the council wants a new super-museum to house the collection, "which could attract up to 250,000 new visitors a year."

Let's see: if the new super-museum were open six days a week for 52 weeks, that's 312 days. That's just over 801 visitors a day (the calculation is a simple one), which is far more than visit to collections in Minneapolis and Toronto. The BBC did a bit more research, and reported the next day that Neil McCaw, academic director of the collection, said that there were more than 40,000 items in the collection, all of them uncatalogued when it came to Portsmouth; the vast majority have been catalogued since then, and work continues. Scirard Lancelyn Green, Richard's brother and the executor of his will, said that Richard's family was "delighted" with the way the city council had dealt with the connection.

The Baker Street Irregulars' running of The Silver Blaze has been held at

Jamaica, Aqueduct, Belmont, and New York (Wayne B. Swift wrote an excellent history of the races in The Baker Street Journal's Christmas Annual 2000); Jamaica was closed and torn down by the end of the 1950s, and now N.Y. governor Eliot Spitzer has proposed that Aqueduct be closed and the land sold to developers. According to a report in the N.Y. Times (May 20), Belmont would be converted and run nearly year-round, and racing would continue at Saratoga, which now has a six-week summer season and was the venue for The Silver Blaze in 2006.

The first issue of Excursionz Magazine has a well illustrated cover story on Gillette Castle (and one of the visitors shown in the cover photograph is a motorcyclist, which would please William Gillette), and much more information about tourist attractions in the area. \$3.00 postpaid from Excursionz Magazine, c/o Larry Kalbfeld, 1300 Boston Post Road, Guilford, CT 06437 <www.excursionzmagazine.com>.

Jun 07 #2 James E. Starrs edited THE NOISELESS TENOR: THE BICYCLE IN LITERATURE (1982) (an anthology that included "The Priory School" and two excerpts from Christopher Morley), but he's much better known for the work that resulted in A VOICE FOR THE DEAD: A FORENSIC INVESTIGATOR'S PURSUIT OF THE TRUTH IN THE GRAVE (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005; 284 pp., \$24.95) (New York: Berkeley, 2006; 304 pp., \$14.00). The book covers his exhumations and research into the cases of Alferd Packer, Jesse James, and others, and of course he mentions Sherlock Holmes. Of special interest (in view of current proposals to exhume B. Fletcher Robinson) are the "desiderata for an exhumation" that Starrs discusses in his Introduction (and you can read what he has to say at <www.amazon.com> by using their "search inside" feature and searching for "desiderata").

"On the edge of a jutting pinnacle, three or four hundred feet above him, there stood a creature somewhat resembling a sheep in appearance, but armed with a pair of gigantic horns." ("A Study in Scarlet"). Our postage rates have gone up, and so have ink-on-paper rates for this newsletter); the new 17c stamp for additional first-class ounces shows a bighorn sheep. The bighorn is popular with the U.S. Postal Service, having been shown on six stamps since 1972, and it was included on an endangered species set issued by the United Nations in 2002.

There's no mention of a murderous attack on Sherlock Holmes in a recent article about the Cafe Royal in the Sunday Express (Apr. 8), kindly forwarded by John Baesch, but there's some interesting news: the Crown Estate (that's Her Majesty's property company) plans to sell the lease on the eight-story, 21-suite restaurant as part of a plan to revitalize the area around Regent Street and Piccadilly Circus. The asking price for the lease will be £80 million, according to the paper, and the "smart money" is on the restaurant being turned into a luxury hotel.

As promised earlier (Sep 06 #5), Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle are indeed mentioned in Daniel Stashower's THE BEAUTIFUL CIGAR GIRL: MARY ROGERS, EDGAR ALLAN POE, AND THE INVENTION OF MURDER (New York: Dutton, 2006; 336 pp., \$25.95); it's a well written account of Poe's life and the events that led to "The Mystery of Marie Roget"; you can read the prologue and see some illustrations at his web-site at <www.stashower.com>.

The first issue of QuinCahier (May 2007) has arrived from the Societe Sherlock Holmes de France, 24 pages all in color (and all in French), with news and scholarship and excellent artwork by Jean-Pierre Cagnat; 8 euros postpaid to France, 10 euros to Europe, and 12 euros elsewhere (36 avenue Jean-Jaures, 63500 Issoire, France). You can see what it looks like at the society's web-site <www.sshf.com>, and order there with PayPal.

Barrie Roberts died on June 10. He was a criminal lawyer, an accomplished musician specializing in folk music, and a mystery writer, with many novels and short stories to his credit. SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE AMERICAN ANGELS

(Sutton: Severn House, 2007; 185 pp., £18.99) (and New York: Severn House, \$28.95), is the 9th in his series of novel-length pastiches; it begins in London and moves to Scotland, with Holmes and Watson investigating a possible Jacobite conspiracy and searching for golden lost treasure.

Jun 07 #3 I'm not sure how common it is for the names of members of The Baker Street Irregulars to be used for characters in works of fiction, but Bud Livingston reports Otto Penzler as a Waffen SS tank commander for Rommel in Africa in Elmore Leonard's UP IN HONEY'S ROOM (2007). Les Klinger is one of two members of the BSI who can be found as characters in Laurie R. King's THE ART OF DETECTION (2006), and Mike Whelan appears in Jerry Neal Williamson's THE TULPA (1981).

Gayle Harris has forwarded news of a new on-line archive: the University of London Research Library Services <archives.ulrls.lon.ac.uk>. A search for "conan doyle" [without quotes] turns up 67 records, all apparently from the papers of psychic researcher Harry Price.

Sherlock Holmes is alive and well, and speaking Hindi, on Pogo, the number two kids' television channel in India. Pogo is broadcasting Granada's "The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes" in English and Hindi, with Tom Alter and Anjan Srivastav dubbing the voices of Holmes and Watson.

The second issue of Bob Byrne's "Baker Street Essays" is available at his web-site <www.holmesonscreen.com>, with 16 pages of discussion of eight of the Canonical cases. And the third issue of The Solar Pons Gazette (June 2007) is available at Bob's <www.solarpons.com>; the on-line newsletter has 30 pages, with an excellent article by Roger Johnson (president of The Solar Pons Society of London), reprints from the Pontine writings of Edgar W. Smith, A. E. van Vogt, and Cecil Ryder, and much more. Earlier issues of the newsletter also are available at the web-site.

Richard Roberts has an amusing teaser for his book RAGS TO RICHES: THE CASE OF THE HIRE SHOP FIEND (Dec 06 #3) at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRUJObnIsiY> (the teaser shows the book's Sherlockian artwork).

"Our coveted Sherlock Holmes Award," Jon Henley reported in the Guardian on Mar. 27, "goes to the Greater Manchester police, who, having been told by several witnesses that suspected thief Aaron Williams repeatedly screamed 'Don't let them take me,' as three men with knives dragged him from a security van outside Salford magistrates court, explained that they had 'not ruled out the possibility that Mr. Williams was taken against his will.'"

Will Thomas' THE HELLFIRE CONSPIRACY (New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 2007; 316 pp., \$24.00 cloth/\$14.00 paper/\$9.99 eBook) is the fourth in his Victorian mystery series featuring Cyrus Barker (an homage to Holmes' rival in "The Retired Colourman") and his assistant Thomas Llewellyn. As with the preceding novels, it's well written, with interesting characters and an imaginative plot, and appropriate late-Victorian atmosphere.

Charles Press' PARODIES AND PASTICHES BUZZING 'ROUND SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (Battered Silicon Dispatch Box Press, 2006; 173 pp., US\$21.00 postpaid) is an entertaining examination of the imitations published while Conan Doyle was alive, with excerpts and a bibliography and history. And with humor: I'm sure this is the first Sherlockian book in which the first chapter begins with a quote (and an appropriate quote) from Jimmy Durante; signed (or inscribed) copies are available (\$15.00 postpaid) from the author at 6291 Whiskey Creek, New Era, MI 49445.

Jun 07 #4 The murder of Alexander Litvinenko in Britain, perhaps by Andrei Lugovoi, has brought a reminder of "The Valley of Fear": the Regnum News Service reported from Russia (June 6) that Lugovoi claimed that Litvinenko, in an attempt to recruit him to work for British intelligence, gave him Yevgeny Grishkovets' novel RUBASHKA to use as a "means for secure connection." The proposal was to use the novel for a book code, and

a Russian specialist in cryptography noted that the book code still is popular among criminals and celebrities; as for British intelligence using a book code, he explained, it reminded him of "the times of Sherlock Holmes." "It is rather strange," the expert added, that "Lugo-voi did not mention a book by Conan Doyle." The Regnum headline read: "Litvinenko Brought British Special Services into the Time of Sherlock Holmes."

Israel Shenker died on June 9. He was a correspondent for Time, and then a reporter for the N.Y. Times, and, according to Margalit Fox in her obituary for Shenker, he was "a scholar trapped in a newsman's body" who was known to readers of the papers "or his vast erudition and sly, subversive wit." In 1974 when the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of William Gillette's play arrived in New York, Shenker's article "Sherlock Holmes Craze Is Far from Elementary" offered readers a warm and enthusiastic view of the Sherlockian world.

The Wessex Press sponsored its first "From Gillette to Brett" conference in 2003, devoted to Sherlock Holmes on stage, screen, radio, and television, and Steve Doyle reports that "From Gillette to Brett II" will be held Nov. 16-18 at the Indianapolis Hilton North Hotel in Indianapolis. The lists of speakers includes special-guest Jeremy Paul, who wrote many of the Granada series scripts, and the play "The Secret of Sherlock Holmes". The deadline for reservations is Oct. 5, and detailed information is available from the Wessex Press (Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268) <www.wessexpress.com>. A video advertisement can be seen at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLP20J5hge0>.

Belgium has a portrait of Lord Robert Baden-Powell on a postage stamp honoring the centenary of the founding of Scouting. Baden-Powell is mentioned in Conan Doyle's history THE GREAT BOER WAR, and Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes are mentioned in Baden-Powell's SCOUTING FOR BOYS.

Basil Rathbone was an officer in the 10th (Scottish) Battalion of the King's (Liverpool) Regiment during World War I, and was awarded the Military Cross for "daring and resource" on patrol; according to an article in the Liverpool Daily Post (June 11), the citation read: "Lieutenant Rathbone volunteered to go out on daylight patrol, and on each occasion, brought back invaluable information regarding enemy's posts, and the exact position and condition of the wire. On 26 July, when on the enemy's side of the wire, he came face to face with a German. He shot the German, but this alarmed two neighbouring posts, and they at once opened a heavy fire with two machine guns. Despite the enemy fire, Lieutenant Rathbone got his three men and himself through the enemy wire and back to our lines. The result of his patrolling was to pin down exactly where the enemy posts were, and how they were held, while inflicting casualties on the enemy at no loss to his own men. Lieutenant Rathbone has always shown a great keenness in patrol work both by day and by night."

Jun 07 #5 Ken Lanza spotted the report in Variety (June 12): "Gold Circle Films has picked up feature rights to Thomas Wheeler's fantasy-adventure 'The Arcanum' out of turnaround from Miramax." Miramax optioned the story in 1999 along with the publishing rights, and the novel was published in 2004 (Aug 04 #2). The novel "is set in 1919 and follows the titular secret society comprising the era's leading occult investigators--Arthur Conan Doyle, Harry Houdini, H. P. Lovecraft, and Marie Laveau--as they battle demons descending on New York City." Gold Circle's president Paul Brooks said that "We see this as a potential franchise property."

"What do Van Gogh, Iron Chef Morimoto, Sherlock Holmes, and Tai Shan have in common?"

Malice Domestic XX will be held at the Crystal City Marriott in Arlington, Va., on Apr. 25-27, 2008, featuring Lindsey Davis as international guest of honor, Charlaine Harris as guest of honor, a lifetime achievement award for Peter Lovesey, and Daniel Stashower as the toastmaster; the ghosts of honor

will be all those so honored in past years (Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was the ghost of honor in 2000). More information is available from the convention (Box 8007, Gaithersburg, MD 20898) <www.malicedomestic.org>.

Laurie R. King has launched the Laurie R. King Virtual Book Club ("a book club where readers don't have to bring cookies, hire a baby sitter, or even change out of their pajamas") at <www.laurierking.com/vbulletin>. The club will discuss one novel a month, and there will be essays from Laurie about the book, and contests and drawings. A GRAVE TALENT was discussed in June, and THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE will be discussed in July. There is a new URL for Laurie's blog <www.laurierking.com/wp.php>, and Mary Russell's blog will be found at <www.myspace.com/maryrussell>.

And there's an incentive for joining Laurie's Virtual Book Club: there will be a drawing in mid-July for a signed (and inscribed, on request) copy of the first edition of THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE; you can find signed copies offered by Internet book dealers for \$300 and up.

The June 11 issue of The New Yorker had an interesting article written by D. T. Max about the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas in Austin. "Ransom, who earned the nickname the Great Acquisitor, not only bought these writers' manuscripts and letters, he tried to gather everything from baby book to death mask," Max reports. As a result, the Center has Arthur Conan Doyle's undershirts. The article may still be on-line at <www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/06/11/070611fa_fact_max>.

"Victorian Secrets and Edwardian Enigmas: The Riddles of the Rooms of Baker Street" is the title of an exhibition that has just opened in the Elmer L. Anderson Library at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis; the exhibition is open through Aug. 20, and features the miniature that Dorothy Rowe Shaw created for her husband John Bennett Shaw, the full-scale sitting-room that Allen Mackler created for his own home and bequeathed to the University, and other material from the Special Collections. Registration for the Norwegian Explorers' conference on July 6-8 has now closed; if you aren't going, you can get an idea of what you'll miss at the conference web-site at <www.tc.umn.edu/~bergq003/norwegianexplorers/2007_conference.html>.

Jun 07 #6 "What do Van Gogh, Iron Chef Morimoto, Sherlock Holmes, and Tai Shan have in common?" is the question on an envelope mailed by the Smithsonian Associates. Needless to say, they've all been subjects of presentations at Smithsonian Associates events, and you can find more information about the program at <www.smithsonianassociates.org/join>.

And what do you get when you cross Father Christmas with Sherlock Holmes?

I suggested some years ago (May 96 #5) that Sherlockians visiting San Diego might wish to stay at the Hotel del Coronado (which is the world's largest wooden hotel, carefully preserved and registered as a national landmark) in the room where William Gillette stayed in December 1898, when he settled in to write his play "Sherlock Holmes". I'm happy to report that the room is quite comfortable, with a balcony overlooking the hotel's courtyard (rather than the ocean), and considerably more expensive than it was in 1898.

People who spend much time on the Internet have surely encountered Internet slang, which is now widely used in text-messaging: abbreviations such as u, brb, lol, and omg. Peter Ashman says this suggests a line of Holmes-Watson text messages: tga!, ykmm, and ysbydno. And for those who don't spend much (or no) time on the Internet, the first set of abbreviations are shorthand for you, be right back, laughing out loud, and oh my god. You get to figure out the Holmes-Watson text messages on your own.

David Kotin (manager of special collections, archives, and digital collections at the Toronto Public Library) plans to retire in July, after a long career at the library and many years of help the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, and to Sherlockians and Doyleans everywhere. Collections such as the

one in Toronto can't survive without strong support from within the library system, and David's efforts have been valuable indeed. His successor will be Mary Rae Schantz, who is currently manager of the library's performing arts & languages, periodicals & newspapers, and urban affairs departments.

<www.ihearofsherlock.com> is the URL for Scott Monty and Burt Wolder's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" twice-monthly 30-minute podcast. A podcast is one of the wonders of modern technology: audio on demand, or radio for your computer; you can listen on the Internet, or download broadcasts to your PC or iPod, or subscribe to have the podcast delivered by e-mail. The first of the podcasts is an interesting conversation between Scott and Burt; future podcasts will include guests.

Steven Dietz's play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" (it won an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America) is scheduled at the Fulton Theatre in Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 18 to Nov. 4. The box office address: 12 North Prince Street, Lancaster, PA 17608 (717-397-7425) <www.thefulton.org>.

Walter Pond's copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 sold for \$156,000 (including the buyer's premium) at Sotheby's in New York on June 21, setting a new record for Beeton's; the Insley Blair copy sold for \$153,600 in Dec. 2004. Pond's manuscript of "The Adventure of the Three Gables" (estimated at \$350,000-\$500,000) wasn't sold when bids didn't reach the seller's reserve. Details (and illustrations) are available at Randall Stock's website <www.members.aol.com/_ht_a/shbest/ref/three-gables-sothebys.htm>.

Jun 07 #7 There's still no word on whether or when the British television mini-series "Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars" (which was broadcast by BBC-1 on Mar. 25 and Apr. 1) will be seen in the United States, but you've likely seen Jonathan Pryce (Sherlock Holmes) in one or more of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" films; he has played Governor Weatherby Swan (Elizabeth Swan's father) in all of them. Maggie Schpak's handiwork can also be seen in the films: she created Capt. Jack Sparrow's rings, and jewelry and ornamentation worn by other characters in the films.

