

Jan 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

"A long weekend of Sherlockian activities, largely involving too much food and even more drink," was Michel Dirda's forecast in his "Dirda on Books" on-line conversation at <www.washingtonpost.com>, and the description certainly was appropriate. The festivities began with the now-traditional ASH Wednesday supper 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 Sir Christopher Frayling, who presented a fascinating report on the genesis of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" based on new information revealed in Conan Doyle's pocket diary for 1901. You'll be able to read his lecture in The Baker Street Journal later this year (see below for information on how to subscribe).

On Friday members of The Hounds of the Internet met informally at the bar at Moran's Chelsea Seafood Restaurant before the William Gillette Luncheon; the luncheon featured The Friends of Bogie's at Baker Street (Paul Singleton, Sarah Montague, and Andrew Joffe) in a reprise of their 1984 presentation of excerpts from the Canon as written by Chandler, Shakespeare, Pinter, Joyce, and Milne. And Otto Penzler's traditional Mysterious Bookshop open house offered the usual opportunities to browse and buy.

The Gillette Luncheon also featured Evelyn Herzog's announcement of 19 new members of The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes, a society for many years XX-rated (with regard to chromosomes), until 1991, when four men were made full members (with Investitures). At the end of 2006 men were invited to make ASHes of themselves by applying for membership, and the new members are: John F. Baesch ("Cardinal Tosca"), Peter J. Crupe ("The Noble Bachelor"), Allan Devitt ("The Criterion Bar"), Joe Fink ("Tonga"), Alexian Gregory ("The Coptic Monasteries of Syria and Egypt"), Andrew Joffe ("The Dog That Did Nothing in the Night-Time"), Roger Johnson ("Shinwell Johnson"), Robert S. Katz ("Dr. Jackson"), Brad Keefauver ("Something Hunt"), William Nadel ("These Modern Gramophones"), Andrew J. Peck ("The Date Being-?"), Warren Randall ("An Impish Habit"), Christopher Redmond ("The Glamour of His Convictions"), Philip A. Shreffler ("Radix Pedis Diaboli"), Andrew L. Solberg ("Professor Coram"), Thom Utecht ("Montague Street"), Edwin Van der Flaes ("Nonpareil Club"), Bill Vande Water ("A Very Ordinary Individual After All"), and Ben Vizoskie ("Briarbrae").

The Beacon Society gathered for its annual meeting at the Algonquin on Friday afternoon; the group's mission is to encourage and recognize programs that introduce young people to Holmes, and the winner of this year's Beacon award was Watson's Tin Box (the society was honored for its sponsorship of an annual student essay-writing competition).

The Irregulars and their guests gathered for the BSI's annual dinner at the Union League Club, and Heloise Rathbone (granddaughter of Basil Rathbone) was honored as the "highly irregular" guest at the reception, offering some fine stories about her grandfather. The dinner featured the usual toasts and traditions (including Andy Fusco's imaginative and ad-lib rendition of the Constitution and Buy-Laws), Michael Dirda's tribute to Vincent Starrett

Jan 08 #2 (this year being the 75th anniversary of the publication of his THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES), Betsy Rosenblatt's stirring up-date of Samuel Rosenberg's NAKED IS THE BEST DISGUISE, Ray Betzner's toast to Old Irregular Vincent Starrett, a tribute in song (with words by Henry Boote) to the four senior Irregulars present at the dinner (Art Levine, David Weiss, Peter Blau, and George McCormack), and much more.

Mike Whelan (the BSI's "Wiggins") announced the Birthday Honours, awarding Irregular Shillings and Investitures to Betsy Rosenblatt ("Lucy Ferrier"), Dana Richards ("The Priory School"), Dave Morrill ("Count Von Kramm"), Barbara Roisman Cooper ("Mary Maberley"), Randall Stock ("South African Secur-

ities"), John Genova ("Harry Pinner"), and Guy Marriott ("The Grand Hotel du Louvre").

Mike also presented the BSI's Two-Shilling Award (for extraordinary devotion to the cause beyond the call of duty) to Sherry Rose-Bond, and the Editor's Medal to Roy Pilot, Al Rosenblatt, and Christopher and Barbara Roden, in recognition of their services as editors of books and Christmas Annals published by the BSI.

The Gaslight Gala, held at the Manhattan Club, celebrated "Damsels in Distress" with toasts, music and song (by the Gaslight Damsels and Dudes), a skit ("That was No Lady, That was My Watson"), Donny Zaldin as "Carnac the Magnificent, Sherlock Style", Don Hobbs' Sherlockian video tour of "Texas, Oklahoma, and perhaps Arkansas", a raffle (a sweatshirt donated by Cynthia Wein), and an auction.

On Saturday morning the dealers room at the Algonquin welcomed (as usual) sellers and buyers, and at 10:30 The Clients of Adrian Mulliner (devotees of the works of both Wodehouse and Watson) gathered for their Junior Bloodstain, which featured a dramatic reading of Marilyn MacGregor's dramatization of Poul Anderson and Gordon R. Dickson's 1953 pastiche "The Adventure of the Mislplaced Hound".

The BSI's Saturday-afternoon cocktail party was again at the New York City Bar Association, with entertainment in the auditorium, and wining, dining, and conversation in their reception room. The entertainment began with a performance of Jerome Coopersmith's one-act play "The Other Side" (starring Paul Singleton and Elyse Locurto as Harry and Bess Houdini, and Bob Thoma-len and Mary Ellen Rich as Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle), and continued with Al and Betsy Rosenblatt's poetic report on events of the previous year and the previous evening, and Mary Ann Bradley's introduction of the ladies who have been honored by the BSI as the woman.

Ray Betzner was announced as the winner of the Morley-Montgomery Award (an attractive certificate and a check for \$500) for the best contribution to The Baker Street Journal last year: his article "The Wicked Beginnings of a Baker Street Classic!" And the John H. Watson Fund benefited from energetic sales of raffle tickets (by June Kinnee, Sue Vizoskie, Elaine Coppola, and Carol Cavaluzzi) for a prize donated by Patricia Guy: a bottle of 1985 Masi Amarone ("A census taker tried to quantify me once. I ate his liver with some fava beans and a big Amarone," Hannibal Lecter said, in THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS).

Jan 08 #3 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 this year's auction were Maggie Schpak and the Curious Collectors of Baker Street (a glamorous replica of the Beryl Coronet), Joe Coppola and the Mycroft Holmes Society (an arts-and-crafts style hand-crafted bracket clock), Gail Postal (an oil portrait of Sherlock Holmes), Elaine Coppola (Google's official lapel pin with their Sherlockian logo from May 22, 2005), and Joanne Zahorsky-Reeves (a custom tailored replica of Sherlock Holmes' dressing gown).

A Saturday-evening event was the "Lost in New York with a Bunch of Sherlockians" dinner at Kennedy's Irish Restaurant, where Sherlockians from at least five nations joined Chrys Kegley and The Curious Collectors of Baker Street for additional festivities (including a traditional reading from Ogdon Nash's THE PRIMROSE PATH). Many Sherlockians (and a few non-Sherlockians) also attended an evening performance of "Sherlock: Solo", a one-man play that written and performed by Victor Cahn. And Sunday morning a convivial group of visiting and local 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 of the Morley-Montgomery Awards, articles from recent issues of the BSJ, and information on the BSI's other publications.

And a final note, for those who are planning ahead: The Baker Street Irregulars' next annual dinner will be held on Jan. 9, 2009, honoring the 150th anniversary of the birth of Arthur Conan Doyle and the 75th anniversary of the founding of the BSI. And planning continues for the BSI's "A Study in Scarlet" excursion to Salt Lake City (Aug. 29-Sept. 1), and for the Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium at Harvard University's Houghton Library in Cambridge (May 7-9, 2009).

"A REMARKABLE MIXTURE": AWARD-WINNING ARTICLES FROM THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL, edited and introduced by Steven Rothman (New York: Baker Street Irregulars, 2007; 362 pp., \$35.00), is an anthology of the writings of winners of the Morley-Montgomery Award, from Poul Anderson in 1958 to Harold Billings in 2006. The award was established by Lew David Feldman in honor of Christopher Morley and James Montgomery, and honors the author of the best contribution to The Baker Street Journal in the preceding year; the anthology is a fine demonstration of how interesting the BSJ has been, and is. By mail: (2 Dettling Road, Maynard, MA 01754); \$35.00 plus shipping: \$3.95 (North America) or \$9.95 (elsewhere) plus \$1.50 for each additional copy. You can also order on-line at <www.bakerstreetjournal.com>.

Jan 08 #4 George MacDonald Fraser died on Jan. 2. An excellent writer, he was best-known for a long series of novels about the picaresque coward, bully, and womanizer Harry Flashman; Fraser also wrote fine screenplays and insightful introductions to reprints of THE WHITE COMPANY/SIR NIGEL and THE EXPLOITS AND ADVENTURES OF BRIGADIER GERARD. His Flashman series debuted in 1969, and "Flashman & the Tiger" was first published in the Daily Express in 1975 and collected in FLASHMAN AND THE TIGER, AND OTHER EXTRACTS FROM THE FLASHMAN PAPERS (Oct 99 #4); it's a splendid tale: the "tiger" is Col. Sebastian Moran, with whom Flashman had three encounters (this being the third, in an empty house in Baker Street in 1894).

Fraser's introduction to THE EXPLOITS AND ADVENTURES OF BRIGADIER GERARD is available on-line at <www.nybooks.com/shop/product?product_id=4>; click on "Read the introduction" (kindly reported by Cliff Goldfarb). The book is still in print, as is THE COMPLETE BRIGADIER GERARD, published by Barnes & Noble in 2005 with an introduction by Cliff, and you can read his introduction on-line as well, at <www.barnesandnoble.com> (use their "see inside" feature).

The famous/infamous "tent joke" was unveiled to The Hounds of the Internet in July 1998, and seems to have appeared in print first in the Reader's Digest (Nov. 1998), and it was published here somewhat later (Dec 01 #6), and it came in second in voting for the world's funniest joke (Oct 02 #1); it's still being told, by Olivia Wilde (who appears on television in the series "House"), in the January issue of Esquire in their "Funny Joke from a Beautiful woman" department. You can read the joke (and there's a photograph); go to <www.esquire.com/women> and search for [olivia wilde]. Jim Hawkins noted the magazine's disclaimer: "Esquire cannot guarantee that this joke will be funny to everyone."

<www.cafepress.com> is an interesting web-site with some amusing Sherlockiana: John Pforr has reported a Sherlock Holmes license plate frame (this is one

of the six advertised at the site, at \$14.00 each); go to <www.cafepress.com/bakerstreet> and click on "auto accessories" to see all six.

The Mystery Writers of America have announced the nominees for Edgars (to be awarded at their gala banquet on May 1 in New York). The nominees include (best critical/biographical) ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley. Their web-site at <www.mysterywriters.org/pages/awards/nominees07.htm> lists the nominees in all the categories.

Tom Dunn launched his The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeric in 1965, and continued to publish it for his Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers until he died in 2005. Albert Mendez, a stalwart member of the Coterie, has now launched his own The Pipe Smoker's Thing: the first issue (autumn 2006) offered a heart-felt tribute to Tom Dunn, and the third issue (autumn 2007) has 12 pages of almost entirely Sherlockian content. Following in Tom Dunn's footsteps, Albert Mendez offers copies on request, "in consideration of a small donation to help defray the costs of printing and postage." His address is 142-35 38th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11354.

Jan 08 #5 There were some familiar names on the Queen's New Year's honours list: Sir Ian McKellen and Roy Dotrice. McKellen, who was appointed CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in 1979 and knighted in 1991, was appointed to the Order of Companions of Honour (CH) for services to drama and to equality; he appeared in Sherlockian costume in a 4-minute skit ("Hot Air Balloon Mystery Theater") on "Saturday Night Live" (2002). And Roy Dotrice was appointed CBE for services to drama; he played Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in the Disney film "Young Harry Houdini" (1987), and he played Douglas Stone in the BBC-2 dramatization of "The Case of Lady Sannox" (1968).

Edward D. Hoch died on Jan. 17. He was a masterful short story writer, and a novelist and editor. John Dickson Carr once wrote about Hoch that "Satan himself would be proud of his ingenuity"); he had a story in every issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine for more than 34 years (sometimes more than one story in an issue, writing under a pseudonym as well as his own name), and 1991 was honored as a Grand Master by the Mystery Writers of America. He wrote many Sherlockian and Doylean pastiches (some of them as R. L. Stevens); his "A Scandal in Montreal" appeared in the February issue of EQMM that was distributed at the Baker Street Irregulars' annual dinner.

"To be a book-collector is to combine the worst characteristics of a dope fiend with those of a miser." Robertson Davies, in THE TABLE TALK OF SAMUEL MARCHBANKS (kindly, or perhaps unkindly, forwarded by Alan Rettig).

"The Case of the Influential Illustrator: Sidney Paget's Sherlock Holmes" is the title of an exhibition that opened on Dec. 1 at the Church Farmhouse Museum in Greyhound Hill, London, and will remain open through May 5. The exhibition honors the centenary of Paget's death in January 1908, and the museum is located near Finchley, where Paget lived for a time and is buried in Marylebone Cemetery. There's more information about the museum at its web-site at <www.churchfarmhousemuseum.co.uk>

<www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/special/sherlock.cfm> is the URL for the web-site for the Marylebone Library's Sherlock Holmes Collection, with news of the discovery of two portraits painted by Sidney Paget; there's a link to Catherine Cooke's interesting discussion of the portraits.