And what do you get when you cross Father Christmas with Sherlock Holmes? Santa Clues. According to the Sunday Mirror (Dec. 24, 2006), that's one of the ten worst puns found by researchers in Christmas crackers in Britain.

Boris Yeltsin died on Apr. 23. He was Russia's first freely elected president, and became the leader of post-Soviet Russia. According to the Sherlock Holmes Gazette (spring 1992), the Times reported just before Christmas that Yeltsin was an ardent admirer of Sherlock Holmes, and had ordered from a London store sweaters with a Sherlock Holmes logo for himself and Mikhail Gorbachev.

It was Holmes vs. Holmes in the battle for this year's Tony Award for best performance by a leading actor in a play: Frank Langella was nominated for "Frost/Nixon" and Christopher Plummer for "Inherit the Wind". Langella won the award for his performance as Nixon.

Don Terras has noted Daniel T. Willingham's article "Critical Thinking: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?" in the summer issue of American Educator, with a sidebar by the editors asking "Did Sherlock Holmes Take a Course in Critical Thinking?" (they suggest that "no one better exemplifies the power of broad, deep knowledge in driving critical thinking than Sherlock Holmes"). The article is on-line at <www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator>, and copies of the magazine are available without charge from the American Federation of Teachers (555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001).

John Baesch spotted an interesting look at "cultural literacy" in Britain: Gordon Brown, the new prime minister, "is renowned for his ability to make himself scarce at the first hint of political embarrassment," according to Roland White in his "Atticus" column in the Sunday Times (Apr. 29, 2007). "Yet this instinct, which has earned the chancellor a reputation as Macav-

ity the political mystery cat, seems to have failed him last week." White saw no need to explain to his readers who Macavity is, nor to mention T. S. Eliot or OLD POSSUM'S BOOK OF POLITICAL CATS, in which he modelled Macavity after Moriarty.

John also has noted an interesting letter offered by a dealer: "I have always liked Boucher's stuff. He writes like an educated man, and the Seven Sneezes starts as if it were going to be superb. Did you ever read a Sherlock Holmes pastiche of his - I forget the title? Darn good." The letter was written by P. G. Wodehouse in 1967 to Don Benson at Pyramid Books; the pastiche was Anthony Boucher's CASE OF THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Jul 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

HOUNDING THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES: A POETIC PORTRAIT OF THE DETECTIVE NOVEL, by Yair Mazor (Madison: Goblin Fern Press, 2007; 101 pp., \$12.95), offers an interesting examination of the clues that Conan Doyle offered in the story that would allow a perceptive reader to solve the mystery before all is revealed at the end of the case; Mazor concludes that "the reader is given equal opportunity to solve the case independently, without the detective's help, sometimes even receiving clues (verbal analogies) that are not available to the detective."

Steve Doyle reports that the "From Gillette to Brett II" conference in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18 (Jun 07 #4) is already half full, and that there are some additional speakers on the schedule: Michael A. Hoey (son of Dennis Hoey, who played Lestrade in the Rathbone films) and Jenny O'Hara, who played opposite Larry Hagman in "The Return of the World's Greatest Detective" on NBC in 1976 (the film will be screened at the conference); Steve also notes that the Wessex Press web-site at <www.wessexpress.com> now has information about all of their in-print titles, and about the conference. There's also a new trailer for the conference available at YouTube; the URL is <www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn03_OHXASI>.

Ron Weyman died on June 26. He was a Navy veteran who saw HMS Hood go down and landed at Omaha Beach in the invasion of Normandy, and then worked in film and television in Canada for many years. After retiring from the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. in 1980 he started writing novels, short stories, and screenplays; his Sherlockian pastiches included SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MARK OF THE BEAST (1989), SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE ULTIMATE DISGUISE (1991), and SHERLOCK HOLMES: TRAVELS IN THE CANADIAN WEST (1994).

Forecast: THE CRIMES OF DR. WATSON, by Duane Swierczynski, from Quirk Books in November; an "interactive mystery" with pull-out clues that allow readers to pretend they're Sherlock Holmes and solve a formerly lost case.

Jasper Fforde has delighted book lovers since Thursday Next first appeared in THE EYRE AFFAIR, "a genre send-up hailed as an instant classic," according to publicity for his new FIRST AMONG SEQUELS (New York: Viking, 2007; 400 pp., \$24.95); in this fifth novel in the Thursday Next series she pursues a serial killer in Bookworld. "Sherlock Holmes is killed at Rheinback Falls and his series is stopped in its tracks. And before this can be corrected, Miss Marple dies suddenly in a car accident, bringing her series to a close as well."

Rheinback Falls is a mistake by the publicists; Fforde gets it right, and his use of Sherlock Holmes is intriguing. Thursday's uncle Mycroft Next, appeared in Fforde's first book, and is a continuing character, with nice echoes of Mycroft Holmes. If you get a chance to go to a Fforde book-signing, by all means do so; he's a performer, and a good one, and offers all sort of useful advice: "if there are blue nouns in your students' homework, they have been using Wikipedia." The Thursday Next series is set in Swin-

don, in Wiltshire, as was Mark Haddon's *THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME* (and of course Sherlock Holmes once ate lunch there); Swindon now has a Mycroft Street, named in honor of Thursday's uncle.

Jul 07 #2 For the completists: Joyce Carol Oates reviewed Steven Hall's *THE RAW SHARK TEXTS* (Canongate, 2007; 428 pp., \$24.00) in the N.Y. Review of Books (July 19); she says the book is "essentially a graphic novel in prose," and "by naming a monstrous villain of Victorian times Mycroft Ward ('a creature with one enormous mind inhabiting hundreds of bodies'), Hall would seem to be alluding to Mycroft Holmes, the elder, obese genius-brother of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes."

Further to the item on Bouchercon (the long-established world mystery mystery convention, run by fans for fans, and named in honor of Anthony Boucher; Bouchercon 40 will be held in Indianapolis on Oct. 15-18, 2009; their web-site's at <www.bouchercon2009.com>).

Doug Marlette died on July 10. He began drawing editorial cartoons for the Charlotte Observer in 1972 and went on to win every major award for editorial cartooning including the Pulitzer Prize in 1988. His comic strip "Kudzu" delighted faithful readers and had occasional Sherlockian allusions (and was adapted into a musical in 1998); there's a web-site about Marlette at <www.dougmarlette.com>. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) was one of Marlette's favorite targets; this editorial cartoon appeared in the Charlotte Observer in Oct. 1983, when Helms was running for reelection to the U.S. Senate.

Actor Peter Sallis was appointed a CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in the Queen's birthday honours list last month. He played Watson in the musical "Baker Street" (1964), and Jonas Oldacre in "The Norwood Builder" on BBC Radio 4 (1993).

Robert D. Jones died on June 15. After a 25-year career in the U.S. Army, he retired and became a sports columnist covering golf on the Monterey Peninsula in California, where he was a long-time member of the Diogenes Club. He wrote four books about golf, including (writing as Bob Jones) *SHERLOCK HOLMES SAVED GOLF* (1986) and *SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE GOLFER* (1991).

"Ratatouille" is the latest Pixar/Walt Disney animation, and quite enjoyable, but non-Sherlockian (although Peter O'Toole does provide the voice of Anton Ego). On the other hand: theaters showing "Ratatouille" likely have the trailer for "Underdog" (due from Spyclass/Walt Disney) on Aug. 3; the trailer shows Underdog trying on various superhero costumes, with a brief glimpse of Underdog with Sherlockian deerstalker, cape, and pipe. You can see the trailer on-line at <www.disney.com/underdog>.

"Sherlock Holmes (The Early Years)" is a British "musical parody" that had its world premiere at the Oxford House in Bethnal Green in 2005, and Susan Dahlinger reports that its New York premiere will be at the Theater at St. Clements, Sept. 24 through Oct. 6, during the N.Y. Musical Theatre Festival. The Festival's office is at 242 West 38th Street #1102, New York, NY 10018 (212-664-0979) <www.nymf.org/Show-117.html>. You can see more about the musical at <www.themightyfin.com/MightyFin_SH.html>.

Jul 07 #3 Les Klinger notes that the UCLA Film & Television Archive and Hugh M. Hefner Classic American Film Program will present the 125-minute version of "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970) on Aug. 29 at the Billy Wilder Theater (10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90024) (310-206-8013) <www.cinema.ucla.edu>. This is the shorter theatrical release of the film directed by Billy Wilder, with Robert Stephens and Colin Blakely as Holmes and Watson.

Fred Saberhagen died on June 29. He was a prolific writer of science fiction and fantasy, best known for his Berserker and Dracula series; he wrote two Sherlockian pastiches: THE HOLMES-DRACULA FILE (1978) and "The Adventure of the Metal Murderer" (1980).

Dana Richards found a Sherlock Holmes hanging felt ornament (6 inches high) made by St. Nicolas Ltd. and sold by The Christmas Company (item 9148SH, L4.64); 59 High Street, Burford, Oxfordshire OX14 4QA, England) <www.christmascompany.co.uk>.

Dorothy Stix has decided to sell her collection of Sherlockian translations (there are 492 books in the collection, in three dozen languages from Arabic to Ukrainian, and including braille and shorthand, individually priced, on her sales list). Her address is 1342 Hickory Moss Place, Trinity, FL 34655-7015 (727-372-2214) <dorothystix@aol.com>.

"Pulps, videos, comics, sleaze, art, authors, artists, and more!" will be featured at this year's New York City Paperback & Pulp Fiction Expo at the Holiday Inn (440 West 57th Street) on Oct. 7. And some of the authors (Ed Hoch and Ron Goulart among them) have Sherlockiana in their bibliographies. For more information, you can contact Gary Lovisi (Gryphon Books, Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228 <www.gryphonbooks.com>.

"Hook Meets Holmes in Floral Fantasy" was the headline on a report in the Maldon Standard (July 18), spotted by Karen Murdock. "Books in Bloom" was the theme of the annual festival of flowers held at St. Michael's Church in Woodham Walter in Essex; "arrangers had interpreted classic fairytales and literature such as Peter Pan and even Victorian detective Sherlock Holmes." Alas, there was no photograph of the Sherlock Holmes arrangement.

For collectors of foreign translations: there's an on-going Brazilian edition of Les Klinger's THE NEW ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES. Four volumes of SHERLOCK HOLMES: EDICAO DEFINITIVA: COMENTADA E ILUSTRADA (AS AVENTURAS DE SHERLOCK HOLMES, AS MEMORIAS DE SHERLOCK HOLMES, A VOLTA DE SHERLOCK HOLMES and O ULTIMO ADEUS DE SHERLOCK HOLMES) have been published so far, by Jorge Zahar Editor <www.zahar.com.br>; R\$89.50 each for vols. 1-3, and \$74.50 for vol. 4.

"Trams Put the Squeeze on the City's Streets" was the headline on a story in the Edinburgh Evening News (July 25); the city's new L594 million tram line, with stops and bus interchanges, will require many changes, including moving the statue of Sherlock Holmes now located in the traffic circle in Picardy Place. There's no word on a new location, but presumably it won't be far from the site of the house where Conan Doyle was born.

Jul 07 #4 There was a delightful variety of interesting presentations at The Norwegian Explorers' conference on "Victorian Secrets and Edwardian Enigmas" in Minneapolis on July 6-8, with an opportunity to see many of the furnishings of Allen Mackler's full-scale 221B sitting-room and other treasures from the Special Collections (the exhibit will be on display through Aug. 20). Christopher Roden offers a far more detailed report on the conference at his "blog" at <www.sirhenry1.blogspot.com>.

<special.lib.umn.edu/rare/holmes/victorianguidefinalcompressed.pdf> is the URL for the Library's colorful 20-page booklet prepared for the exhibition. The booklet (one per customer) costs \$10.00 postpaid (to the U.S. and Canada, \$15.00 elsewhere); checks (U.S. currency please) made payable to the University of Minnesota can be sent to Tim Johnson (111 Elmer L. Andersen Library, Minneapolis, MN 55455).

The society also has published THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS OMNIBUS, edited by Phillip G. Bergem, Michael V. Eckman, and John E. Bergquist, with reprints of the now-long-out-of-print THE CROWDED BOX-ROOM (1951), SHERLOCK HOLMES:

MASTER DETECTIVE (1952), EXPLORING SHERLOCK HOLMES (1957), and CULTIVATING SHERLOCK HOLMES (1978), with new introductions and an afterword. The 297-page book costs \$30.00 postpaid (\$31.00 to Canada, \$37.00 elsewhere) from Phillip Bergem, 3829 172nd Avenue NW, Andover, MN 55304; checks payable to the Norwegian Explorers, please.

Also available from Phillip are two new works that will be welcomed by collectors of Conan Doyle's writings as they were published in magazines and newspapers: A DOYLEAN AND SHERLOCKIAN CHECKLIST OF THE STRAND MAGAZINE and A BIBLIOGRAPHIC LISTING OF STORIES, POEMS, AND OTHER WRITINGS OF A. CONAN DOYLE. The 37-page CHECKLIST is a detailed listing (with helpful notes) of relevant material in the British and American editions of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, plus THE NEW STRAND and 21 issues of the new STRAND now published by Andrew Gulli; \$17.50 postpaid (CA\$20.00 to Canada, and US\$24.00 elsewhere). And the 158-page BIBLIOGRAPHIC LISTING covers fiction and fact (arranged by story title), plus additional listings by magazine and newspaper appearances and a chronology, with newly discovered material not found in the Gibson/Green bibliography; \$52.00/CA\$56.50/US\$62.00. Checks payable to Phillip Bergem, please.

The Norwegian Explorers' "Christmas Annual 2006" has John Bergquist's discussion of "The Curious Incident of the Policemen's Wives", Sue Vizoskie's report on "Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire: An Unusual Mother in the Canon" and other scholarship and entertainment; copies of the 56-page booklet are available from John Bergquist (3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122) for \$8.00 postpaid (checks payable to The Norwegian Explorers, please).

Add one more to the list of Investitured members of The Baker Street Irregulars who have appeared in films and on television (Apr 07 #2): Paul Singleton (who has had speaking parts on three daytime television soaps).

Scott R. Kurtz is one of the many modern comic-strip artists who don't get a lot of exposure in newspapers, but are readily available on the Internet; <www.pvponline.com/article/3416/fri-jul-06?y=2007> has a bit of Sherlockian artwork, kindly reported by Samantha Wolov.

Jul 07 #5 It's quite possible that more people saw Arthur Conan Doyle's name in newspaper articles this month than any other month, ever: there was a flood of articles about what was going to happen in J. K. Rowling's HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS, and the legions of ardent fans who were worried that Rowling would kill off Harry Potter in the last book of her series. And of course there were parallels drawn to other authors who put an end to their characters, with prominent mention of Conan Doyle's decision that Holmes should perish at the Reichenbach. No spoilers here, in case there are readers who have not yet found their way to the end of Harry Potter's story. Some writers have suggested other authors for bereft Potter fans, including Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories.

Mike Berdan spotted an interesting quote in the Philadelphia Inquirer (July 5): "I'm great at spying. I should have been Sherlock Holmes." Turns out that Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova would also like to be a James Bond girl. You can find photographs of Sharapova (and one of Basil Rathbone) at <www.sportsbybrooks.com/maria-sharapova-bond-girl-fantasy-13250.php>.

"The ghostly gas lamps fail at twenty feet," Vincent Starrett wrote (in his famous sonnet "221B"), and while London hardly has Sherlockian yellow fogs any more, you can still see gas street lights, and lamplighters. This year marks the 200th anniversary of gas lights in London, according to an article spotted by John Baesch in the Daily Telegraph (June 18), and the city's six remaining lamplighters attending the unveiling of a plaque at the site of the first gas lamp, in Pall Mall. Back in the 1960s, there were still gas lamps to be found in the streets behind 221B Baker Street, and I hope they've survived.

James J. DeStefano ("The St. Pancras Case") died on May 9. He worked as an

electrical designer, and was an active and enthusiastic member of The Three Garridebs, The Priory Scholars, and Mrs. Hudson's Cliffdwellers; he contributed to The Baker Street Journal and Prescott's Press, and he received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1985.

The Anthony nominees have been announced for Bouchercon 38 in Anchorage on Sept. 27-30 <www.bouchercon2007.com>; the convention and awards are named in honor of Anthony Boucher. Steve Hockensmith (HOLMES ON THE RANGE) has been nominated for best first novel, and Dan Stashower (THE BEAUTIFUL CIGAR GIRL) and E. J. Wagner (THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES) for best critical nonfiction.

"CSI: The Experience" is an interactive exhibit that will be at the Museum of Science in Boston, Sept. 30 through Jan. 1; the web-site for the exhibit is at <www.mos.org/visitor_info/museum_news/press_release&id=1896>; the intention is to explore the tools and technology behind crime scene investigation, and E. J. Wagner will lecture on "Superstition, Science, and Sherlock Holmes" on Oct. 17.

"Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars" (the mini-series starring Jonathan Pryce as Holmes and broadcast by BBC-1 earlier this year) now is available on DVD in the U.S.; \$24.99 from Acorn (Box 1670, West Chester, OH 47071) (888-870-8047) <www.acornonline.com>; Amazon <www.amazon.com> lists it for release on Sept. 4 (\$22.49 and eligible for free shipping).

Jul 07 #6 The new issue of the Sherlockian E-Times is at hand from Joel and Carolyn Senter (Classic Specialties) with news of Sherlockians and their gatherings, and a report on Jerry Riggs (whose new book THE UNUSUAL SHERLOCK HOLMES is a collection of three pastiches), and as usual offers of S'ian merchandise; <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07-7.htm> is the URL for the newsletter, and you can request an e-mail subscription at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

"Jane Annie, or the Good-Conduct Prize" has been scheduled by the Rockford Operetta Party at the Central Christian Church in Rockford, Ill., on Oct. 19-20; this appears to be the North American premiere of the comic operetta that was written by Arthur Conan Doyle and J. M. Barrie in 1893. More information will be available from Scott Farrell (5288 Granite Drive, Love's Park, IL 61111) <scottlfarrell@yahoo.com>.

The New Yorker published a long list of Sherlockiana and Doyleana (beginning with discussion of Conan Doyle in "Talk of the Town" (Feb. 21, 1925), and THE COMPLETE NEW YORKER: EIGHTY YEARS OF THE NATION'S GREATEST MAGAZINE (issued on eight DVDs in 2005) offers a chance to see how fine a magazine it was under its first two editors, Harold Ross and William Shawn. E. J. Kahn, Jr., hired in 1937, wrote for the magazine for five decades and was one of its best writers; his ABOUT THE NEW YORKER & ME: SENTIMENTAL JOURNAL (1979) is his memoir of the year 1977, with many anecdotes about his earlier life (he writes with considerable affection about his first wife, mistress, and second wife), and about his friends at the magazine. Kahn also explains that he and many others disliked Brendan Gill, who wrote HERE AT THE NEW YORKER (1975); Gill, on the other hand, told some great stories but had little to say about Kahn. Kahn's book is not Sherlockian, except for one passing allusion, but it's grand fun to read.

Circulo Holmes is one of the more active Sherlockian societies in Europe; their web-site's at <www.circuloholmes.org.es>, all in Spanish, as is their annual Agony Column, now in its seventh year. Copies of the new (130-page) issue, which has much about Holmes and Watson and Moriarty, and "The Lost World" and the fatal battle of Maiwand, are available for E30.00 postpaid from Miguel Ojeda Peral (Passeig Maragall 23, esc A, 7.0 1.a, 08026 Barcelona, Spain).

Not a politician in sight, nor a trained cormorant, but the Postal Service has honored five Pacific Lighthouses, in the five states with coastlines on

the Pacific Ocean.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Aug 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

John Gardner ("Moriarty") died on Aug. 3. Best known for his novels about the cowardly secret agent Boiesie Oakes, and 14 novels extending the James Bond saga after Ian Fleming died, he also wrote two fine Moriarty journals, THE RETURN OF MORIARTY (1974) and THE REVENGE OF MORIARTY (1975); according to his obituary in the Independent (Aug. 7), a third volume, with the provisional title THE REDEMPTION OF MORIARTY had been completed just before he died. He received an Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1988, and wrote proudly of the honor at his web-site <www.john-gardner.com>.

Karen Murdock found <www.magicdragon.com/SherlockHolmes>, the URL for the Sherlock Holmes Reference Service, which offers assistance in writing resumes, and with links at the web-sites to the resumes of Sherlock Holmes and James Bond.

Some touring Sherlockians have visited the Brambletye Hotel in Forest Row (it's mentioned in the Canon), and have had a drink or two at the hotel's Black Peter's Bar. And now there's a coffee shop called Sherlocks in near-by East Grinstead, according to the story East Grinstead Courier (July 5) spotted by Karen Murdock. There also is a Sherlocks coffee shop about 13 miles away, in Crowborough.

Evy Herzog discovered the Museum of Jewelry (401 First Street #205, Richmond, CA 94801 (800-385-2700) <www.museumofjewelry.net>; the company uses name from English literature to title some of their products, which include "Moonstones of Baker Street Earrings" and "Arnsworth Castle Earrings".

The Societe Sherlock Holmes de France provides interesting news at their web-site <www.sshf.com>, and a helpful "Alerte Sherlock Holmes" by e-mail. They recently noted a new set of stamps scheduled for issue Sept. 6 by the Swiss post office honoring "Switzerland as Seen by Foreign Artists--England"; the artists are all writers: Mary Shelley, William Wordsworth, Lord Byron, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who will be represented by James Peel's photograph of the Reichenbach Falls.

Sir Hans Sloane founded the British Museum (Nathan Garrideb hoped to be the Hans Sloane of his age), and according to an item spotted by John Baesch in Country Life (July 12), also invented milk chocolate. Chocolate-maker Bill McCarrick offers a "Sir Hans Sloane of London" line, priced from ø8.00 for four pieces to ø36.00 for 25 pieces. Available from Selfridges, and from McCarrick's web-site <www.sirhanssloane.com>.

John also noted a story in Orient Express Magazine about the Langham Hotel (mentioned in three of the Canonical tales), which has recently opened its Artesian bar, named in honor of the 360-foot artesian well that in the 19th century provided "the best water in London" to the hotel. They now serve bottled artesian water for ø4.00, and their classic martinis cost ø11.00.

The bar's web-site is at <www.artesian-bar.co.uk>. The hotel's web-site is at <www.london.langhamhotels.com>; rooms cost £199 and up.

Aug 07 #2 Some new pastiches: SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE HEIR OF ALBION, by Ronan Coghlan (Bangor: Xiphos Books, 2007; 188 pp., \$11.99), is a Sherlockian fantasy, with echoes of H. P. Lovecraft; the story is told by journalist Hector Wace, who substitutes for an absent Watson as Holmes does his best to counter a dire threat against the royal family. And THE UNUSUAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, by Jerry 'B-P' Riggs (West Conshohocken: Infinity Publishing, 2007; 369 pp., \$18.95), offers three stories that Riggs has been telling to Boy Scouts for many years (the 'B-P' in his name honors Baden-Powell, the founder of the movement); they're adventurous tales that deal with stolen rifles in Michigan, space-travel fantasy, and Arthurian round-table reenactors.

EYE OF THE CROW, by Shane Peacock (Toronto: Tundra, 2007; 250 pp., \$19.95), is announced as the first case in a series about "the boy Sherlock Holmes" ("Sherlock Holmes, just thirteen, is a misfit. His highborn mother is the daughter of an aristocratic family, his father a poor Jew."); it's an exciting and atmospheric story for young readers. The cast of characters includes Andrew C. Doyle (who isn't Arthur Conan Doyle) and Mohammad Adalji (who isn't George Edalji), and a few other names that echo jarringly from the Canon. There's a web-site at <www.theboysherlockholmes.ca>.

"There is cocoa ready in the next room," Sherlock Holmes said ("The Priory School"), and a cup of cocoa is shown on a stamp in a set honoring chocolate that will be issued by the Swedish post office in September. Cocoa beans and chocolate bars have been shown on postage stamps in the past, but this seems to be to be the first philatelic cup of cocoa.

The People's Light & Theatre Company plans to produce Katie Forgetting's play "Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Jersey Lily" in Malvern, Pa., June 13-July 18, 2008; Accompanied by that consummate wit Oscar Wilde, the beautiful actress Lillie Langtry (the Jersey Lily) seeks help from the brilliant detective Sherlock Holmes in a small matter involving blackmail, some missing jewels, and the royal family." The theater's address is 39 Conestoga Road, Malvern, PA 19355 (610-644-3500) <www.peopleslight.org>.

Reported: SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE COMPLETE GRANADA TELEVISION SERIES, a set of 12 DVDs with all 41 programs, for a total of 43 hours, from MPI Home Video (\$229.98); bonus features include three commentary tracks, interviews with Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke, an interview with Adrian Conan Doyle, a report on the Sherlock Holmes Museum, and subtitles in Spanish and English.

Also: LADIES, LADIES: THE WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (San Diego: Aventine Press, 2007; 148 pp., \$11.95), edited by Katherine Karlson and Patricia Guy; an anthology of essays, poems, and music-hall ditties about the ladies in the Canon.

"Tales from the Darkside: The Movie" was released by Paramount in 1990, described as "four ghoulish fables in one modern nightmare." "Lot 249" was one of the four stories, adapted by Michael McDowell from the Conan Doyle story "Lot No. 249", and the cast included Christian Slater, Steve Buscemi, and Julianne Moore. The film was released on DVD in 2001, and is still available.

Aug 07 #3 Ken Lanza spotted a report on the American Theatre Wing's web-site at <www.americantheatrewing.org>, where you can watch or listen to all sorts of interesting material, including video of Frank Langella participating in 90-minute seminars on "Working in the Theatre" taped in Sept. 1984 and in Apr. 2002, and a 48-minute "Downstage Center" program broadcast by XM Radio in May 2007 in which Langella talks briefly about why he has played Sherlock Holmes twice (and he says that he adored playing the title role in William Gillette's play, and was way in over his head when he

produced and starred in "Sherlock's Last Case"). There are many more fine actors in programs available at the web-site.

The Friends of Gillette Castle State Park will hold a celebration on Oct. 6 benefiting the restoration of William Gillette's locomotives; there will be hors d'oeuvres, music, beverages, and a silent auction, and tickets cost \$35.00 each. The Friends are a non-profit organization that helps maintain and restore the trails and grounds of the Castle, and their address is Box 133, East Haddam, CT 06423 <www.friendsofgilletecastle.org>.

Laurie R. King's Virtual Book Club ("a book club where readers don't have to bring cookies, hire a baby sitter, or even change out of their pajamas") at <www.laurierking.com/vbulletin> discussed THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE in July, and A MONSTROUS REGIMENT OF WOMEN in August; Laurie comments on the book from time to time, and the discussions don't close at the end of the month. A LETTER OF MARY is scheduled for November, and THE MOOR for April 2008. Her new stand-alone novel TOUCHSTONE will be published in January. Laurie's blog is at <www.laurierking.com/wp.php>, and Mary Russell's blog at <www.myspace.com/maryrussell>.

As noted earlier (Jul 07 #1), Jasper Fforde's FIRST AMONG SEQUELS (2007) is Sherlockian, although Sherlock Holmes doesn't actually appear as a character in the book. Mycroft does appear, in a fashion (he's Thursday Next's uncle, and a ghost), and the book is both interesting and amusing, with a lot of literary puns. Fforde's web-site at <www.jasperfforde.com> is thoroughly intriguing (especially if you've read one or more of his books), and offers upgrades to the books, interviews, merchandise, a helpful emergency "boss approaching" feature, and much more.

Madeleine B. Stern died on Aug. 18. She was a bibliophile, rare-book dealer, and literary sleuth, she and her partner Leona Rostenberg in 1942 identified Louisa May Alcott as the author, under a pseudonym, of a series of (at the time) racy stories, and their reminiscences about their long partnership can be found in OLD BOOKS, RARE FRIENDS: TWO LITERARY SLEUTHS AND THEIR SHARED PASSION (1997) and BOOKENDS: TWO WOMEN, ONE ENDURING FRIENDSHIP (2001); she also wrote about Sherlock Holmes, and in 2001 gave The Baker Street Irregulars' Distinguished Lecture in 2001 (published in the summer 2001 issue of The Baker Street Journal).

"Baker Street" and "Honour Among Punks" were two series of comic books published by Caliber some years ago (May 90 #3, Aug 90 #4, Dec 91 #5) for "mature" audiences (they were quite graphic, although not porno). Karen Murdock has spotted a report of HONOUR AMONG PUNKS: THE COMPLETE BAKER STREET GRAPHIC NOVEL, by Guy Davis and Gary Reed (Ibooks Graphic Novel, 2003; 368 pp., \$19.95).

Aug 07 #4 Allen and Pat Ahearne have presided over the book shop Quill & Brush since 1976, and they have written interesting books about collecting; their web-site <www.qbbooks.com> offers a link to "first edition identification" that will be of help to collectors who want to identify first and later editions and printings from many publishers.

The British edition of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (edited by Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley) will be issued by HarperCollins on Sept. 17, and it will be featured as BBC Radio 4's "Book of the week" with five 15-minute readings from the book on Sept. 24-28. You can listen to the program on the Internet (and for seven days after the broadcast date) at <www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/arts/book_week.shtml>.

<www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/special/sherlock.cfm> is the URL for the web-site for the Marylebone Library's Sherlock Holmes Collection, and there is a link to their "special competition page" and a chance to win a copy of the British edition of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (May 07 #5); the contest closes on Oct. 31.

Subscribers to the ink-on-paper edition of Scuttlebutt will find enclosed a copy of the flier for the ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS. If you're reading this in bits and bytes, Randall Stock's comprehensive and interesting web-site at <members.aol.com/shbest/ref/conan-doyle-life-letters.htm> information about the book, and the same images that are on the fliers.

The Baker Street Irregulars and The Sherlock Holmes Society of London (as The Quartering Press) have announced their first joint publication: TO KEEP THE MEMORY GREEN, a collection of essays by friends and colleagues honoring the memory of Richard Lancelyn Green; the contributors include June Lancelyn Green, Scirard Lancelyn Green, Cilla Lancelyn Green, John Michael Gibson, Douglas Wilmer, Sir Christopher Frayling, Owen Dudley Edwards, Philip Porter, Peter Horrocks, Doug Wrigglesworth, Marina Stajic, Brian W. Pugh, David Drummond, R. Dixon Smith, Marina Stajic, John Michael Gibson, Andrew Malec, John Nichols, and Jonathan and Elaine McCafferty, and a bibliographical checklist of Richard's writings compiled by Steven Rothman (224 pp., with 24 pages of illustrations).

The book will be available from both the BSI and the SHSOL in October, but it can be ordered now; there will be a standard edition and a numbered edition limited to 50 copies that's signed by editors Steven Rothman and Nicholas Utechin, Douglas Wilmer, Michael F. Whelan ("Wiggins" of the BSI), and Guy Marriott (Chairman of the SHSOL). Copies of both editions can be purchased on-line at <www.quarteringpress.com>. BSI copies also are available by mail (2 Detting Road, Maynard, MA 01754); \$30.00/\$75.00 plus shipping: \$3.95 (North America) or \$9.95 (elsewhere) plus \$1.50 for each additional copy. SHSOL copies are available from Judi Ellis (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU, England); standard edition £17.50 (UK) €20.00/€30.00 (Europe) \$22.50/\$45.00 (elsewhere), and special edition £40.00 (UK) €42.00/€63.00 (Europe) \$45.00/\$90.00 (elsewhere).

And the book's editors Steve Rothman and Nick Utechin have been interviewed by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder for episode #8 of their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcast available now at <www.ihearofsherlock.com>.

Aug 07 #5 It has been some years since I mentioned Goshō Aoyama's "Case Closed" (May 04 #6), a 30-minute animated series based on the Japanese manga comic-book "Meitantei Conan" (Shinichi Kudo is a 17-year-old master detective, turned by villains into a child, who assumes the name Conan Edogawa and pursues evil-doers). The series ran on the Cartoon network in English, and there's now a series of paperbacks from VIZ Media (19 volumes and counting, \$9.99 each); only the first volume is of real interest to Sherlock Holmes: the cover shows Conan Edogawa in Sherlockian costume, and there's a page at the end of the book about Aoyama's "mystery library" featuring Sherlock Holmes. The web-site <www.caseclosed.com> has information about the animated series, which is available on DVDs.

Steven Dietz's play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" (it won an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America) is scheduled at the MeadowBrook Theatre in Rochester, Mich., Oct. 10 to Nov. 4; box office at 207 Wilson Hall, Oakland University, Rochester, MI 48309 (248-377-3300) <www.mbttheatre.com>. The Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit will have a theater party on Oct. 14; the society meets quarterly, and Chris Music reports on the society's activities at <www.amateurmendicant.blogspot.com>.

Further to the item about Basil Rathbone receiving the Military Cross (Jun 07 #4), Paul Churchill notes that the Wikipedia biography for Rathbone mentions that when he joined the London Scottish Regiment as a private, Rathbone served alongside Claude Rains, Herbert Marshall, and Ronald Colman. The entry, at <www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basil_Rathbone>, displays a portrait of Rathbone as Commissar Dimitri Gorotchenko (in the 1937 film "To-varich") rather than as Sherlock Holmes, presumably arranged by someone who knew that Rathbone much preferred to be known for his non-Sherlockian work.