Interesting things turn up at auction (thanks to Wilfrid de Freitas for observing this item): a copy of Mary Conan Doyle's A VISIT TO HEAVEN (1899), inscribed "With the Author's loves" (Arthur Conan Doyle's daughter was nine year old at the time); it sold for £780 (plus premium and tax) at Bonhams in Bath on Oct. 30. And Alec Guinness' handwritten 20-page script for his dramatization of "The Adventure of the Dying Detective" (done in 1929, when

he was a 15-year-old schoolboy) went for £360 (also plus premium and tax) at Bonhams in Knightsbridge on June 20.

The Norwegian Explorers' "Christmas Annual 2007" has fine tributes to Allen Mackler and his 221B room (now on display at the University of Minnesota), a tour of other reproductions of the sitting-room, and additional scholarship, entertainment, and poetry; the 46-page booklet is available from John Bergquist (3665 Ashbury Road, Eagan, MN 55122) for \$8.00 postpaid (checks payable to The Norwegian Explorers, please).

Jan 08 #6 Lionsgate will have its premiere for "The Bank Job" in London on Feb. 25. The film had the working title "Baker Street" and claims to be based on the bank robbers who tunneled into a Lloyds Bank on Baker Street in 1971 and got away with £1.5 million; some of the culprits were caught and convicted in 1973, and of course newspapers and magazines noted similarities to "The Red-Headed League" (Nov 06 #8). A story by John Millar, spotted by John Baesch in The Express on Sunday (Jan. 6), reports that in the film it's a safety-deposit box robbery, set up by MI5 to recover sexually compromising photographs of a British princess, and that there was a note scribbled on the inside of the safe: "Let Sherlock Holmes try to solve this."

Benton Wood ("A Scandal in Bohemia") died on Dec. 8, 2007. He was an educator, chaplain, philatelist, and numismatist, and for many years the Recorder of The Pleasant Places of Florida. He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1979, succeeded the Rev. Leslie Marshall as the Chaplain of the BSI; and received the BSI's Two-Shilling Award in 1997.

"World Book Club" is a 27-minute weekly series broadcast by the BBC World Service, and Harriett Gilbert's interview with Umberto Eco about THE NAME OF THE ROSE aired on Dec. 29. You can download the interview (and earlier broadcasts) at <www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/worldservice/wbc>.

RBC Computers made some of the Soviet "Sherlock Holmes" television series starring Vasily Livanov available on cassettes and DVDs with English subtitles some years ago (Nov 02 #1); the company's now called RussianDVD.com (269 Brighton Beach Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11235) (800-901-5543), with a web-site at <www.russiandvd.com>, and the DVDs are in NTSC format. Phil Bergem reports that if you order all five titles, they arrive as a boxed set.

Interesting and useful things continue to turn up on the Internet: Ken Lanza has noted Chris Haycock's web-site at <www.sherlockandwatson.com>, where he offers a download of the text of all the Sherlock Holmes stories, with a long list of Conan Doyle's other fiction and non-fiction, all for \$19.97.

Another example of how interesting the Internet can be: "The Author Trail" at <www.authortrail.eu> offers you a chance to identify some of the sites in East Sussex, Medway (in Kent), and the Somme associated with famous authors (including Conan Doyle, for whom the East Sussex map provides links for Crowborough, Forest Row, Groombridge, Newhaven, Rotherfield, and Winchelsea).

Jon Lellenberg has reported an interesting review of Matthew Hughes' novel MAJESTRUM: A TALE OF HENGHIS HAPTHORN: Publishers Weekly called Hapthorn a "sleuth who combines the confident brilliance of Sherlock Holmes with the amusing voice of P. G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster, in a fantastical mystery reminiscent of Randall Garrett's Lord Darcy novels." A second novel (THE SPIRAL LABYRINTH has already been published, and a third is in the works. Hapthorne first appeared in six imaginative stories published in The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction in 2004 and 2005, and they've been collected in THE GIST HUNTER AND OTHER STORIES. Night Shade Books is the publisher, with a web-site at <www.nightshadebooks.com>, and you can read excerpts from the two novels at <www.archonatebooks.com>.

Jan 08 #7 Raymond Betzner has edited the 75th anniversary edition of Vin-

cent Starrett's *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (Indianapolis: Gasogene Books, 2008; 221 pp., \$29.95); the new edition is a splendid tribute to Starrett and his book (which Julian Wolff said was "the greatest book about Sherlock Holmes that has ever been written"), with a facsimile of the first edition (1933), an appreciation of Starrett by Robert J. Mangler, a discussion of the origins of Starrett's book, and a bibliography of the many subsequent editions. \$37.20 postpaid (to the U.S.) from the publisher (Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268) <www.wessexpress.com>; costs of shipping outside the U.S. available at the web-site.

Gasogene has also published *BAKER STREET RAMBLES*, by Leslie S. Klinger (210 pp. \$18.95), reprinting his Sherlockian essays and reviews (and a radio-play script) that appeared in various journals and newspapers from 1994 to 2005. \$24.45 postpaid (to the U.S.); publisher's address as above).

THE QUINTESSENTIAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, by Richard L. Boyer (Alexander: Alexander Books, 2008; 496 pp., \$75.00), is a collection of five pastiches, from "The Giant Rat of Sumatra" (1976) to "The Wilton Water Horror" (2007); it's a deluxe leather-bound and boxed edition, with atmospheric illustrations by Phil Hawkins. Four of the stories are reprints, but they have been revised and expanded for this volume. The publisher's at 65 Macedonia Road, Alexander, NC 28701 (800-472-0438) <www.sherlockholmeslives.com>. Boyer won an Edgar (for best novel) in 1983 for his *BILLINGSGATE SHOAL*, the first in his series of "Doc Adams" mysteries.

The March issue of Alfred Hitchcock's *Mystery Magazine* has "The Adventure of the Red Circle" with annotations by Leslie S. Klinger, who also contributed a guest editorial ("The Immortal Sherlock Holmes") on Holmes' enduring appeal to modern readers. Les reports that several of the annotations are new, bringing the scholarship current.

Add another site to a tour of places associated with *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*: Parnham House, near Beaminster in Dorset. The Wrenwood Hotel's web-site states that "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, awoken by the baying of the hounds during a night's stay at Parnham, is said to have been inspired by the sound to write his famous classic *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*." But the Automobile Association's *EXPLORING BRITAIN'S HISTORIC HOUSES* (by Penny Wicks, 1995) offers a rather different story: "In the 1920s Parnham was a fashionable country club, and its patrons included the Prince of Wales and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Conan Doyle always stayed in what is now the Country Room, and was convinced that it was haunted."