What do Edmond Hillary, Moscow mayor Yuri Lushkov, and Sherlock Holmes have

in common? According to a story in the Moscow News (Aug. 17), at hand from Ray Betzner, all three men are famous beekeepers. The Russian Union of Apiarists has organized Moscow's 18th annual Honey Festival, opening Sept. 1, and the RUA hopes to increase production of Russian honey. Russia exported 262,000 tons of honey a year to Europe before 1917, but last year produced only 100,000 tons, not enough to supply the domestic market.

E. J. Wagner reports that her *THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: FROM BASKERVILLE HALL TO THE VALLEY OF FEAR: THE REAL FORENSICS BEHIND THE GREAT DETECTIVE'S GREATEST CASES* (Jun 06 #2) has been translated into Italian and Korean. The Italian edition is available from Bollati Boringhiere Editore (E20.00) <www.bollatiboringhiere.it/scheda.php?codice=17498>, and the Korean edition from Han Seung (12,000 won) <www.hansbook.com/index.html>. Her own web-site is at <www.forensic.to/webhome/ejwagner>.

After 40 years of collecting sherlockian books, Jerry Margolin has sold his collection of books, pamphlets, pastiches and parodies to Otto Penzler at the Mysterious Bookshop in New York; his collection included first editions of all of the Canon except for *A STUDY IN SCARLET*, and many other rare items, many in original dust jackets. If you're seeking a particular item, you can contact Otto (212-587-1011) <ottopenzler@mysteriousbookshop.com>. Jerry has not stopped collecting, and plans to continue adding to his original artwork for sherlockian illustrations and cartoons.

Aug 07 #6 MC Black is now leading "Detective Walks" in London, offering half a dozen different routes to places mentioned in the Canon and of importance in Conan Doyle's life; if clients have particular interests, he's willing to do the research and include them on a walk. A discount is offered to members of "reputable Holmesian and Sherlockian societies," and he has a web-site at <www.detectivewalks.co.uk>. Additional information is available from him at Hardknott, Chadwell, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9JY, England (44(0)1920-467-930) <info@detectivewalks.co.uk>.

I've reported on Peter Abrahams' *DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE: AN ECHO FALLS MYSTERY* (Apr 05 #1), and his suspense novel *THE TUTOR* is sherlockian as well. (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002), available in paperback (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003; 384 pp., \$7.50) and on audiocassettes and a CD read by James Daniels (Brilliance Audio); the novel is a real page-turner, and features a thoroughly nasty villain and a precocious 11-year-old girl-in-peril who is a passionate reader of the Canon, and uses sherlockian observation and logic to bring the villain to book.

News from Japan: Kitano Ijinkan is a district in Kobe that contains a number of foreign residences built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries after the Kobe was officially opened to foreigners in 1867; western merchants built their houses in a section that was set aside for foreigners, and about 20 houses (of the more than 100 that were built in the district) have survived and are preserved. Tomoka Sakihara (director of business planning and marketing for the Ijinkan) writes that a recreation of the sitting-room at 221b will open Oct. 7 at English House, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. They have had assistance from The Japan Sherlock Holmes Club, and the exhibit will be on permanent display. There are entries for Kobe and the Kitano area at <www.wikipedia.org>.

The DVD of "Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars" (the mini-series starring Jonathan Pryce as Holmes and broadcast by BBC-1 earlier this year) made it into the shops in August, despite a release date of Sept. 4; it's possible that it won't be broadcast here, since it has gone to DVD already; \$22.49 and eligible for free shipping at <www.amazon.com>.

Forecast for October: a new edition (with coverage from the earliest silent films to the latest television films, through 2007) of David Stuart Davies' *STARRING SHERLOCK HOLMES* (London: Titan Books, 2007; 208 pp., £24.99) (distributed in the U.S. by Random House, \$35.00). The first edition was delightful (Aug 01 #6), and the new edition will be equally interesting.

Steve Doyle reports that there's still some room (but not that much) at the "From Gillette to Brett II" conference in Indianapolis on Nov. 16-18 (Jul 07 #1). There's another new trailer for the conference on-line at YouTube at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMDCEjlsy2U>, and details of the schedule are at <www.wessexpress.com>.

And a warning: the end-of-September issue of this newsletter will be a few days late, with an explanation that may serve as an excuse.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Sep 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

"El Misterio de Whitechapel" is a new Spanish pastiche written by Enrique Garcia Diaz and published in January 2007 (in Spanish); "en esta aventura, Holmes se embarca junto a Watson en la investigacion de los atroces asesinatos de prostitutas en el West End de Londres." You can read it without charge at <www.sherlock-holmes.es/archivo/?ir=biblioteca&entry=61>.

And Les Klinger reports that Ripperologist, an electronic journal available at <www.ripperologist.info>, will publish the first complete translation of the early 20th-century Sherlockian pastiche "Jack el Destripador" (in a new translation by Eduardo Zinna, with a brief introduction by Les) in the next three issues, beginning with #83 (Sept. 2007). Anthony Boucher contributed a brief partial translation, with a summary, to Allan Barnard's THE HARLOT KILLER (1953); the complete pastiche has more than 18,000 words, and there will be a preface by the translator and new original illustrations by Jane Coram.

Electronic newsletters continue to appear in the Sherlockian world, and it shouldn't be all that surprising, considering that publishing on a web-site or by e-mail avoids the costs of printing and postage. One nice example is Musgraves Matters, edited for The Musgraves by Rafe McGregor and available from him <musgravesmatters@aol.com> as a .pdf attachment to an e-mail message (the third issue was published this month).

Forecast (for January): ON THE TRAIL OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: AN ILLUSTRATED DEVON TOUR, by Brian Pugh and Paul R. Spiring, with an introduction by Roger Johnson (Brighton: Book Guild, 128 pp., £12.99); a German edition is in the works (AUF DER SPUR VON ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: EINE RUNDREISE DURCH DEVON, from Dryas in Mannheim), and there are plans for French, Spanish, and Japanese editions.

Canonical Sleuths, Inc., is the Sherlockian society for the students in the senior-citizen class Francine Kitts teaches at the College of Staten Island, and they have a lapel pin, available for \$10.00 postpaid (\$12.00 outside the U.S.) from Francine (35 Van Cortlandt Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301).

The 32nd annual Toronto International Film Festival opened on Sept. 6, and Toronto chefs worked hard to please the celebrities who attended the festival. According to a story in the Globe and Mail (Sept. 5), noted by Karen Murdock, Four Seasons executive chef Robert Bartley themed the hotel's menus to 1920s Hollywood glamour, offering Moroccan-style Casablanca chicken wings and Sherlock Holmes martinis served on magnifying-glass coasters. It's quite likely that it was the coaster that made the martinis Sherlockian.

Scholastic Books, world-famous as the publisher of J. K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series, still publishes other books, including two written and illustrated by Mark Teague about a wire-haired terrier named Ike LaRue. DETECTIVE LARUE: LETTERS FROM THE INVESTIGATION (New York, Scholastic Books, 2004; 32 pp., \$15.95) is suitable for children aged 4-8, and for Sherlock-

ian parents who may be amused by two passing Canonical allusions.

Sep 07 #2 The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Public Library will present a lecture by Andrew Lycett (author of the new biography CONAN DOYLE: THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES) on Oct. 25 at 7:00 pm in the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium at the Toronto Reference Library (798 Yonge Street); there's no charge for admission, and all members of the public are invited.

"I wonder what naked ghosts wear on Halloween," is the question on the cover of a new Halloween card from Hallmark (\$2.99).

There's a Sherlock Mountain (elevation 6,604 ft) in Broadwater County, Montana, recognized by the U.S. Geological Survey in its Geographic Names Information System (but with no information about who named it, or for whom). There's another Sherlock Mountain in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, not recognized by the U.S.G.S., but it's the site of six exclusive home sites (three still available) at Birchridge of Sherlock Mountain. You can read all about it at <www.birchridgeofsherlockmtn.com>.

Further to the report on the death of John Gardner (Aug 07 #1): Otto Penzler reports that the third Moriarty novel was completed and edited before Gardner's death; MORIARTY will be published by Harcourt/Penzler next fall. It's the equal, at least, of the first two, Otto notes.

Otto also reports that he has launched a blog, at <otto.gather.com>; just click on the link to "It's a Mystery to Me" (where's there's a link to an archive of his weekly columns for the New York Sun).

"Autumn in Baker Street" (at the Doubletree Hotel in Norwalk, Conn., over the Labor Day weekend) was a delightful gathering; Bob Thomalen did a fine job arranging and presiding over the festivities, and he was excellent performing as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (with an appropriate Scots accent) in a new one-act play about Houdini and Conan Doyle: "The Other Side" was written by Jerome Coopersmith, who also was the author of the book for the musical "Baker Street" (1964) and was present to enjoy the show.

John Patrick Bray directed a production of Gillette's "Sherlock Holmes" at the University of Louisiana (Lafayette) last year (Sep 06 #6) and his play "Hound" (his adaptation of "The Hound of the Baskervilles") will have its world premiere at the Cite des Arts in Lafayette, Oct. 4-20. The theater's at 109 Vine Street in Lafayette, (337-291-1122) <www.citedesarts.org>.

Alan R. Kaplan ("Charles Augustus Milverton") died on Aug. 20. He was an attorney, and a member of Mrs. Hudson's Cliffdwellers, and received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1985.

David Stuart Davies wrote his one-man two-act play "Sherlock Holmes - The Last Act" for Roger Llewellyn in 1997; it premiered in Salisbury in 1999, and has toured in Britain and overseas. David has written that "I thought I'd really said all I wanted to say about Holmes in 'The Last Act'. Then they played a dirty trick on me: they offered me money." His new play "The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes" (also starring Llewellyn) will premiere in Guildford on Mar. 6, 2008, and then go on tour, including a two-week run at the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh during next year's Festival.

Sep 07 #3 LADIES, LADIES: THE WOMEN IN THE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Patricia Guy and Katherine Karlson (San Diego: Aventine Press, 2007; 134 pp., \$11.95), is an intriguing anthology of essays, poems, music-hall songs that mention Sherlock Holmes (and some that don't), by way of examining "topics ranging from libations to libido, perfumes to prejudice, in the context of the Sherlock Holmes stories."

"I wonder what naked ghosts wear on Halloween," was the question on a Hallmark Halloween card. The answer inside the card is "No sheet, Sherlock."

Thanks to John McGowan and Dante Torrese, who spotted the card early on.

Further to the item (Jul 07 #3) about the statue of Sherlock Holmes in Edinburgh needing to be moved when the city's new tram line is built, there seems to be no threat to the nearby pub The Conan Doyle: the Evening News reported (Sept. 5) that the pub is planning to fit its entrance with traditional lanterns, and install new seating. A photograph of the pub, and a review and comments, are at <www.edinburgh247.com/pubreview.asp?pubID=11>.

There are many new products available to coin collectors, including colored (or coloured) coins, produced by national and other mints, and there's now a set of four such coins honoring Sherlock Holmes, issued by the New Zealand Mint. They're NZ\$2.00 coins, each minted from one ounce of pure silver and legal tender in the Cook Islands, although people are quite unlikely to want to spend them, because a set of four coins costs NZ\$325.00 (or US\$260.00). The coins feature a portrait of Sherlock Holmes (as played by Vasily Livanov), and characters from "The Sign of the Four", "The Hound of the Baskervilles", and "His Last Bow", and you can see them all in full color and much better detail at <www.newzealandmint.com>. Thanks to Bill Barnes for this numismatic report.

"The Uncanny Appearance of Sherlock Holmes" (a new musical written by Brad Krunholz for the North American Cultural Laboratory) will be performed at the NACL Theatre in Highland Lake, N.Y., on Oct. 5 during the NACL Catskill Festival of New Theatre (845-557-0694) <www.nacl.org>.

Irene's Cabinet is an annual anthology edited by Beth Austin for Watson's Tin Box, and this year's issue (42 pp.) offers Andrew Solberg's investigation of Sherlockian and Doylean material published in the Washington Post in the 1890s and 1900s, John C. Sherwood's amusing full-color two-page comic "The Adventure of the Faux Phillistine", and the winning essays in the society's annual Sherlockian contest for seventh-graders in Howard County, Md. (the student's work is imaginative and intelligent). \$15.00 postpaid Beth Austin (9455 Chadburn Place, Gaithersburg, MD 20886); copies of annuals from 2003 through 2006 also are available (same price).

Baker Street West 1 is "a Sherlockian journal from the western USA" and now in its 13th year; the Sept. issue (46 pp.) offers Chuck Kovacic's report on his discoveries of a five-color sign advertising Campbell's Shag, and Sherlock Holmes on the scorecard glass for a pinball machine ("The Dragonette") produced in 1954, plus other interesting Sherlockian material. \$7.00 postpaid from Jerry Kegley (9338 Sophia Avenue, North Hills, CA 91343); \$12.00 a year (two issues) or \$15.00 outside the U.S.

Sep 07 #4 Tim Johnson's "The Adventure of the Unopened Box: Building the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota" is an excellent history and description of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the university (where Tim presides over all the special collections). Publications Management (fall 2004), it's also available from Tim as a .pdf file via the Internet <johns976@umn.edu>.

"Undershaw Goes Under the Hammer" was the headline on a story in the Haslemere Herald (Sept. 28), spotted by Laura Kuhn; Undershaw, where Conan Doyle lived from 1897 to 1907, is now on the market. Owned by Fossway Limited, a company registered in the British Virgin Islands, the house and grounds are available to buy or let from estate agents Lambert Smith Hampton in Guildford. The Victorian Society, with support from The Sherlock Holmes Society of London, successfully fought plans to subdivide the house into 13 apartments (Jul 06 #4 and Feb 07 #2), and the Waverley Borough Council announced on Apr. 25 that Fossway had ignored several requests to protect the house from further deterioration and the Council had commissioned protective work on the house (and is entitled to recover the costs from the owner). On May 15 the director of the Victorian Society noted that windows had been broken so that vandals could enter the house, and that attempts to steal lead from

the roof had resulted in water damage. As of press time, the estate agents have not announced an asking price for Undershaw.

"Louisiana's famous carnival will be celebrated in Bahrain, at the Sherlock Holmes' Mardi Gras Costume Party tomorrow night," according to a story in the Bahrain Gulf Daily News (Sept. 5), spotted by Ken Lanza; it was an end-of-summer festival, and guests were encouraged "to come decked in their favorite gear from the 60s and 70s or in carnival garb." One hopes that one or more guests came in Sherlockian costume, of course.

The Bootmakers of Toronto have launched their web-site, with handsome and imaginative artwork by Jean-Pierre Cagnat, at <www.bootmakers.ca>.

Zoran Kovcic's new play "A Taste of Murder & Not a Crumb of Evidence" will open at the Hedgerow Theatre in Media, Pa., on Oct. 27 and run through Nov. 7; featuring Hesione Holmes, "an American cousin of the famous sleuth Sherlock Holmes." The theater address is 64 Rose Valley Road, Media, PA 19063 (610-566-4211) <www.hedgerowtheatre.org> [click on "our season" and "horizon series"]. Thanks to Francie Monahan for the report.

Mark Alberstat's 2008 Sherlock Holmes Calendar is illustrated with artwork from The Strand Magazine, and displays important Sherlockian birthdays and William S. Baring-Gould's dates for the cases. The calendar costs US\$14.00 postpaid, and his address is: 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, NS B3A 2M2, Canada.

Frank Middlemass died last year (on Sept. 8). He began acting in 1949 after retiring from the British army as a lieutenant colonel, and had a long career on stage, radio, and television. Well known as Rocky Hardcastle in the long-running BBC television series, Middlemass also played Peterson in Peter Cushing's "The Blue Carbuncle" (1968), Henry Baker in Jeremy Brett's "The Blue Carbuncle" (1984), and Dr. Froelich in Christopher Lee's "Sherlock Holmes and the Leading Lady" (1992).

Sep 07 #5 Prescott's Press, edited by Warren Randall for The Three Garridebs, continues to offer a nice mix of scholarship and whimsy, and the September issue (#45) offers a well-illustrated reprise of the "Baker Street Belles" fashion show ("a fashionable look at Victorian England") presented by Cynthia Wein and a posse of models at "Autumn in Baker Street" in 1989. Issue #45 costs \$6.00 postpaid, and a subscription costs \$14.00 for four issues (\$18.00 outside the U.S.) from Warren Randall (15 Fawn Lane West, South Setauket, NY 11720).