"The Madness of Sherlock Holmes: Conan Doyle and the Realm of the Faeries" is a 70-minute DVD written, directed, and narrated by Philip Gardiner, who has written books that include *QUANTUM MIND OF GOD* and *GATEWAYS TO THE OTHERWORLD*. Produced by Reality Entertainment (\$24.95), the DVD explores the gnostic, theosophist, and mystic aspects of Holmes and Conan Doyle; there's a 3-minute preview at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbUczdKhDQ8>. There's also an audiobook, available at <www.real2can.com/storeaudiobooks.htm> for purchase (€10.99) or MP3 download (\$10.99). And you can interviews with Gardiner about some of his non-Sherlockian books can be heard at a metaphysical talk show at <www.exploreyourspirit.com/podcasts.html>.

Jan 08 #8 The Toronto Public Library has made available a digital edition of Lady Conan Doyle's diary for Conan Doyle's tour of Canada in 1914. You can turn pages, zoom in and out, and click on related text notes and images; the URL is <ve.torontopubliclibrary.ca/showcase/lcd_diary>, and it's a grand example of what can be done with up-to-date digitization (and the Internet), and it is well worth a visit.

Yuichi Hirayama has resumed his English-language blog about "Sherlockiana in Japan" at <ameblo.jp/shinjapan>, and his web-site for the Shoso-In Bulletin is at <www1.parkcity.ne.jp/hirayama>.

Karen Murdock reports her discovery of Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints

<www.kessinger.net>; they publish "thousands of rare, scarce, and out-of-print books," and there are many titles available if you search for [conan doyle] or [sherlock holmes].

Patricia Guy's BACCHUS AT BAKER STREET was published some years ago (Nov 95 #6), and it's now back in print (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2007; 150 pp., \$13.95) with the subtitle "Sherlock Holmes & Victorian Drinking Lore" and new (and attractive) cover art by Gianni Burato. She discusses the wine, beer and spirits found in the Canon, and the brewers, vintners, barkeepers and wine-merchants, with flavor and humor and an occasional surprise.

<www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times08-1.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 Sherlockian news and web-links.

Ten years ago Ramute Plioplys, a member of The South Downers near Chicago, created a series of attractive Sherlockian eggs, to hang on your Christmas tree or elsewhere; they were decorated in the Lithuanian tradition (using heated beeswax and multiple dye baths) and featured dancing men and S'ian mottos. Ramute died last year, and her brother has showcased her art on a new web-site at <www.ramute-pliedplys.com>, where you can see her Sherlock Holmes Eggs and her other creations.

Reported by Phil Attwell: the Royal Mail's presentation pack for the set of stamps honoring James Bond, issued on Jan. 8, includes a time-line for Bond and his creator Ian Fleming; the entry for Bond in 1964 states "Bond--like Sherlock Holmes--declines a knighthood." There are links to more information about the stamps at <www.royalmail.com/portal/stamps>.

Ales Kolodrubec reports that a Czech publisher (Garamond) has issued a series of bilingual editions (English on one page and Czech on the other) of Sherlock Holmes stories (three short stories or one novel per volume) and some of Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian stories. The books cost from \$9.00 to \$14.00 each plus shipping, and if you're interested you should send an e-mail to Ales at <ales@sherlockholmes.cz> and ask for more information. Another company is publishing Czech translations of some of Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian work, and Ales has information about them as well.

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Feb 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The "Sherlock Holmes weekend" in Cape May, N.J., on Mar. 7-9 will include a new mystery ("Sherlock Holmes and the Music Box Murders") presented by Midsummer Night Productions, and a performance of Craig Wichman's dramatization of "The Speckled Band" by the East Lynne Theater Company. The festival web-site at <www.capemaymac.org/tours/winter/special/sherlock.html> has more information (the Sherlock Holmes weekends have been held in the spring and fall for many years).

I began last month's issue quoting from Michael Dirda's weekly on-line conversation "Dirda on Books" at <www.washingtonpost.com>, and I might as well do it again: he was asked to recommend a collection of the Sherlock Holmes stories that can be read without the assistance of a magnifying glass, and he had three suggestions: the Heritage Press edition, the OXFORD ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, and THE NEW ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, noting that for the last of the three that you "would have to enjoy or put up with the bizarre kind of playful scholarship associated with the Baker Street Irregulars."

<www.sherlockiancalendar.homestead.com>, maintained by Ron Fish and Ben and Sue Vizoskie, is an excellent list of upcoming Sherlockian events, for anyone who would like to know what's happening when, and where; if you want to have something listed, Ron is at <ronf404@aol.com>.

"Despot Bigwigs Ban Sherlock Holmes Carriage" was the headline on a story in the Hampstead & Highgate Express (Jan. 18), at hand from Ken Lanza. The historic hansom cab (which is billed as London's only Victorian horse-drawn taxi) has been banned from the Royal Parks because it advertises the Sherlock Holmes Museum. A spokesman for Royal Parks (which include Hyde Park, Green Park, and Regent's Park) said that "managing the parks is about balance and we seek to limit commercialization and advertising where we can." John Aidiniantz, director of the museum, said that "it is not reasonable or practical for us to cover up our advertising," and that the museum has been trying to get a commercial license to travel through the Royal Parks for 15 years. Aidiniantz said the latest refusal is "the last straw," and the cab has now been taken off the streets, because "you cannot take the cab around London without going through the parks because you have to go around them which is no good for the horses."

An addition to the familiar names on the Queen New Year's honours list (Jan 08 #5): June Lancelyn Green (Richard Lancelyn Green's mother) was appointed MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) for services to the community in Merseyside. Thanks to Steve Rothman for the report.

Michael Cox, the executive producer of the Granada "Sherlock Holmes" television series, was the keynote speaker at the first Sherlock Holmes Review symposium at Indiana University in Bloomington in 1987, offering his audience the inside story of the creation of the series. His talk was recorded, and it's a delight to hear his account of the imagination and hard work involved in launching and continuing the series. "A Study in Celluloid" is a 58-minute CD available from the Wessex Press (Box 68308, Indianapolis, IN 46268) <www.wessexpress.com>. \$18.45 postpaid (to the U.S.); see the website for shipping costs outside the U.S.

Feb 08 #2 OLD DEVIL MOON, by Christopher Fowler (London: Serpent's Tail, 2007; 296 pp., £7.99/\$14.95); his tenth collection of "dark and sometimes uneasily humorous" short stories, including "The Lady Downstairs" (an amusing Sherlock Holmes story told by his landlady, who has an entirely different perspective on the Great Detective); the story was read by Hannah Gordon in the BBC 7 radio series "Cult Holmes" in 2005.

Nancy Springer's "Enola Holmes" mysteries continue with THE CASE OF THE BIZARRE BOUQUETS (New York: Philomel, 2008; 170 pp., \$14.99); the series is for young readers, and the stories and characterizations are excellent (THE CASE OF THE MISSING MARQUESS and THE CASE OF THE LEFT-HANDED LADY are the previous books). Enola is the younger sister of Mycroft and Sherlock, and is hiding from them in London and solving mysteries on her own.

Al Gregory <gaslightandfog@earthlink.net> offers (by e-mail only) his 2008 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).