ITV3 is a British cable channel that broadcasts the Granada series weekly; according to a report in the Islington Gazette (on Sept. 12), at hand from Ken Lanza, the City and Islington College's Forensic Crime Scene Investigation team will participate in a documentary that will air in November during a Sherlock Holmes week: Richard E. Grant will recreate a murder scene from "A Study in Scarlet" for investigation by the lecturers and students. Grant has played Sherlock Holmes on television in "The Other Side" (1992), Mycroft Holmes in James D'Arcy's "Case of Evil" (2002), and Jack Stapleton in Richard Roxburgh's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (2002).

And Jon Lellenberg reports that the week's broadcasts will include another documentary ("The Shackles of Sherlock") about Holmes and Conan Doyle; Jon was filmed for the program at the British Library this month. It is possible that the Sherlock Holmes week will start in late October; you can see the channel's schedule and watch its programs at <www.itv.com>.

"For the British Grenadiers: Sherlock Holmes and the British Army" is the theme for this year's "Saturday with Sherlock Holmes" (sponsored by the local Sherlockian societies) at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore on Nov. 10; the festivities begin with morning coffee in the Edgar Allan Poe Room at 10:00, and end at 1:00. There's no charge, and the library is at 400 Cathedral Street in Baltimore.

Dr. William R. Hanson has designed a special cancel for the GlenPex Stamp and Postcard Show in South Glens Falls, N.Y., on Nov. 17; his own cachets will be available after the show, but you can send your own (stamped) covers and postcards to GlenPex Station, c/o Postmaster, 16 Hudson Avenue, Glens Falls, NY 12801; they will be cancelled and returned on Nov. 17.

I mentioned the upcoming American premiere of Jeremy Paul's "The Secret of Sherlock Holmes" in Lenox, Mass., earlier (Mar 07 #1); the play will have 16 performances, from Sept. 28 to Oct. 28, and now there's news of a special Sherlockian weekend on Oct. 19-21. Events will include a reception at Ventfort Hall (a Gilded Age mansion that was built by George and Sarah Morgan in 1893), three presentations by Sherlockian guests, a performance of the play, and a Victorian (and Sherlockian) brunch. Details are available at Shakespeare & Company's web-site <www.shakespeare.org> and from the theater (70 Kemble Street, Lenox, MA 01240) (413-637-1199). Scott Monty and Burt Wolder interviewed the leading actors and the director for the latest "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" at their blog <www.ihearofsherlock.com>.

Sep 07 #6 The National Aeronautics and Space Administration launched its new Phoenix Mars Lander on Aug. 4, and the unmanned spacecraft is expected to land on May 25, 2008, with Sherlock Holmes on board. Tina Rhea has spotted a report about the "Visions of Mars" mini-DVD prepared by The Planetary Society, with 80 stories and articles by leading writers and scientists, a collection of Mars artwork, and classic radio shows, that the lander will carry to Mars. Poul Anderson's Sherlockian pastiche "The Martian Crown Jewels" is one of the stories on the DVD, and two other members of the Baker Street Irregulars (Isaac Asimov and August Derleth) are represented by non-Sherlockian stories. You can read more about the mini-DVD at <www.planetary.org/programs/projects/messages/vom_contents.html>.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS is a delightful book. Edited by Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley (London: HarperPress, 2007; 710 pp., £25.00), the many letters to his mother, preserved in the family papers, are augmented by other letters to family and friends, with helpful annotations and illustrations. The actor Stephen Fry once said that "Personally I would walk a mile in tight boots to read his letters to the milkman," and one can only agree: Conan Doyle's letters offer an excellent picture of his imagination, humor, and energy, and it is grand that so many of his letters have been preserved and are now available to those who want to know more about him.

The Practical, But Limited, Geologists will honor the world's first forensic geologist at dinner on Wednesday, Oct. 31, at Dixon's Downtown Grill at 1600 16th Street in Denver, during the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America; drinks at 7:00 and dinner at 8:00. Come one, come all, as they say, and watch the geologists and Sherlockians try not to confuse each other. Dinner will cost about \$25.00 per person, and there will be a cash bar. Please let me know if you can attend the festivities; my e-mail address is <blau7103@comcast.net>.

Andrew Lycett's CONAN DOYLE: THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2007; 527 pp., £20.00) is an impressive biography. Lycett has had access to far more sources than any previous biographer of Conan Doyle: the earlier biographies, Georgina Doyle's OUT OF THE SHADOWS, many of papers and letters now at the British Library (with permission from Dame Jean's estate), and material owned by collectors and in Richard Lance-lyn Green's collection. The book is full of information for those interested in the life and career of Conan Doyle, and there's plenty of opinion as well, often tending toward the sensational: Lycett's article about Conan Doyle in The Guardian (Sept. 15) was headlined "Adultery, My Dear Watson".

As predicted (Aug 07 #6), this issue is a few days late, because I was away from home for almost two weeks; we visited in London, and returned on the Queen Mary 2 and thoroughly enjoyed the "Cunard experience." The ship has many attractions, among them the only planetarium and the largest library afloat; the library has 8,000 volumes, but only one of them is Sherlockian: Donald Thomas' SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICE FROM THE CRYPT AND OTHER TALES (2002).

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Oct 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Francine Swift ("The Wigmore Street Post Office") died on Oct. 10. She was proud to be a Texan, faithful to her corgis Prudence and Hatty, and devoted to her husband Wayne. Francine was a librarian when she joined the Sub-Librarians in the late 1960s, moved to Washington in the 1970s, and met Wayne at a running of the Silver Blaze at Pimlico. She was a member of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (as "Hatty Doran"), and many other Sherlockian societies; Francine was honored by the Baker Street Irregulars as *The* woman in 1983, and received her BSI Investiture in 1994.

"We've also recreated Sherlock Holmes' study as an onboard office for one customer," Ewan Foster told Daily Mail reporter Victoria Moore (Sept. 14). Foster is head designer for Sunseeker, a British company that builds super-yachts for the very rich. "That was quite a strange request because we put it in a boat that looked very futuristic from the outside," he added. "We had to make certain adaptations. A big mahogany bookcase filled with hardbacks would have been too heavy, so we had trompe l'oeil bookshelves painted onto wooden panels. It looked fantastic." Visit <www.sunseeker.com> to learn more about their boats (but not the one with the Sherlockian office). Thanks to Karen Murdock for spotting the article.

<www.audiobookstanddl.com>, spotted by Les Klinger, is an interesting website that offers digital audiobooks that you can buy and download to your PC or portable listening device; searches for "sherlock holmes" and "conan doyle" bring up scores of hits for Sherlockian and non-Sherlockian stories, radio broadcasts, and pastiches.

Bob Robinson has recalled a story about Nigel Bruce, told by Sean Wright, who heard it from Bruce's nephew Ian, almost 30 years ago: in October 1953, Nigel Bruce, seriously ill in a hospital, had been following the world series between the New York Yankees and the Brooklyn Dodgers on the radio, and lapsed into a coma before the final game was played; when he awoke from his coma on Oct. 8, he asked his wife, Bunny, "The Dodgers, did they beat the Yankees? Did they win the world series?" His wife replied, "No dear, I'm sorry. The Dodgers lost. They did not win the world series." And Nigel Bruce sank back onto his pillows, sighing, "Oh sh*t," and turned his head and died.

Darlene Cypser discovered <steampunkworkshop.com/lcd.shtml>, where you can see what Sherlock Holmes' computer might have looked like.

DARK AND STORMY NIGHTS (Alma: Yaddog Press, 2001; 71 pp., \$6.00) has five short stories by Bradley H. Sinor, one of them being his atmospheric pastiche "The Adventure of the *Other* Detective". The collection also offers Sherlockian cover art by Laura J. Underwood. Yaddog's address is 710 West Redbud Lane, Alma, AR 72921 <www.yaddogpress.com>.

Ken Lanza noted an announcement for "Sherlock Holmes versus Arsene Lupin", a new computer game produced by Frogware, the company responsible for the earlier game "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Awakened" (Sep 06 #4). A 90-second trailer is available at <www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com/en/sh>; the game is scheduled for release later this year.

Oct 07 #2 The fall issue of The Magic Door (the newsletter published by The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library) has Cliff Goldfarb's discussion of Conan Doyle's "Nelson Notebook" (recently acquired for the Collection), Peggy Perdue's report on an intriguing miniature edition of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, and Dayna McCausland's introduction of Mary Rae Shantz, who has succeeded David Kotin as manager of special collections at the Library. Copies of the newsletter are available from Doug Wrigglesworth (16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1H4, Canada) <doug.wrigglesworth@sympatico.ca>.

The Toronto Reference Library is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year with a gala exhibition showing material from its special collections, and there's a web-site at <ve.torontopubliclibrary.ca/collected_works/acd.html> offering a virtual tour of some of its Sherlockian and Doylean treasures. And if you click on "More" at the upper right you'll find links to two other virtual exhibits: "A Case of Considerable Interest" and "Footprints of the Hound".

The Workshop Theater Company will present Andrew Joffe's two-act dramatization of "The Blue Carbuncle" (in a double bill with O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi"), Dec. 6-22, at 312 West 36th Street (4th floor) in New York City (212-695-4173 ext 5) <www.workshoptheater.org>. Paul Singleton plays Sherlock Holmes, and Todd Butera is Dr. Watson, and the performances are recommended "for ages 9 to 109."

The September issue of Ripperologist (Sep 07 #1) has been published, with the first of three parts of "Jack the Ripper: From the Private Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes", an early pastiche (1907) written by Kurt Matull and Theo von Blankensee, translated into English by Eduardo Zinna and illustrated by Jane Coram and introduced by Leslie S. Klinger. The pastiche is one of the long series known to Sherlockians as the "memorias intimas" (although they were first published in German), and Zinna's preface offers a fine history of the series and the many languages in which it appeared. Ripperologist is an electronic journal available at <www.ripperologist.info>; if you want only the three issues with the pastiche, Zinna <editorez@yahoo.co.uk> will be happy to tell you the cost. The September issue also has an excerpt from the Canon in Zinna's "Opium Dens and Other Victorian Delights".

Richard Valley died on Oct. 12. In 1991 he launched the magazine Scarlet Street, offering enthusiastic coverage of classic horror and mystery films, and wrote the album notes for the CD "Sherlock Holmes: Classic Themes from 221B Baker Street" (Jun 96 #6) and MPI Video's DVD set of the 14 Rathbone/Bruce films (Apr 03 #4).

Stuart M. Kaminsky's dramatization of his short-story pastiche "The Final Toast" (1987), will have its world premiere during the International Mystery Writers' Festival at the RiverPark Center in Owensboro, Ky., June 12-22, 2008; the festival will also feature the U.S. premiere of Agatha Christie's long-lost play "Chimneys" adapted from her novel THE SECRET OF CHIMNEYS (she wrote the play for performance in London in 1931, but her manuscript was lost during a trip to North America and discovered 70 years later in Canada). The festival's web-site <www.newmysteries.org> will have more information about next year's events.

Oct 07 #3 The University of Wisconsin's reprint of Ely M. Liebow's splendid biography DR. JOE BELL: MODEL FOR SHERLOCK HOLMES (Apr 07 #1) is available for a 30% discount from the \$26.95 retail price, via the Internet <www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/books/2150.htm> or by phone (800-821-2736); use the code "AU657" in the "comments or special instructions" box.

It has been many years since I mentioned the J. Peterman Company, possibly because (like so many companies) they now depend more on the Internet than on printed catalogs; Gideon Hill notes that Peterman now offers a "Classic Inverness Cape Coat" (with an atmospheric mention of Sherlock Holmes in the

description) for \$699 <www.jpeterman.com> or (888-647-2555). The coat actually appears to be a MacFarlane, Gideon suggests (apparently purists insist that an Inverness is a cape without sleeves).

L. Frank James died on Sept. 2. He was a pastor and an actor, and author of AN OPENED GRAVE: SHERLOCK HOLMES INVESTIGATES HIS ULTIMATE CASE (Dec 06 #6); Holmes investigates the truth of the Biblical history of Jesus Christ.

The Sherlock Holmes Hotel at 108 Baker Street now is the Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes London, and it's holding Sherlock Holmes Murder Mystery Evenings, according to a press release spotted by Ken Lanza. Actors perform an interactive mystery during dinner, and the next events will be on Nov. 24 and Dec. 13. More information is available at <www.murdermysteryshop.com>.

Twin Engine Productions has published new print-on-demand editions of THE EXPLOITS OF BRIGADIER GERARD and THE ADVENTURES OF GERARD at \$10.95 each; their web-site's at <www.twinengine.se>.

A life mask of Basil Rathbone, "made circa 1939 and used to design make-up appliances for an unknown production," offered by Heritage Auction Galleries on Oct. 6, sold for \$215.10 (including the buyer's premium); of course it's likely that there would have been spirited bidding if the seller had been able to demonstrate that the life mask was made for "The Hound of the Baskervilles". You may still be able to see a photograph of the life mask at <www.ha.com> (auction 648, item 22105).

Reported: ROUND THE RED LAMP AND OTHER MEDICAL WRITINGS, edited and with an introduction by Robert Darby (Kansas City: Valancourt Books, 2007; 348 pp., \$16.95); a reprint of the 1894 book and three other medical stories.

Denny Martin Flinn died on Aug. 24. He acted on stage, screen, and television, and he was a writer: two pastiches, SAN FRANCISCO KILLS (1991) and KILLER FINISH (1991) featured San Francisco private Spencer Holmes (grandson of Sherlock Holmes); he also co-wrote the film "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country (1991) with Nicholas Meyer and adapted Meyer's THE SEVEN-PER-CENT SOLUTION for BBC Radio 4 (1993).

There are a few Sherlockians who like to denigrate Petri wine, despite the fact that modern Petri wine is made by an entirely different company than the one that sponsored radio broadcasts by Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce (1943-1946) and by Ben Wright and Eric Snowden (1949-1950); the old company exhibited at the California State Fair and Exposition in 1959, and the medal it won for its grappa sold at eBay this month for \$54.00.

Oct 07 #4 Connections between Sherlock Holmes and James Bond are tenuous (although Sherlockian scholars have not neglected them), and it is nice to know that the Royal Mail plans to issue a set of stamps honoring James Bond and Ian Fleming on Jan. 8, showing different editions of six of his most famous novels; there will be a Prestige Stamp Book written by novelist Kim Newman, whose ANNO DRACULA (1992) had many interesting Canonical aspects. And it is of interest that one of the stamps will show the nudest young woman I can recall seeing on a British postage stamp. It's the cover of the current paperback edition of one of his novels, which you can see now on-line at Amazon; search for [for your eyes only penguin].

LibriVox is an Internet project for which volunteers read works in the public domain; they have an interesting list of Sherlockian and non-Sherlockian stories by Arthur Conan Doyle, and they're at <www.librivox.org>.

Craig Wichman's Quicksilver Radio Theater broadcast Craig Wichman's dramatization of "The Speckled Band" in 1999, and the East Lynne Theater Company will perform the play in Cape May, N.J., on Mar. 7 and 8, 2008. Their web-site is at <www.eastlynnetheater.org>.

Jon Lellenberg has reported Christopher Hitchens' article "An Anglosphere

Future", which discusses "how a shared tradition of ideas and values--not bloodlines--can be a force for victory," and begins with consideration of Conan Doyle's THE WHITE COMPANY and his views on the common heritage of the Americans and English; it's available on-line at <www.city-journal.org>.

wanda Dow found amusing an parody "The Adventures of Wassup Holmes" created by Raul E. Duke, at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOj-Is2yIA0>; it's another example of the interesting things out there on the Internet.

Mary Schulz died on Oct. 15. Married to Ted Schulz for 54 years, Mary graciously agreed to name their son William Sherlock Schulz; she enjoyed classical music and golf, and was an enthusiastic member of The Scowrers and the Molly Maguires and The Persian Slipper Club in San Francisco; she was honored by The Baker Street Irregulars as *The* woman in 1998.

The "Sherlock Holmes weekend" in Lenox, Mass., on Oct. 19-21 offered both scholarship and entertainment (Sep 07 #5), including a chance to see Jeremy Paul's play "The Secret of Sherlock Holmes", and you can read about it in the Pittsfield newspaper at <www.berkshireagle.com> searching for [sherlock holmes], and hear podcasts by Scott Monty (who performed and recorded) at <www.ihearofsherlock.com>.

Further to the report on "Undershaw Goes Under the Hammer" (Sep 07 #4), the Daily Telegraph had a well-illustrated story (Oct. 20) that likely still is available to their web-site <www.telegraph.co.uk>. Conan Doyle wrote about the house to his mother (Sept. 1897): "As the house and grounds & furniture stand they represent L6000 without any mortgage or charge of any kind upon it." According to the web-site <www.measuringworth.com>, a calculation of the increase in purchasing power from 1897 to 2006 yields L467,956.16 (far less than what the house will bring on the market). You can read the letter (and much more about the house, and many other things) in ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (2007).