The Pleasant Places of Florida are sponsoring a Sherlock Holmes Film Festival at St. Petersburg College on Mar. 29; it's open to the public without charge, and the films are "The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire" (2002, with Matt Frewer), "The Musgrave Ritual" (1986, with Jeremy Brett), and "Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars" (2007, with Jonathan Pryce). This is the sort of event that brings new members to a society, of course, in addition to helping "keep the memory green."

Rupert Holmes (who is perhaps best known as the author of the musical "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" and whose pen name reflects his enjoyment of Rupert Knickerbocker beer and the Canon) has joined the executive committee of the International Mystery Writers' Festival, and he has adapted two episodes of his delightful television series "Remember WENN" (1996) for performance (as "Armchair Detective: A Remember WENN Musical Mystery") in Owensboro, Ky., June 12-22. "Remember WENN" was a 30-minute series about a fictional radio

station in Pittsburgh during the golden age of radio, and "Armchair Detective" had the station doing a Sherlock Holmes broadcast. The festival website <www.newmysteries.org> will have more information about the schedule, which also will feature Stuart Kaminsky's dramatization of his short-story pastiche "The Final Toast" (1987).

"In lighter moments she turns to Conan Doyle," Wilson Harris wrote, in an article on "The Education of a Queen" in the Atlantic Monthly (Dec. 1943), also reported by Jon Lellenberg. The article was about Princess Elizabeth, then 17 years old, and Harris hoped that she read THE WHITE COMPANY as well as SHERLOCK HOLMES. You can read the entire article at the Atlantic's website at <www.theatlantic.com/doc/194312/queen-elizabeth>.

Plan ahead (but decide quickly): the announcement for the Baker Street Irregulars' "A Study in Scarlet" excursion to Salt Lake City on Aug. 29-Sept. 1 is being mailed to those who asked Mike Whelan to put them on the mailing list; space will be limited, so if you haven't asked to be on the mailing list already, write to Michael F. Whelan (7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278).

Feb 08 #3 "There have been millions of detective stories over the years. Many of them are forgettable. Somehow Sherlock Holmes has endured, mainly because no one could write a detective story as brilliantly as Conan Doyle and nobody could come up with a character as interesting and flawed as Sherlock Holmes." Stan Lee (who has created some enduring characters himself), interviewed at <www.forbes.com> on Feb. 7. Thanks to Ken Lanza for spotting this.

Laurie R. King discusses THE ART OF DETECTION on a new 38-minute DVD "Mysterious California: Four Authors" created by Pamela Beere Brings and William McDonald for the California Center for the Book, which offers a "book club in a box" without charge to libraries in California <www.calbook.org>. The other authors are Kirk Russell (SHELL GAMES), Nina Revoyr (SOUTHLAND), and Nadia Gordon (SHARPSHOOTER), and all four of them have written mysteries set in California and have interesting things to say about their books. The DVD is available for purchase by out-of-state libraries (\$85.00 to public libraries, and \$150.00 to college and university libraries) at the website or by phone (800-343-5540). The filmmakers also have kindly made it available to individuals for home use only at a "writer's discount" price of \$35.00 until June 1 (same phone number: 800-343-5540).

Laurie already has written more than 100 pages of her next book, THE LANGUAGE OF BEES. It's the new Mary Russell/Sherlock Holmes novel, of course, and you'll find more information about Laurie and her work and her blog at her web-site <www.laurierking.com>.

And Laurie will be on tour, making appearances in the Detroit area on Apr. 16-18, discussing THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE and signing books. Details at their web-site <www.everyonesreading.info/meetathr.hrm>

Barry Morse died on Feb. 2. Best known as Lt. Philip Gerard, who pursued Richard Kimble in the 1960s television series "The Fugitive", he began his acting career when he received a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in the 1930s, and went on to act on stage and screen and television for more than 60 years. He played Carter Morstan in CBS-TV's "The Return of Sherlock Holmes" (1987).

Reported: L'AFFAIRE DU CHIEN DES BASKERVILLE, by Pierre Bayard (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 2008; 166 pp., E14.50; Bayard is a psychoanalyst and a professor of French literature, and the author of HOW TO TALK ABOUT BOOKS YOU HAVEN'T READ, and in his latest book he concludes that Sherlock Holmes got it wrong, and that Sir Charles Baskerville wasn't killed by Jack Stapleton with the help of a gigantic dog. In other books Bayard has suggested that Hamlet got it wrong (Claudius didn't kill his father) and that Poirot also got it wrong (in THE MURDER OF ROGER ACKROYD). The new book is avail-

able only in French (so far).

Sherlockian societies in southern cities (Atlanta, Nashville, Birmingham, and Greenville) will hold their Fourth Annual Gathering of Southern Sherlockians at the Sheraton Read House in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Apr. 12-13; the festivities will include a performance of Brad Keefauver and Bill Mason's "Hee-Haw Holmes". Details are available from Kent Ross (721 Hartford Road, Springfield, OH 45503) (678-464-8321) <kenthross@aol.com>.

Feb 08 #4 There may be Sherlockians still alive who saw Basil Rathbone on stage as Sherlock Holmes in 1953, and there certainly are some who could have but didn't, because they didn't attend the try-outs in Boston or the (only) three performances in New York. Susan Dahlinger and Glen Miranker have researched the history of the play for The Baker Street Journal's Christmas Annual for 2007 ("Rathbone Returns! A Misadventure Called Sherlock Holmes), and it is a delight to read their story of how the play came to be written and produced, and about why it failed. \$11.00 postpaid (or \$12.00 outside the U.S.) from the BSJ at 2 Dettling Road, Maynard, MA 01754; you can also order on-line at <www.bakerstreetjournal.com>.

SIR HUGO'S LITERARY COMPANION: A COMPENDIUM OF THE WRITINGS OF HUGO'S COMPANIONS, CHICAGO, ON THE SUBJECT OF MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by David C. Humphrey (Lincoln: iUniverse, 2007; 167 pp., \$22.95 cloth or \$12.95 paper or \$6.00 eBook), is very much what the subtitle announces: the authors include Vincent Starrett, Jay Finley Christ, and Robert J. Mangler, and their works range from scholarship to parody. Signed copies are available from the editor (1843 Winnetka Avenue, Northfield, IL 60093); \$28.95 postpaid.

Steven Dietz's "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" will be performed at the Western Stage (156 Homestead Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901), from Aug. 15 to Sept. 14. Box office at (831-375-2111) <www.westernstage.com>.

If you're still seeking an attractive Sherlockian calendar for 2008, Bill Dorn's colorful calendar is illustrated with scenes from 24 films and television shows, notes more than 250 events from the Canon television, and includes a dozen original limericks; it's discounted to \$10.00 postpaid (to the U.S.) or \$12.00 to Canada or \$15.00 elsewhere), from William S. Dorn at 2045 South Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210. You can see sample pages (and other Sherlockian offers) at his web-site at <www.thesherlockstore.com>.