Oct 07 #5 Sherlock Holmes' 154th birthday will be celebrated on Friday, Jan. 11, with the traditional festivities in New York, but the first formal event will be The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes' ASH Wednesday dinner starting at 6:30 pm at O'Casey's (22 East 41st Street); attendees pay their own checks, but you should let Susan Rice (125 Washington Place #2-E, New York, NY 10014 <susan221bee@gmail.com> know if you're coming to the event.

The Christopher Morley walk, led by Jim Cox and Dore Nash, will leave from the Algonquin Hotel (59 West 44th Street) at 9:30 am on Thursday, followed by lunch at McSorley's at about 1:30 pm; those planning to participate are asked to get in touch with Jim (2240 15th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116) <jasdcox@yahoo.com>, and of course are advised to dress appropriately for the weather.

The Baker Street Irregulars' Distinguished Speaker Lecture begins at 6:15 on the 6th floor of the Williams Club (24 East 39th Street, between Madison and Park Avenues); the speaker will be Sir Christopher Frayling, the rector of the Royal College of Art, an expert on spaghetti westerns, and author of NIGHTMARE: THE BIRTH OF HORROR (1996), a book that accompanied a four-part BBC-TV mini-series that included a detailed examination of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES. The lecture will cost \$11.00; seating will be limited, and you are advised to reserve early (details below).

Otto Penzler will hold his traditional open house on Friday, from 11:00 to 5:00 at the Mysterious Bookshop, at 58 Warren Street (between West Broadway and Church Street) in Tribeca; the 1, 2, and 3 trains stop at the Chambers Street station (one block from the shop). If you get lost, the bookshop's telephone number is 212-587-1011. Many items from Jerry Margolin's collection will be available for purchase.

The William Gillette Memorial Luncheon starts at noon, at Moran's Chelsea

Seafood Restaurant at 146 Tenth Avenue at 19th Street; the cost is \$44.00 for chicken taragon or salmon wellington (\$50.00 for prime rib). You can request a formal announcement from Susan Rice (125 Washington Place #2-E, New York, NY 10014) <susan221bee@gmail.com>.

The Beacon Society will hold its annual meeting at 3:15 pm in the lobby of the Algonquin to make the Fourth Annual Beacon Award recognizing efforts of individuals to introduce Sherlock Holmes to young people. More information on the award is available at <www.beaconsociety.org>.

The Baker Street Irregulars will gather at 6:00 pm at the Union League Club at 38 East 37th Street. The Gaslight Gala (which is open to all Sherlockians and their friends) will provide dinner and entertainment at 6:30 pm at the Manhattan Club (201 West 52nd Street between Broadway and Seventh Avenue); \$75.00 (checks payable to Will Walsh can be sent to Carol Fish (Box 4, Circleville, NY 10919). Please include your e-mail address and primary Sherlockian society affiliation). There is more information at their website <www.baskervillebash.homestead.com>.

Space is limited at the William Gillette Luncheon and the Gaslight Gala, and early reservations are advised.

Oct 07 #6 Those who wish to have seasonal souvenirs included in the various dinner packets can send 175 copies (for the BSI) to James B. Saunders (3011 47th Street, Astoria, NY 11103), and 110 copies (for the Gala) to Francine Kitts (35 Van Cortlandt Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301), and 20 copies (for The Women) to Mary Ann Bradley, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278); your material should arrive by Dec. 15.

On Saturday a wide variety of Sherlockiana will be available in the dealers' room (Covent Garden West) on the second floor of the Algonquin Hotel (59 West 44th Street) from 9:00 am to noon; Ralph Hall (2906 Wallingford Court, Louisville, KY 40218) (502-491-3148) <bugmanhall@aol.com> has information about dealers' tables. The Clients of Adrian Mulliner (devotees of the writings of both John H. Watson and P. G. Wodehouse) will hold a Junior Bloodstain (a rather less than totally reverent event) on the second floor of the Algonquin Hotel at 10:30 am; if you're planning to attend the event, please get in touch with Anne Cotton (12 Hollywood Street, South Hadley, MA 01075) <ladybassett@comcast.net>.

The Baker Street Irregulars' annual reception, open to all Sherlockians and their friends, will be held from 1:00 to 4:30 at the New York City Bar Association (42 West 44th Street); the reception will feature a performance of Jerome Coopersmith's one-act play "The Other Side" (first performed at "Autumn in Baker Street" earlier this year) starting promptly at 1:15, and there will be hors d'oeuvres (adequate but not replacing lunch or dinner) and an open bar (wine, beer, juice, and soft drinks). The cost is \$70.00 (details below) or \$80.00 after Dec. 8 or at the door.

Baker Street West 1 and The Curious Collectors of Baker Street will present a very irregular "Lost in New York with a Bunch of Sherlockians" dinner at 6:00 pm at Kennedy's Irish Pub & Restaurant (327 West 57th Street, between 8th and 9th Avenues); details are available from Chrys Kegley (9338 Sophia Avenue, North Hills, CA 91343) (818-894-1501) <ckegley@socal.rr.com>.

"Sherlock: Solo" (the new one-man play written and performed by Victor L. Cahn) will be performed at the Kirk Theatre at Theatre Row (410 West 42nd Street) at 8:00 pm; the box office phone number is 202-279-4200 and their web-site's at <www.resonanceensemble.org>, tickets cost \$20.00. The play opens on Jan. 10 and closes on Feb. 3, so locals will have a chance to see the play on other dates.

The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes will hold an informal buffet brunch on Sunday, from 11:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Oldcastle Pub & Restaurant at 160 West 54th Street (between 7th and 6th Avenues) (and yes, 6th Avenue is the

Avenue of the Americas), and the cost will be \$20.00 including tax and tip. It's open to all, but space is limited and reservations will be important; please send your checks to Judith Freeman (280 Ninth Avenue #1-C, New York, NY 10001. Overseas guests are welcome to reserve via e-mail and pay at the door; her e-mail address is <judith-freeman@worldnet.att.net>.

And here are the details: if you've not already received Mike Whelan's announcement with the prices and a reservation form for the Thursday lecture and the Saturday reception, you can request a copy from Michael F. Whelan, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278.

Oct 07 #7 The Baker Street Irregulars are a tax-exempt organization, and Mike Whelan has made arrangements with the Algonquin for their "classic full" with one bed at \$175.00 (or \$275.00 for a "premiere suite"), Tuesday through Sunday. This is the total cost, since there is no tax on reservations arranged by the BSI. The offer's available to all Sherlockians, and room reservations must be made directly to the Algonquin (mention The Baker Street Irregulars) at 212-840-6800 before Dec. 8 (warning: last January our block of rooms sold out well before the deadline).

Mary Ellen Rich kindly continues to provide advice about hotels that offer reasonable (as defined by New York landlords) rates, but it's a mark of the 21st century that the best offers are to be found on the Internet, at web-sites such as <www.priceline.com>, <www.tripadvisor.com>, <www.hotels.com>, <www.travelocity.com>, and <www.expedia.com>; wise shoppers will then check the hotel's web-site and ask for the best rate (and don't neglect non-optional extras such as 14% in state and city taxes). John Pforr praises the Super 8 Hotel Times Square at 59 West 46th Street (212-719-5944); \$119.99 plus tax per night.

The Dr. John H. Watson Fund offers financial assistance to all Sherlockians (membership in the BSI is not required) who might otherwise not be able to participate in the weekend's festivities. A carefully pseudonymous John H. Watson presides over the fund and welcomes contributions, which can be made by check payable to John H. Watson and sent (without return address on the envelope) to Dr. Watson, care of The Baker Street Irregulars, at 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278; your letters are forwarded unopened, and Dr. Watson will acknowledge your generosity. Requests for assistance should also be mailed (quickly) to Dr. Watson at the same address.

And if you can't remember where you put your copy of all of this, detailed information about the birthday festivities is available on the Internet at <www.bsiweekend.com>.

Dan Stashower, one of the editors of the new collection ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (Sep 07 #6), will be interviewed on "The Diane Rehm Show" at 11:00 am on Nov. 19 on WAMU-FM (88.5); the show is broadcast by public radio in many other cities and on satellite radio, and is available on-line at <www.wamu.org/programs/dr>.

An exhibition on "Crime Scene Edinburgh: 20 Years of Rankin and Rebus" has opened at the National Library of Scotland, through Jan. 13. The focus of the exhibition is on Ian Rankin, but the exhibits include the original manuscript of "The Illustrious Client". There's additional information at the library's web-site <www.nls.uk/events/rebus20/index.html>.

Scott Monty has launched a "Sherlock Holmes Social Network" on the Internet on an open-source system called Ning, to give Sherlockians a chance to create their own community, at <sherlockholmes.ning.com>. It's an interesting demonstration of one of the many ways people can communicate on the world wide web, starting discussions, sharing media files, etc.

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Nov 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

New information about the birthday festivities in New York in January: on Saturday the dealers' room will be open from 9:00 am to noon.

Forecast: KNIFE POINT, by Lyndsay Faye, from Simon & Schuster. The author is Lyndsay Faye Lehner, a New York actor (Lyndsay Faye is her stage name) who has turned to writing ("the actors outnumber the pigeons in New York," she said in an interview in the Longview Daily News on Oct. 14); her first novel, a mystery about Jack the Ripper and Sherlock Holmes, brought her a \$100,000 advance from the publisher (the book is scheduled for 2009).

Richard E. Crandall's article "The Challenge of Large Numbers" in Scientific American (Feb. 1997) has an interesting variant on the now-famous room full of monkeys typing away to produce Shakespeare's plays: "It would take approximately $10^{3,000,000}$ [that's 10 to the 3 millionth power, for anyone reading this item via the Internet] years before a parrot, pecking randomly at a keyboard, could reproduce by chance *The Hound of the Baskervilles*" Don Dillistone spotted a reprint of the article in a pamphlet published by the magazine last year to encourage readers to renew their subscriptions.

Christopher Roden reports an announcement of "Re-Examining Conan Doyle: Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium" at the University of Regina on Nov. 7-9, 2008. There has been a call for papers about various aspects of Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes have been requested, and there will be a film evening and a stage dramatization of a Holmes story; more information is available from Dr. Nils Clausson (Dept. of English, University of Regina, Regina, SK S4S 0A2, Canada) <www.uregina.ca/hri/Conferences/conan_doyle_2008.shtml>.

Robert F. O'Neill died on Oct. 23. He was a supervising producer and producer for many series for Universal Television from the 1960s through the 1990s, winning two Golden Globes (for "Murder, She Wrote") and an Emmy (for "Columbo"). He produced "The Murder of Sherlock Holmes" (1984), the two-hour pilot for "Murder, She Wrote".

The October issue of Ripperologist (Oct 07 #2) has appeared, with the second of three parts of the early (1907) pastiche "Jack the Ripper: From the Private Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes", and reports on goings-on in the world of students of the infamous murderer. Ripperologist is an electronic journal available at <www.ripperologist.info>; if you want only the three issues with the pastiche, Zinna <editorez@yahoo.co.uk> will be happy to tell you the cost. The October issue also has news of the "Guardian News & Media Archive": the first phase is already on-line offering The Guardian from 1821 to 1975 and The Observer from 1900 to 1975; the remainder of the archives will launch next year, when every edition of the newspapers will be available <mediaguardian.co.uk/presspublishing/story/0,,2191657,00.html>.

Copies of the late Al Hirschfeld's limited-edition lithograph "The Game's Afoot" (showing Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce as Holmes and Watson) still are available (for \$1,600) from the Margo Feiden Galleries at 15 East 9th Street, New York, NY 10003 (212-677-5330) <www.alhirschfeld.com>. The original artwork has been sold, and you would have been wise to buy a copy of the lithograph when it was first offered (Mar 92 #1) for \$500.

Nov 07 #2 The Gotham Book Mart closed earlier this year; the N.Y. Times reported on May 23 on the sale of its contents to satisfy the store's arrears in rent to its landlord. Frances Steloff founded the bookshop in 1920 and made it a gathering place for authors and their readers; her slogan was "wise men fish here," and one of those wise men was Christopher Morley, who discovered the shop in 1931, and spent many hours helping with publicity and other business matters (such as writing a set of dunning verses to be sent to delinquent customers). When she was arrested in 1935 for selling obscene literature (Random House's edition of Andre Gide's autobiography), Morley came to her defense, in his "Bowling Green" column in the Saturday Review of Literature, and his column was quoted by the judge

when he dismissed the case. She died in 1989, at the age of 101; but the shop remained open and was a haven for admirers of Edward Gorey's work.

There's a new "Wordsworth Literary Lives" edition of Conan Doyle's autobiography MEMORIES AND ADVENTURES (reprinting the first British edition), with an excellent introduction by David Stuart Davies (London: wordsworth, 2007; 368 pp., L3.99). Wordsworth also has a "Library Collection" (L9.99) that will soon include THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES.

Samantha Wolov has found THE SUPERHERO DETECTIVES, written by Beth Engleman Berner and illustrated by Jenna Riggs (Inglewood: Piggy Toes Press, 2005; 5 pp., \$10.95); young children can follow the clues to solve a mystery (the cover shows the superhero detectives' dog Watson).

An article by Jess Blumberg in the November issue of Smithsonian about the *Mary Celeste* ("Phenomena: Abandoned Ship") provides a modern scientific explanation of what might really have happened to ship and its crew, with a mention of Conan Doyle's story "J. Habakuk Jephson's Statement".

Dr. Watson's Pub opened in the early 1970s in Philadelphia, and it's still going strong (at 216 South 11th Street), and (of course) there's a web-site at <www.drwatsonspub.com> with a cute little animated Sherlock Holmes.

The Easton Press (677 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06857 (800-211-1308) <www.eastonpress.com> still offers their three-volume THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES; first issued in 1987, it's a handsome leather-bound reprint (with color frontispieces) of the Heritage Press edition they published in 1952 and 1957; \$59.00 per volume postpaid (item 0135). They also have the PROFESSOR CHALLENGER SERIES in three volumes in a similar format, with an introduction by science-fiction author Robert Silverberg (2005); \$65.00 per volume postpaid (item 1575).

Peter Haining died on Nov. 19. He started his career as a reporter, became editorial director at New English Library, and a full-time writer in 1970s; he edited many anthologies, and reference books devoted to James Bond, Doctor Who, and of course Sherlock Holmes: A SHERLOCK HOLMES SCRAPBOOK (1973), THE FINAL ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (1981), and THE TELEVISION SHERLOCK HOLMES (1986).

Nov 07 #3 John J. Miller had an interesting essay about Arthur Machen in the Oct. 31 issue of the Wall Street Journal, and discussed his novel THE THREE IMPOSTERS (published in 1895 and reprinted this year by Dover. Miller notes that after borrowing a copy of THE THREE IMPOSTERS, Conan Doyle told his friend Jerome K. Jerome: "Your pal Machen may be a genius all right; but I don't take him to bed with me again!"

Paul B. Smedegaard ("The Randall Gang") died on Nov. 14. He was involved in business administration, and in local politics in Racine, Wis., and an enthusiastic member of many midwestern Sherlockian societies. He enjoyed presiding over his own societies, including C.A.L.A.B.A.S.H. (Convivial Attendant Liaisons Among B.S.I. and Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes) and The Last Dog Hung Post-Prandial Club, and energetically pursued the goal of becoming a member of every one of the all-male Sherlockian societies. He received his Investiture from the Baker Street Irregulars in 1977.

Doug and Laura Marr's play "A Christmas Spirit" (about Conan Doyle and his involvement with Spiritualism) was first staged in 2002, and it will be revived at the Circle Theater in Omaha, Neb. (402-554-4715), through Dec. 22.

In Australia: "Sherlock Holmes and the Unsolved Case at Victor Harbor" is the title of a weekend Steamranger Heritage Train Murder Mystery in Mount

Barker and Victor Harbor, scheduled in February and March by the Bearly Together Co. in Adelaide; contact Allen Lyne (8 Redgate Court, Moana Heights, SA 5169, Australia) <www.bearly.net>.

The Sherlock Holmes, the whitbread theme pub in launched in Northumberland Street in 1957, celebrated it's 50th anniversary with "some small jollification" on Nov. 6, when a selection of ales and popular foods was available in the bar at 1957 prices. The pub still is a fine and atmospheric place to visit, and its web-site at <www.sherlockholmespub.com> explains its history, with lots of photographs.

THE HAMMER STORY: THE AUTHORIZED HISTORY OF HAMMER FILMS, by Marcus Hearn and Alan Barnes (London: Titan Books, 2007; 192 pp., £24.99/\$35.00), is a second revised edition (the first appeared in 1997); it's a fine book, with two pages devoted to the 1959 Cushing/Morrell film "The Hound of the Baskervilles". Wayne Kinsey's HAMMER FILMS: THE BRAY STUDIOS YEARS (Richmond: Reynolds & Hearn, 2002; 356 pp., £19.95) will also be of interest to those who enjoyed the film.