Further to the report (Jan 08 #8) on the new Czech bilingual editions (English on one page and Czech on the other), Don Hobbs reports there are similar Arabic/English, Danish/English, French/English, German/English, Japanese/English, Korean/English, Russian English, Spanish/English, and Swedish/English editions. If you can add to the list, please let me know.

Shirley Dickensheet ("Ivy Douglas") died on Feb. 8. She was an energetic member of The Trained Cormorants and then The Scowlers and Molly Maguires, and she one of the speakers at John Bennett Shaw's Sherlockian seminar at Stanford University in 1987. She was working for the Fireman's Fund when they insured in Loch Ness Monster in 1969, and paid off when it sank during the filming of "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (the submersible is now at the bottom of the Loch, waiting to be found by one of the many people who still pursue "Nessie"). Shirley and her husband Dean were the sparking plugs for Vamberry's Ltd. (Wine Merchants) and The Beaune Press, and she received her Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1993.

The Sound & Fury Fakespearean Players performed their "Sherlock Holmes and the Saline Solution" in Los Angeles in 2006 (May 06 #4), and they're planning to repeat the show during the Fringe Festival in Winnipeg in July. You can see their poster at <sherlock.soundandfury.org>, and you can purchase the DVD (\$20.00) <www.soundandfury.org>; click on [Product] at the left.

Feb 08 #5 Emory Lee has spotted an advertisement for SHERLOCK IN SHANGHAI: STORIES OF CRIME AND DETECTION, by Cheng Ziaqing (Hono-

lulu: University of Hawai'i, 2006; 214 pp., \$24.00); Cheng Ziaoqing (1893-1976), described as the most popular author of Chinese detective fiction in the first half of the 20th century, wrote many stories about Huo Sang and Bao Lang (his fictional counterparts to Holmes and Watson) set in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s (and a 1940s edition of the Huo Sang stories ran to 40 volumes).

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 Edith Meiser, Philip Bergem's "100 Years Ago" report on the scrapbook from the wedding of Sir Arthur and Lady Jean Conan Doyle, Jon L. Lellenberg's amusing story about a damaged portrait of Conan Doyle that Jon has donated to the Collections, and other news from Minneapolis. 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>.

<www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times08-2.htm> is the URL for the latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's The Sherlockian E-Times from Classic Specialties; their new offers include T-shirts and sweatshirts displaying a "Cogitavit ergo sum" design, based on a design by Tom Rieschick. The Latin paraphrases Descartes' famous dictum "Cogito ergo sum" and translates as "He [Conan Doyle] thought, therefore I am."

A poll of 3,000 teenagers in Britain revealed that 27% think that Florence Nightingale was a mythical character, and 20% believe that Winston Churchill was fictional. And that 58% believe that Sherlock Holmes really lived at 221B Baker Street, and 51% think that Robin Hood actually lived in Sherwood Forest. 77% admitted they didn't read history books, and 61% changed channels rather than watch historical programs on television. The poll was commissioned by the cable channel UKTV Gold, which has launched a new "Robin Hood" series; UKTV Gold's Paul Moreton said that "the elevation of mythical figures to real life showed the impact good films could have in shaping the public consciousness." "Stories like Robin Hood are so inspiring," he added, "that it's not surprising people like to believe these characters really existed." The story was picked up by many newspapers, demonstrating that UKTV Gold knew how to get attention for its "Robin Hood" series.

The next annual Stud-Watsonian weekend will be held in and near Chicago on Apr. 11-13; the schedule includes a dinner (with Julie McKuras as the featured speaker), a running of The Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course, and a Fortescue Honours brunch. Registration forms are available from Susan Z. Diamond (16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106) <szdiamond@comcast.net>.

Michael A. Hoey's ELVIS, SHERLOCK & ME: HOW I SURVIVED GROWING UP IN HOLLYWOOD (Albany: Bear Manor Media, 2007; 335 pp., \$24.95) is written with humor and style, about the author's interesting career in Hollywood, but (more important for Sherlockians) it offers an excellent account of the stage and screen career of his father, Dennis Hoey, who played Lestrade in six of the Basil Rathbone films made by Universal in the 1940s.

Feb 08 #6 "Battered by talk of national decline and chronic instability, Italy has rediscovered a forgotten hero," Richard Owen wrote in a dispatch to The Times (Feb. 18). The forgotten hero is Dorando Pietri, who was the first to cross the finish line in the marathon in the Olympics in 1908, only to have the prize withdrawn because he had been assisted toward the finish line by officials on the track. It has been alleged that Pietri was helped by Conan Doyle, but he actually was in the stands, covering the race as a correspondent for the Daily Mail.

Billy E. Ross ("The Abergavenny Murders") died on Jan. 28. He entered the Sherlockian world as a member of The Maiwand Jezails, and after moving east to be a professor of educational administration at the University of Delaware was a member of The Sons of the Copper Beeches and The Six Napoleons.

Billy received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1977.

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 Barbara Rusch's report on Andrew Lycett's talk at the Library in October, Peggy Perdue's discussion of new acquisitions from the family archives, and greetings from Mary Rae Shantz, the new manager of special collections at the Library. Doug Wrigglesworth (16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1H4, Canada) <doug.wrig@sympatico.ca> will be happy to send you a copy of the latest issue.

Karen Ellery has found an interesting web-site for people who want to read translations into Russian: <www.fictionboon.ru> offers (according to their count) 17,273 books, including some of the Sherlock Holmes stories, SIR NIGEL, and Frank Thomas' SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE GOLDEN BIRD.

<www.hclibrary.org/partners/holmescontest.php> is the URL for this year's Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for seventh-grade students in Howard County, Md. The contest is sponsored by Watson's Tin Box, and students will write a five-paragraph analytical essay on "The Speckled Band"; the web-site has a link to a booklet that teachers and students can use for the content.

THE CRIMES OF DR. WATSON, by Duane Swierczynski (Philadelphia: Quirk Books, 2007; 60 pp., \$24.95), is an "interactive mystery" with pull-out clues that allow readers to pretend they're Sherlock Holmes and solve a formerly lost case; the format's reminiscent of the murder dossiers edited by Simon Good-enough in the 1980s, but the adventure is a new one, with some interesting twists and turns.

An interesting letter written by Conan Doyle about "The Hound of the Baskervilles" will be at auction at Bonhams in London on Mar. 18 (sale 16199, lot 276) <tinyurl.com/2ng6pj>. Conan Doyle wrote to Cecil P. Turner that "My story was really based on nothing save a remark of my friend Fletcher Robinson's that there was a legend about a dog on the Moor connected with some old family. I had no place in my eye." Turner seems to have written to Conan Doyle asking if the story had been based on the Black Dog of Hergest Croft, which haunted the Vaughan family in Herefordshire.

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

Mar 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The winter 2007 issue of the Society, Sherlock Holmes de France's QuinCahier has arrived; 24 pages all in color (and all in French), with news, scholarship, a quiz, and grand artwork by Jean-Pierre Cagnat; 8 euros postpaid to France or 10 euros to Europe or 12 euros elsewhere (36 avenue Jean-Jaurès, 63500 Issoire, France). You can see what it looks like at their web-site at <www.sshf.com>, and order there with PayPal. The web-site also offers a fine look at the imaginative things the French are up to.

For completists: CELEBRATING BOARD GAMES, by Nine Chertoff and Susan Kahn (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., 2006; 144 pp., \$10.00), is a colorful review of board games, from 1861 to the present, with two pages devoted to "Alfred Hitchcock Presents why" (a 1958 game with a character piece named Shylock Bones).

There haven't been any Sherlockian comic books in quite a while, but Greg Darak reports a S'ian panel in DONALD DUCK: THE CASE OF THE MISSING MUMMY (published by Gemstone in 2007, \$8.99); Gemstone seems to be the successor to Gladstone, and the comic's available at their web-site at <www.gemstonepub.com/disney>.

Mimi Langley died on Feb. 24. She was for many years a member of The Sher-

lock Holmes Society of London, and one of the volunteers who answered the letters written to Sherlock Holmes at 221b Baker Street, when they were delivered to the Abbey National Bank.

And now for something non-Sherlockian and non-Doylean: a computerized geography quiz at <www.travelpod.com/traveler-iq> that allows you to test your knowledge of the world. You get points for being close, and fast, and no one else need know how you scored. Compliments to Peter Ashman for finding and reporting the quiz.

Roger Llewellyn's tour in David Stuart Davies' new play "The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes" (Sep 07 #2) started on Mar. 6 in Guildford, and it continues in Britain through Sept. 6; The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's web-site <www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/event_info.php?id=120> has a detailed schedule.

ANTHONY BOUCHER: A BIOBIBLIOGRAPHY, by Jeffrey Marks (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2008; 213 pp., \$35.00), is a delightful tribute to a multi-talented man: Boucher wrote novels, short stories, radio scripts, and book reviews, and edited magazines and mystery libraries, and Bouchercon, the world mystery convention, was named in his honor. When Boucher's novel THE CASE OF THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS was published in 1940, Edgar W. Smith was for a time suspicious that the book had been written by a member of our BSI under a pseudonym. Boucher soon became a member of the BSI as well as The Scowlers and Molly Maguires of San Francisco, and wrote scripts for the "Sherlock Holmes" radio series, and Marks offers an excellent account of Boucher's life and career, and a detailed bibliography of his published and unpublished work (and there are many unpublished titles in his papers at the Lilly Library at the University of Indiana).

Mar 08 #2 It's always nice to be reminded of Rex Stout, and his biographer John McAleer: MYSTERY WRITING IN A NUTSHELL, by John and Andrew McAleer (Rockville: James A. Rock, 2007; 100 pp., \$9.95), is subtitled "The World's Most Concise Guide to Mystery and Suspense Writing" and it includes brief but interesting excerpts from John's ROYAL DECREE: CONVERSATIONS WITH REX STOUT (1983).

Sam Fry spotted an Acme Metropolitan whistle ("still standard issue to London bobbies") offered by The J. Peterman Company (\$19.00); they're at 888-647-2555 and <www.jpeterman.com>. The whistle was invented in 1883, and I don't recall that anyone has proposed a connection between its inventor and someone of note in the Canon: Mrs. Hudson. Police whistles are mentioned in half a dozen of the Sherlock Holmes stories, and its inventor was Joseph Hudson; biographical information and a photograph are available at the company's web-site at <www.acmewhistles.co.uk>.

William F. Buckley, Jr., died on Feb. 27. He was a committed conservative, and he wrote more than 50 books and more than 5,600 biweekly columns "On the Right". The National Review, which he founded in 1955, was launched with the claim that it "stands athwart history yelling Stop!" and his book CANCEL YOUR OWN GODDAM SUBSCRIPTION (2007) featured correspondence he received at the magazine, including this exchange with someone who wrote in 1967: "You are the mouthpiece of that evil rabble that depends on fraud, perjury, dirty tricks, anything at all that suits their purposes. I would trust a snake before I would trust you or anybody you support." To which Buckley replied, "what would you do if I supported the snake?" Brad Linaweaver's "A Scandal in Transylvania" in May 1977 in New Guard: The Magazine of Young Americans for Freedom had Buckley and D. Keith Mano in pursuit of Professor Goreviarty.

CLASSICS FOR PLEASURE, by Michael Dirda (New York: Harcourt, 2007; 341 pp., \$25.00), is a collection of 89 excellent essays that range from Lao-tse to

Edward Gorey; Conan Doyle be found in the section on "Realms of Adventure".

Julian Rathbone died on Feb. 28. He was a prolific author, twice nominated for Britain's Booker Prize, and the great-nephew of Basil Rathbone, and his pastiche "Baz" (about a thoroughly modern Holmes and Watson) was published in Maxim Jakubowski's anthology *NEW CRIMES 3* (1991).

Greg Darak has reported a new British two-CD set "Did You Know These Stars Also Sang?" (Jasmine Music, 2007) with 108 tracks, one of them Basil Rathbone singing "I Do Like to Be Beside the Seaside" from "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (1939).

"A Scandal in Bohemia" is a new two-act chamber opera written by Nathalie Anderson (libretto) and Thomas Whitman (music), and "A Window on the Work" (an unstaged concert version of Act I) was performed at Swarthmore College on Mar. 2. Orchestra 2001 is planning a concert version of the entire opera next year, tentatively at the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia on Feb. 6 and at Swarthmore College on Feb. 8.

Mar 08 #3 "I had played Watson to his Holmes," Dr. Sheppard said, about Hercule Poirot, in Agatha Christie's "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd". Not in the book, but rather in the 90-minute dramatization (by Michael Bakewell) that was broadcast by BBC Radio 4 in December 1987 (and repeated this month on BBC 7). John Woodvine played Sheppard, and John Moffatt was Poirot. Thanks to Phil Attwell for spotting this.

The 27th annual Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium was held this month despite a blizzard, and the organizers have surrendered to the weather and scheduled next year's Symposium ("The Merry Wives of Watson") on May 15-17 in Dayton, Ohio; Cathy Gill manages their mailing list (4661 Hamilton Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45223) (513-681-5507) <chirpsworth@fuse.net>.

Further to the item (Feb 08 #6) on the new Italian stamp honoring Dorando Pietri, the design is based on the now (in)famous finish-line photograph that shows all of the people who might have been, but weren't, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. And I have some extra copies, which I will be happy to share with readers who request them (they'll be mailed with your next issue).