Karen Murdock spotted a story in the Newark Star-Ledger about an exhibition at the Rupert Ravens Contemporary art gallery. Asha Ganpat's "The Marys" (according to the report) is "a votive table covered with scores of 6-inch statures of the Virgin, one of which, as in Sherlock Holmes' 'Adventure of the Six Napoleons,' has a diamond buried in the plaster. Could you smash to Mother of God to find it?"

"Surry Votes Give Holmes Another Term" was the headline on a story in the Newport News Daily Press (Nov. 6), spotted by Ken Lanza; incumbent M. Sherlock Holmes won reelection to the Surry County Board of Supervisors. And he has been active in local politics for decades: a story about him in the N.Y. Times on Jan. 22, 1972, was headlined "Negro Heads Virginia County".

Nov 07 #4 <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07_calendar-special.htm> is the URL for the latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's The Sherlockian E-Times; it's an advertisement for their new Sherlockian calendar for 2008, with Sherlockian birthdays and events, and new artwork (\$19.99), and for their new Christmas cards (\$19.99 for a pack of ten). The Christmas cards also are available as single cards and in packs of twenty.

Thos. Kent Miller reports that his SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD (Oct 91 #3) has a second edition, as THE GREAT DETECTIVE ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD (Rockville: Wildside Press, 2007; 104 pp., \$14.99); Leo Vincey (whom some will recall from Rider Haggard's SHE and AYESHA) is in Lhasa in 1891, and encounters a Norwegian named Sigerson, who is an excellent detective.

Don Martin's portrait of Sherlock Holmes (or of someone disguised as Sherlock Holmes) appeared in Mad magazine in the early 1970s; you can see it in full color at <www.nachshon.org.il/~its/Don%20Martin/posters/Holmes.jpg>. And it's included in MAD'S GREATEST ARTISTS: THE COMPLETELY MAD DON MARTIN (MAD'S GREATEST ARTIST SERIES), a new two-volume boxed set (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2007; 1200 pages, \$150.00) offering a real fix for his fans.

It's always a pleasure to find that Conan Doyle's work is still in print: ROUND THE RED LAMP AND OTHER MEDICAL WRITINGS, edited and with an introduction by Robert Darby (Kansas City: Valancourt Books, 2007; 348 pp., \$16.95), has the 1894 book, three other medical stories, and his non-fiction writings about medicine from 1887 to 1910. Darby's introduction offers an interesting discussion of Conan Doyle's work as a doctor and an author, and the state of medicine when he was in practice; the "realism" of his medical fiction often offended critics, and the reasons for this are intriguing.

Steve Hockensmith's THE BLACK DOVE (New York: St. Martin's Minotaur, 2008;

304 pp., \$23.95) is the third in his "Holmes on the Range" series about Old Red and Big Red Amlingmeyer, Montana cowboys who are enjoying the Sherlock Holmes stories as they appear in the 1890s, and solving mysteries on their own; this time they're in San Francisco, mostly in Chinatown and the Barbary Coast, involved with some thoroughly nasty villains. Hockensmith was an Edgar nominee for the first novel in the series, and there are amusing samples of his work at his web-site at <www.stevehockensmith.com>.

Ira Levin died on Nov. 12. Best known for his novels ROSEMARY'S BABY, THE STEPFORD WIVES, and THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL, he also wrote the award-winning Broadway comic thriller "Deathtrap" and the lyrics for "Drat! The Cat", a musical that ran for only eight performances in 1965, and contained a song "Holmes and Watson".

Thierry Saint-Joanis has noted a new French computer game: CEREBRAL SHERLOCK: LES ENQUETES CEREBRALES DE SHERLOCK HOLMES (from Anuman Interactive, E19.99); you can see his report at <www.sshf.com> (and you can click on the British for an English version). It's an animated game ("amusant pour les enfants et approuve par les parents"). Thierry maintains the web-site for the Societe Sherlock Holmes de France, and it's well worth a visit.

Nov 07 #5 Don Izban reports that SBIOS (Sherlockians by Invitation Only) will hold a Colonel Sebastian Moran Secret Gun Club "Hunt for the Mongoose Named Moriarty" on Feb. 29 (the event takes place only during Leap Years), and they will be celebrating Sherlock Holmes' "real birthday" on Oct. 10. All in Chicago, and additional information is available from Don (1812 Rene Court, Park Ridge, IL 06068).

David Stuart Davies reports that his new pastiche "Sherlock Holmes and the Ghost of Christmas Past" is in the holiday 2007 issue of Andrew Gulli's new Strand Magazine. Subscriptions (four issues) cost \$19.95 (U.S. and Canada) or \$44.95 (elsewhere), and the magazine's address is Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012 (800-300-6652) (UK: 800-961-280) <www.strandmag.com>.

The World Fantasy Convention ("Ghosts and Revenants, Memory, History, and Folklore") was held in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. this month, and Barbara and Christopher Roden were special guests, recognizing their Ash-Tree Press and The Ghost Story Society. The convention started in 1975, and you can read about its history at <www.worldfantasy.org>. Note: the Michael Whelan who their award as artist in 1981, 1982, and 1983, isn't the Michael F. Whelan who heads The Baker Street Irregulars.

Harold J. Berman died on Nov. 11. An expert in Russian law, he taught for decades at Harvard Law School and Emory University School of Law; according to his obituary in the N.Y. Times, when he decided to study Soviet law as a world war II army veteran at Yale Law School, there was no one to teach it, so he taught himself, and the first case he ever argued was in 1958 in Moscow, on behalf of the estate of Conan Doyle. The suit was against four Soviet state publishing houses and the Ministry of Culture of the USSR, seeking royalties on the millions of Conan Doyle's books that had been sold in the Soviet Union, and in a Moscow city court he won the right to pursue the case before the Supreme Court of the USSR, where (to no one's surprise) the court ruled that no royalties were owed.

[murmer] is a Canadian documentary oral history project that now includes descriptions of the Arthur Conan Doyle Room at the Toronto Public Library by Barbara Rusch, Doug Wriggleworth, and Peggy Perdue. You can listen to their stories at <www.murmertoronto.ca/trl>; click on "arthur conan doyle room".

Reported: THE EYE OF JADE, by Diane Wei Liang (London: Picador, 2007; 240 pp., L12.99); Mei, the heroine, is a private detective in Beijing, as well as an admirer of Sherlock Holmes, and the book's described as "a gripping account of a female gumshoe's search for a Han dynasty artefact in modern Beijing is part thriller and part analysis of the city's past and present."

An American edition's due from Simon & Schuster next year.

MEET ME IN BOHEMIA: A SHERLOCK HOLMES CZECH BOOK is the excursion book for The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's visit to Prague this year: Bob Ellis and Guy Marriott have edited an excellent anthology of scholarship about the many Canonical aspects of Bohemia and Czechoslovakia; the costs of the handbook is £14.00 (UK), £16.00/€25.00 (Europe), or \$36.00/€18.00 (rest of the world) postpaid from Judi Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU, England.

Nov 07 #6 Alan Coren died on Oct. 18. He was a writer, magazine editor, and broadcaster, who joined the staff of Punch in 1963 and became its editor in 1978; Coren also was a television critic for The Times, columnist for many British papers, highly-acclaimed humorist, and author of a children's series that began with ARTHUR AND THE GREAT DETECTIVE (1981), and pastiches that included "The Curious Case of the Distressed Gentlefolk" in Punch and THE CRICKLEWOOD DIET (1982).

There's a new edition of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, illustrated by Pam Smy (Cambridge: Candlewick Press, 2006; 272 pp., \$17.99); the illustrations are atmospheric and nicely done, and you can see the front cover and an inside spread at <www.candlewick.com>.

Further to the report about Liberton Bank House, where Conan Doyle lived as a child (Nov 06 #8), the Edinburgh Evening News reports (Nov. 15) that Dunedin School pupils enjoyed their first day at the 18th century house, which has been rescued from neglect after a long restoration campaign.

For admirers of Sherlock Snoopy: I reported the book when it was published (Jun 82 #3), but only recently have seen THE SNOOPY COLLECTION: ONE THOUSAND FABULOUS SNOOPY PRODUCTS, edited by J-C Soares (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1982) (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982); it has photographs of the plush doll and the mini vinyl figure of Snoopy in Sherlockian costume.

Visitors to Australia might want to stop by the Sherlock Holmes Inn in Melbourne; according to a web-site review, "It's about twenty years old, features classic low ceiling (very English pub, we do say) and does big on the traditional idea of having a knees-up."

Dana Richards has for many years specialized in Victorian (as well as modern) puzzles: riddles, conundrums, enigmas, charades, anagrams, acrostics, and many others, and his VICTORIAN ENIGMAS AND SHERLOCKIAN PUZZLES offers a fascinating (and challenging) exploration of the genre. His 82-page booklet (published this year by his Petty Puzzle Press) includes solutions, and costs \$12.00 postpaid.

Scott Monty and Burt Wolder have now reached episode #13 of their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcasts at <www.ihearofsherlock.com>, with a 55-minute interview with Jon Lellenberg and Dan Stashower about their work on ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, about their letters, and about Conan Doyle.

Alberene Royal Mail has added a Sherlock Holmes pocket magnifier (\$29.95) a Sherlock Holmes pocket watch (\$59.95), and a Diogenes Club Strangers Room wall clock to their Sherlockian offerings; (Box 902, 9 Mill Alley, Harrisville, NH 03450) (800-843-9078) <<http://www.alberene.com>>.

Ken Lanza spotted a report on The Second Street Irregulars, a group that's "modeled after the Sherlockian Baker Street Irregulars." They're members of the Lizzie Borden Society Forum, who gathered this month in Fall River, Mass., at the Borden House on Second Street. You can read all about it at their web-site at <www.wordpress.com/tag/second-street-happenings>.

Nov 07 #7 Laurie R. King reports that Picador has published new editions

of the first four "Mary Russell" books with striking new covers (\$14.00); THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE, A MONSTROUS REGIMENT OF WOMEN, A LETTER OF MARY, and THE MOOR appeared in October. Her web-site, which has a link to her blog, is at <www.laurierking.com>.

Enola Holmes, the younger sister of Mycroft and Sherlock, was featured in Nancy Springer's THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS (Dec 05 #4), and it's now available in paperback (New York: Puffin, 2007; 224 pp., \$4.99). There are two more titles in the series: THE CASE OF THE LEFT-HANDED LADY (New York: Philomel, 2007; 192 pp., \$12.99) and THE CASE OF THE BIZARRE BOUQUETS (New York: Philomel, 2008; 192 pp., \$14.99); for younger readers (ages 9-12).

Reported by Laura Kuhn: THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, read (abridged) by Ben Kingsley on 4 CDs (Ashland: Blackstone Audio, 2007; \$19.95); you can hear a sample at their web-site at <www.blackstoneaudio.com>.

There are two mentions of St. Pancras in the Canon (the St. Pancras Hotel in "A Case of Identity" and the St. Pancras case in "Shoscombe Old Place"), and St. Pancras has been in the news again: the St. Pancras railway station is now the London terminus of Eurostar (that's the company that runs trains through the Channel Tunnel). I'll leave it to the railways experts to provide a list of cases in which Holmes and Watson took trains from the station. St. Pancras Chambers, derelict since the 1980s, is being refurbished as a five-star hotel and apartments; <www.stpancraschambers.co.uk> is the URL for a web-site with interesting photographs, old and new.

The Practical, But Limited, Geologists honored the world's first forensic geologist at dinner in Denver on Oct. 31, during the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America; the visitors were welcomed by Bill Dorn on behalf of Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients. There were two technical sessions, and a public forum, on forensic geology during the convention, with some interesting "war stories" as well as some science. Our next dinners will be in San Antonio on Apr. 23, and in Houston on Oct. 8.

"They Might Be Giants" (the rock group that took its name from the film in which George C. Scott played a psychotic judge who believes that he's Sherlock Holmes) first performed in 1983, and issued its first record in 1986; you may have heard them if you watch "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" on Comedy Central (they perform the theme). They're on tour now, and were at the 9:30 Club in Washington this month; they're excellent musicians, and if you want to hear them, their tour schedule is available at their web-site at <www.tmbg.com>, where you can also listen to their podcasts.

It has been quite a while since I mentioned The Wolfe Pack (Jul 96 #1); the society has about 400 members (many of them as fanatic about Nero Wolfe as some Sherlockians are about Holmes), and a web-site at <www.nerowolfe.org>. They have an annual dinner in New York, a literary award called the "Nero" (Laurie R. King won for A MONSTROUS REGIMENT OF WOMEN in 1996) and a lifetime achievement award called the "Archie" (Rex Stout, Agatha Christie, and Arthur Conan Doyle were the first winners in 2005). Membership in the society costs \$35.00 for two years (and includes four issues of The Gazette); Box 230822, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023.

Nov 07 #8 Gideon Hill reports "The Complete Conan Doyle Sherlock Holmes" set of 64 CDs with all of the BBC Radio 4 programs that starred Clive Merrison and Michael Williams, released in July by BBC Audiobooks America; it retails for \$250.00 but is discounted to \$139.99 by Tower Books <www.tower.com>. The same CDs were issued earlier by the BBC in Britain as a "Complete Sherlock Holmes Box Set" (Nov 04 #2) along with a book by Bert Coules offering "a look behind the scenes at the highs and lows that came with the undertaking of such an enormous project," but there's no mention of a book in descriptions of the American set.

The new Disney film "Enchanted" is a delightful and amusing romance, suitable for all ages; if you go to see it you can keep an eye on the jewelry

worn by Amy Adams, Susan Sarandon, and others: it was all hand-crafted for the film by Maggie Schpak (whose Investiture in The Baker Street Irregulars is "The Soup Plate Medal").

Frederic Dorr Steele's portrait of Sherlock Holmes appears in full color in the December issue of Smithsonian magazine, on its "This Month in History" page, honoring the appearance 120 years ago of "A Study in Scarlet" in Beeton's Christmas Annual.

MURDER, 'ORRIBLE MURDER (Norfolk: Crippen & Landru, 2006; 238 pp., \$18.00) is a collection of stories by Amy Myers, including her Sherlockian pastiche "The Case of the Faithful Retainer"; Crippen & Landru, Box 9315, Norfolk, 23505) <www.crippenlandru.com>. Her pastiche was first published in Mike Ashley's anthology THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (London: Robinson, 1997; 512 pp., L6.99) (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1997, 512 pp., \$10.95).

A gorgeous copy of the first edition of THE LOST WORLD (with Conan Doyle on the front cover, disguised as Prof. Challenger) is shown in full color on the cover of the Oct. 2002 issue of Firsts: The Book Collector's Magazine, which also has Robin H. Smiley's "Books on Film" report on the story. The issue also has Don Herron's article on "Arkham House Ephemera: The Classic Years" (for those who saved, or wish they had saved, August Derleth's brochures, sales lists, and postcards). \$9.00 postpaid; Box 65166, Tucson, AZ 85728 <www.firsts.com>.

G. K. CHESTERTON'S SHERLOCK HOLMES (Feb 03 #3) offered his essays and his illustrations for a never-published edition of the stories, and the American Chesterton Society now offers a "a 300-pound Christmas gift" (a colorful Christmas-tree ornament). It costs \$24.95 postpaid (4117 Pebblebrook Circle, Minneapolis, MN 55437 <www.chesterton.org>).

Bouchercon 2007 ("Bearly Alive") went well in Anchorage, from all reports. Laurie King moderated a "My Name Is Sherlock Holmes" panel (on "the enduring romance between the great Holmes and his fans"), with Les Klinger, Michael Kurland, and Michael Masliah. Bouchercon 2008 ("Charmed to Death") will be held in Baltimore on Oct. 9-12; the convention's web-site will be found at <www.charmedtodeath.com>. Bouchercon 2009 ("Elementary, My Dear Indy!") will be held in Indianapolis on Oct. 15-18.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>

Dec 07 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The digital world offers more and more opportunities to publish Sherlockian pastiches: "Amazon Shorts" are available at <www.amazon.com> at \$0.49 each, and there are at least three Sherlockian pieces listed "Sherlock Holmes and the Wayward Wife" (by Woodrow W. Walker) and "The Belgian at Baker Street: Did Hercule Poirot Meet Sherlock Holmes" and "A Study in Watson: The Extraordinary Life of the Man Behind Sherlock Holmes" (by Rafe McGregor). Rafe McGregor also has a web-site at <www.rafemcgregor.co.uk>.

Rohase Piercy's MY DEAREST HOLMES, was published almost 20 years ago (Apr 88 #1), and it's now back in print (Charleston: BookSurge, 2007; 144 pp., \$12.99); it's an intriguing book: it is homosexual in its intellectual and emotional approach, but it is neither erotic nor pornographic. It's a two-part pastiche; the first half presenting Watson's account of a new case in 1887, and the second offers a thoroughly revised report on the events that preceded and followed the fateful journey to the Reichenbach.

Further to the item (Nov 07 #2) on the Easton Press' three-volume THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES: Jon Lellenberg notes that the current edition is not an exact reprint of the Heritage Press edition that appeared in the 1950s, which did not include all the introductions published by the Limited Editions Club. Easton's 1987 edition was a reprint of the Heritage Press set,

but Jon recommended that they expand the set to include all the introductions that had appeared only in the Limited Editions set, and the current Easton set has the introductions by Vincent Starrett, Elmer Davis, Fletcher Pratt, Rex Stout, Anthony Boucher, and Christopher Morley. \$59.00 per volume postpaid (item 0135); 677 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06857 (800-211-1308) <www.eastonpress.com>.

The November issue of Ripperologist (Nov 07 #1) has appeared, with the last of three parts of the early (1907) pastiche "Jack the Ripper: From the Private Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes", and reports on goings-on in the world of students of the infamous murderer. Ripperologist is an electronic journal available at <www.ripperologist.info>. If you want only the three issues with the pastiche, Zinna <editorez@yahoo.co.uk> will be happy to tell you the cost.

Laurie R. King's new stand-alone (and non-Russell) novel TOUCHSTONE will be published on Boxing Day (that's Dec. 26, for those who don't celebrate the holidays in British style), and there's lots of news, as well as a link to her blog, at her web-site at <www.laurierking.com>. The Laurie R. King Online Store at <www.cafepress.com/laurierking/4076810> offers tote-bags and shirts and such that show the covers of the new editions of the first four Mary Russell novels (Nov 07 #7).

Jean-Paul Gratiat is the editor of SHERLOCK HOLMES DANS TOUS SES ETATS (Paris: Editions Payos & Rivages, 2007; 374 pp., E9.50); the anthology has 13 stories, four by French authors and nine translated from English (including an unpublished out-take from William Kotzwinkle's MURDER IN BUGLAND). Only four of the stories are reprints, and Gratiat has cast his net widely, covering both the old (Stephen Leacock's "Le Mystère qui rend maboul") and the new (Ole Joe's "L'Aventure du clitoris en feu").

Dec 07 #2 Francine Kitts has reported THE 101 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE WHO NEVER LIVED: HOW CHARACTERS OF FICTION, MYTHS, LEGENDS, TELEVISION, AND MOVIES HAVE SHAPED OUR SOCIETY, CHANGED OUR BEHAVIOR, AND SET THE COURSE OF HISTORY, by Allan Lazar, Dan Karlan, and Jeremy Salter (New York: Harper Paperbacks, 2006; 336 pp., \$13.95); Sherlock Holmes is #8.

"It's elementary. EAT SMART" is the title of an imaginative poster (#4417) intended to encourage healthy eating, available from Learning ZoneXpress, Box 1022, Owatonna, MN 55060 (888-455-7003) <www.learningzonexpress.com> for \$14.95. "Find the produce," the poster urges, asking children ("appropriate for grades 1 to 12") to identify "apple, asparagus, beans, Napa cabbage, cantaloupe, dried chili peppers, chives, garlic, grape, lentils, okra, onions, pea, bell peppers, raisins." There are posters with similar "fun food" portraits of Albert Einstein and George Washington, and the company also makes the Sherlock Holmes portrait available on an "It's elementary. READ" poster.

There's a new edition of THE LOST WORLD (London: Headline Review, 2007; 288 pp., L4.99); it's an addition to the "Headline Review Classics" series that included the nine volumes of the Canon (Nov 06 #4).

Forecast for January: CRITICAL SURVEY OF MYSTERY & DETECTIVE FICTION, edited by Carl Rollyson (Pasadena: Salem Press, 2008; five vols., 2,080 pp., \$399.00); the table of contents and some of the articles (including Terry Heller's discussion of Conan Doyle) can be viewed at the publisher's web-site at <https://salempress.com/Store/samples/cs_mystery/cs_mystery.htm>. This is a revised and expanded edition; the first (four volume) edition was edited by Frank N. Magill and published in 1988.

Garry James has written about Sherlock Holmes' weapons in the past, and his latest article ("The Guns of Sherlock Holmes") is in the Nov. 2007 issue of Guns & Ammo <www.gunsandammomag.com/classics/ge_sherlock_0711>. Their postal address is 7819 Highland Scenic Road, Baxter, MN 56425 (800-260-6397);

\$8.00 postpaid to the US, \$13.00 to Canada, or \$18.00 overseas).

www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times07-12.htm is the URL for the latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's The Sherlockian E-Times; in which they offer their S'ian calendar as well as books and other items, as well as some news of recent Sherlockian events.

The 27th annual Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium ("The Year of the Yard") will be held in Dayton, Ohio, March 7-9, 2008; Cathy Gill manages the mailing list (4661 Hamilton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45223) (513-681-5507) <chirpsworth@fuse.net>.

Ben Kingsley, who was excellent as Watson in the film "Without a Clue" in 1988, went on to read abridged versions of seven stories from the Canon for Dove Books on Tape (Jun 89 #4). Kingsley is a fine reader (the stories are (Scan/RedH/Twis/Copp/Card/Croo/Sixn), and the recordings have been reissued on four CDs as THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (\$19.95) by Blackstone Audio (800-729-2665) <www.blackstoneaudio.com>; you can hear a sample reading at their web-site.

Dec 07 #3 The American edition of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley (New York: Penguin Press, 2007; 706 pp., \$37.95), is almost the same as the British edition (May 07 #6): there are a few additional explanations of material that might not be familiar to American readers. It's a book that Doyleans and Sherlockians will welcome, and Randall Stock has an excellent web-page, with much more information about the book, at "The Best of Sherlock Holmes" at <members.aol.com/shbest/ref/conan-doyle-life-letters.htm>.

"The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle (Version 2.0)" is Dean Clark's radio-play script, described by Don Hobbs as loosely based on the Canonical tale with a bit of "Without a Clue" thrown in for good measure. The Afghanistan Perceivers of Tulsa and The Diogenes Club of Dallas performed the play, which Don notes is "a superb stocking-stuffer for silly Sherlockian scion societies." The script is available by e-mail from Dean <dclark@seg.org>.

Pat Ward spotted a three-minute skit from "The Muppet Show" on YouTube, at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljrQB2rEtFE>. It's "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Disappearing Clues" (with Rowlf as Sherlock Holmes and Baskerville as Dr. Watson); the skit aired on Oct. 18, 1976 (Jim Henson played Rowlf).

Donald J. Terras (whose Investiture in The Baker Street Irregulars is "The Politician, the Lighthouse, and the Trained Cormorant") takes the Investiture seriously: he has been elected president of the American Lighthouse Coordinating Committee, which (of course) has a web-site at <www.alcc.ws>. Don presides over the Grosse Point Light Station near Chicago; its web-site is at <www.grossepointlighthouse.net>. Don lives in the keeper's quarters, and the light station is still in operation as a private aid to navigation on Lake Michigan.

"How tastes change." Denis Welch noted in the New Zealand Listener on Dec. 15. "It was not much more than 60 years ago that the *Listener* authoritatively declared: 'With the possible exception of Sherlock Holmes, the creation of Conan Doyle, no other fiction character is better known to English readers than Captain Kettle.' Captain who?"

Ted Riccardi's THE ORIENTAL CASEBOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (New York: Random House, 2003; 320 pp., \$24.95) was reported earlier (Sep 03 #3); nine stories about cases Holmes solved during the Great Hiatus in exotic settings, including India, then part of the empire of Edward VII. Riccardi warns in his preface that "the reader who looks to these tales for historical consistency will be disappointed," and that's certainly accurate in this case (Edward traveled to India as Prince of Wales in 1875, and of course Victoria was on the throne during the Great Hiatus).

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London and the Old Court Radio Theatre Company are continuing their CD series, and their latest CD is "The Beryl Coronet and "The Speckled Band" (dramatized by Chris Drake), with a fine cast that includes Jim Crozier as Holmes and Dave Hawkes as Watson. The CD is available from the Society at Mole End, Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE, England); £5.00 postpaid to the U.K., £6.00/€9.00 to Europe, £9.00/\$12.00 elsewhere (sterling checks payable to Roger Johnson and dollar checks payable to Jean Upton; euros in currency, please).

Dec 07 #4 Edinburgh's new Conan Doyle Medical Centre was officially opened on Nov. 30; it's located in Nether Liberton Lane, and you will find a color photo at <www.richardmurphyarchitects.com/projects/353>. The medical center, which will serve 3,700 patients, is near Liberton Bank House, where Conan Doyle lived as a child; the long-derelect house has been restored and converted into the Dunedin School (Nov 07 #6).

Captain who? Captain Owen Kettle was the creation of C. J. Cutcliffe Hyne, as a minor character in HONOUR OF THIEVES (1895) and then in his own story Pearson's Magazine in 1897; he also appeared in THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KETTLE and other later books, and in silent films. Some of the stories are available on-line at <gaslight.mtroyal.ca/kettmenu.htm>, and there are some interesting web-sites with more information about Cutcliffe Hyne and Kettle at <www.collectingbooksandmagazines.com/hyne.html> and an intriguing blog at <yesterdays-papers.blogspot.com> (use the "search blog" feature to find "kettle").

Admirers of Derham Groves' imaginative work as architect, artist, and writer will be glad to hear that he now has a blog at <www.derhamgroves.com>. There's a long list of categories, including "Sherlock Holmes", where you will find his report on "Conan Doyle's Moustache for Sale". And if you're not familiar with his work, spend some time at his blog.

Dragoncat <www.etsy.com> is the web-site for Earlyynn Collier's hand-painted china and needlework, and she has ten Sherlockian items, including an imaginative night-light. Her postal address is 104 Brunswick Drive, Greenwood, IN 46143.

Bob Katz and Dean Clark spotted a news report about a giant rat discovered in a "lost world" in the remote Foja Mountains in western New Guinea; expedition scientists also found a pygmy possum, one of the world's smallest marsupials. The photograph shows Martua Sinaga with a giant rat that weighed 1.4 kg. Pygmy possums weigh from 10 to 50 grams, and of course one might wonder if giant rats dine on pygmy possums.

Reported: a bit of Conan Doyle in SHORE CHRONICLES: DIARIES AND TRAVELERS' TALES FROM THE JERSEY SHORE 1764-1955, edited by Margaret Thomas Buchholz (West Creek: Down the Shore Publishing, 2003; 368 pp., \$16.95); Conan Doyle visited Atlantic City in 1922, and wrote about it in OUR AMERICAN ADVENTURE (1923), excerpted in Buchholz's book.

Reported: Michael A. Hoey's ELVIS, SHERLOCK & ME (Albany: BearManor Media, 2007; 336 pp., \$24.95); the memoirs (subtitled "How I Survived Growing Up in Hollywood") of the son of Dennis Hoey, who played Lestrade in the Universal "Sherlock Holmes" series.

Scott Monty and Burt Wolder have now reached episodes #14 and #15 of their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcasts at <www.ihearofsherlock.com>, with a two-part interview with Mike Whelan, covering his first experience with Sherlock Holmes, how he became head of The Baker Street Irregulars, and the BSI and its traditions, including the birthday festivities.

Dec 07 #5 The Feb. 2008 issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, which will on the newsstands during the birthday celebrations, offers

Sherlockian cover art by Phil Cornell, a new Amlingmeyer brothers pastiche by Steve Hockensmith ("The Devil's Acre"), a pastiche by Ed Hoch ("A Scandal in Montreal"), and reviews of recent Sherlockian and Doylean books by Jon L. Breen.

Miklos Rozsa's "Concerto for Violin and Orchestra" was written for Jascha Heifetz and premiered by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in 1956; it was then used in the score for Billy Wilder's "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970), and a new recording of the score was issued by Tadlow earlier this year (Feb 07 #7). Now Naxos has issued a new recording of Rozsa's "Violin Concerto" and "Sinfonia Concertante" by the Russian Philharmonic Orchestra on a CD (\$9.98); it's also available from Amazon Digital Services as an MP3 download (\$7.99). This year marks the 100th anniversary of Rozsa's birth.

Australia will issue a set of stamps in February honoring the centenary of Scouting in Australia, with a portrait of Lord Robert Baden-Powell on one of the stamps; he is mentioned in Conan Doyle's history THE GREAT BOER WAR, and Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes are mentioned in Baden-Powell's SCOUTING FOR BOYS.

Jeff Falkingham's SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE CAPER was published in 2001, and a new "2007 flood edition" was issued this year to benefit flood recovery in Browns Valley, Minn.; there's a brief excerpt at his web-site <www.cccaper.com/excerpt4.html>, and the cost of the 227-page book is \$20.00 postpaid (Box 307, Browns Valley, MN 56219). Falkingham brings Holmes to Browns Valley in 1886 to help solve a series of murders, and the book offers a lot of local history.

Laurie R. King reports that she has started work on her ninth Mary Russell novel, which has the working title THE LANGUAGE OF THE BEES. Her web-site (with a link to her blog) is at <www.laurierking.com>.

Forecast for April: Shane Peacock's DEATH IN THE AIR (Tundra); a sequel to his EYE OF THE CROW (Aug 07 #3). A flying trapeze artist dies at Holmes' feet, and he notices that the trapeze bar has been cut twice.

Andrew Lycett's THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (New York: Free Press, 2007; 557 pp., \$30.00) is the American edition of his biography CONAN DOYLE: THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, published earlier this year in Britain (Sep 07 #6). Lycett has had access to far more sources than any previous biographer of Conan Doyle, and he was able to make some corrections to statements in the British edition.

Richard L. Kellogg has written for psychologists and children in addition to Sherlockians; his VIGNETTES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (New York: Gryphon Books, 2008; 106 pp., \$16.00) is a collection of 20 essays published in journals that range from The Baker Street Journal to Studies in Psychoanalytic Theory, and the subjects of his essays include James Hilton, Eliot Ness, Allan Pinkerton, and Henry David Thoreau. Gryphon's address is Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228 <www.gryphonbooks.com>.

Dec 07 #6 According to a poll commissioned by British health insurer BCWA this year, Dr. Watson "is sadly more well-known to the average Brit than many real-life medics that have actually made a genuine difference to people's lives." Watson was correctly identified by 59% of the respondents, followed by Sir Alexander Fleming (51%), Dr. Kildare (47%), Dr. Frasier Crane (43%), and Florence Nightingale (37%).

Dan L. Hover, Sr., has dramatized "A Study in Scarlet" for a full-cast recording on 4 CDs (\$24.95) available from ACD Productions (Box 191, West Salem, OH 44287) <www.acdproductions.com>; it's well done, with a fine cast, including Ron Cuirle as Holmes and Geoffrey Darling as Watson.

Eleanor Schweickert died on Dec. 13. She was a generous, refined, and gra-

cious lady, the widow of William P. Schweickert, and she was honored by The Baker Street Irregulars as *The* woman in 1984.

Further to the item (Feb 07 #2) on the campaign to upgrade the protection of Undershaw, the house where Conan Doyle lived from 1897 to 1907, the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport has rejected the appeal of its decision the building lacks the level of special architectural interest which would justify a Grade 1 listing." The decision (at hand from John Baesch) notes that it cannot be said that the house "survives little-altered from the time when Conan Doyle occupied it," and that "were Conan Doyle to return he would find both the appearance and the 'feel' of his old home much altered."

Dr. William R. Hanson has designed a cachet to accompany his special cancel for the Glen-Pex Stamp and Postcard Show in Glens Falls, N.Y., on Nov. 17; the cachet shows Holmes and Watson in front of Simpson's on the Strand, and a quote from "The Dying Detective" (which Baring-Gould dated Nov. 19, 1887, almost exactly 120 years before the show opened), and the cancel shows Conan Doyle and James Fenimore Cooper (the show had exhibits on Holmes and Cooper). The cost of the cover is \$4.50 postpaid (to the U.S. and Canada) or \$5.00 (elsewhere); his address is 78 West Notre Dame Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801.

Joe Bevilacqua's 30-minute parody radio series "The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes" was launched on WKNJ-FM (Union City) in 1980 and continued on WBAI-FM (New York) in 1983 and 1984; the programs were available on CDs and cassettes (Aug 00 #1), and now you can listen to them (and many of his non-Sherlockian programs) without charge at <www.joebev.com> (click on "audio library" and then on "comedy library"). Daws Butler was Joe's good friend and mentor, and wrote the script for the first program ("Sherlock Holmes in Trouble"); go back click on "writings" to find books Joe has written about Daws Butler. There's a photo gallery and more information about the series at <www.comedyorama.com/holmes>.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <blau7103@comcast.net>