E. Gary Gygax died on Mar. 4. In 1974 he collaborated with Dave Arneson to create the fantasy game *Dungeons & Dragons*, and in his *ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MONSTER MANUAL* (1979) Gygax listed a "Rat, Giant (Sumatran)". And in an article the Nov. 1979 issue of the computer-gaming magazine *Dragon* he suggested that his readers "imagine a game based on the exploits of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's magnificent sleuth Sherlock Holmes. Which of the participants wouldn't like to play the role of the great detective? Or, at the very least, Dr. Watson? The subject matter for any such game would be particularly difficult to handle, and what would the participants do if Holmes were slain? Or merely made a fool of, for that matter?"

Retno Nindya Prastiwi has launched a "Sherlock Holmes Indonesia" web-site at <www.kappachan.com/sherlockholmes>, adding one more country to the list of those that have Sherlockians.

Faithful readers may recall my enthusiasm for Terry Jones and Brian Froud's *LADY COTTINGTON'S PRESSED FAIRY LETTERS* (Dec 97 #6), and it is welcome news that a book of letters written to Lady Cottingham has been returned to the Cottingham Archive, and published in facsimile (verified and presented by Brian Froud and Ari Berk) as *LADY COTTINGTON'S PRESSED FAIRY LETTERS* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2005; 48 pp., \$19.95); the newly discovered letters came from dignitaries such as Wendy Darling, J. M. Barrie, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London has three interesting events on its

forward schedule: "Capital Watson: London Festival" (May 23-25), a cricket match against the P. G. Wodehouse Society (June 22), and their "Portsmouth weekend" (Sept. 5-7), and their web-site <www.sherlock-holmes.org> ought to have details by the time you read this. Events are open to people who are not members if there's room; contact Catherine Cooke (15 Copperfield Court, 146 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London SW20 8QA, England)<avaa61@dsl.pipex.com> and mention that you're not a member.

Mar 08 #4 There's an interesting "The whole Story" edition of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES with attractive artwork by Nicollet and annotations and additional illustrations appropriate to the story (New York: Viking, 2004; 190 pp., \$25.99). An earlier edition was published by Gallimard in Paris (2002), and the American edition also was available in paper covers (\$17.99).

Philip Sherman ("The Six Napoleons") died on Mar. 10. He retired from the Maryland National Guard in 1987, after more than four decades service, with the rank of Brigadier General, and was a lawyer, historian, and a bibliophile, and an enthusiastic member of The Six Napoleons of Baltimore (Phil was Napoleon XL, and in 1966 became Gasogene XI). He launched the annual Sherlockian weekend at the Enoch Pratt Free Library and he presided over it for many years. Phil received his Investiture in the Baker Street Irregulars in 1969, and their Two-Shilling Award in 1984.

Further to the review of Jerry 'B-P' Riggs' collection THE UNUSUAL SHERLOCK HOLMES (Aug 07 #2), Jerry has created a Sherlockian Scout Badge to honor Baden-Powell's admiration of Holmes. It's enameled in seven colors and costs \$6.95 postpaid (303 South Norton Street, Corunna, MI 48817).

Miles Kington died on Jan. 30. He reviewed jazz for The Times, and joined the staff of Punch in 1965, eventually becoming its literary editor, and in 1976 he became a highly respected columnist for The Independent. He enjoyed Sherlock Holmes, and his S'ian parodies began in Punch in 1968 and continued in The Independent; Kington also wrote "The Death of Tchaikovsky: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery" (which he described as a "comic musical enigma") performed in Bath in 1996.

Malice Domestic will announce the winners of its Agatha awards at its convention next month, and the nominees (chosen by fans rather than committee) include (best non-fiction) ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley. Dan will be toastmaster at the convention.

Admirers of the Russian television series that starred Vasiliy Livanov as Sherlock Holmes and Vitaliy Solomin as Dr. Watson may be interested in Igor Maslennikov's autobiography BEIKER-STREET NA PETROGRADSKOI [BAKER STREET TO PETROGRAD] (St. Petersburg: Seans/Amphora, 2007; 255 pp., \$31.00); available from MIPP International at <www.mippbooks.com>. Maslennikov was the director of the series, and of course has much to say about it (in Russian, but there are lots of nice photographs for those who don't read Russian).

Randall Stock has reported Neil McCaw's booklet "A Study in Sherlock: Uncovering the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection" (with details on the bequest by Richard Lancelyn Green, and a foreword by Stephen Fry), available for £3.50 from the Portsmouth City Museum Gift Shop (Museum Road, Portsmouth, Hants. PO1 2LJ, England); <www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/11596_11804.html> has more information about the booklet, and you can order the booklet on-line at <www.portsmouthmuseumshop.co.uk/acatalog/A_Study_in_Sherlock.html>. And the web-site at <www.conandoyllection.co.uk> offers an interesting look at the collection itself.

Mar 08 #5 Paul Scofield died on Mar. 20. Best known for his performance as Sir Thomas More in "A Man for All Seasons" on stage in London and New York (where he won a Tony) and in the film (for which he won an

Oscar), he also starred as Thomas ... Becket in Caedmon's recording of T. S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral" (1968), which contains the exchange with the Second Tempter that Eliot borrowed from "The Musgrave Ritual".

"The Bank Job" (Jan 08 #6) has opened in the United States. I've not seen any mentions of Sherlock Holmes or "The Red-Headed League" in reviews; the film's official web-sites in both Britain <www.bankjobmovie.co.uk> and the U.S. <www.thebankjobmovie.com>

THE TRAINED CORMORANTS 60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE is an interesting tribute edited by Vinnie Brosnan and Jim Coffin; the contents include comments by members on the history of the society, photographs, recollections of its founders Bob Pattrick and Don Hardenbrook, a new Cockroach Bones parody by Kevin Reed, and amusing cover art by Colin Bailey. The cover artwork also is available on a T-shirt. \$20.00 postpaid for the book, and \$12.00 postpaid for the T-shirt (S-M-L-XL); both can be ordered from Vincent Brosnan, 1741 Via Allena, Ocean-side, CA 92056.

"Sherlock Holmes: Nemesis" is the new title for the computer game "Sherlock Holmes versus Arsène Lupin" (Oct 07 #1), due for release from Frogwares in April, there's more information about the game (under the old name) at the web-site <www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com/en/sh>.

Reported: Michael Farquhar's A TREASURY OF FOOLISHLY FORGOTTEN AMERICANS: PIRATES, SKINFLINTS, PATRIOTS, AND OTHER COLORFUL CHARACTERS STUCK IN THE FOOTNOTES OF HISTORY (New York: Penguin, 2008; 272 pp., \$15.00) includes a chapter on "America's Sherlock Holmes". And who's that? Luke May? Ellis Parker? Encyclopedia Brown?

Reported: Jeffery Deaver's "The Westphalian Ring" (first published in Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, Sept.-Oct. 2004) in his MORE TWISTED: COLLECTED STORIES, VOL. II, by Jeffery Deaver (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006; 448 pp., \$24.95) (New York: Pocket Books, 2007; 544 pp., \$7.99).

Gyles Brandreth's OSCAR WILDE AND THE CANDLELIGHT MURDERS (May 07 #2) featured Wilde and his friends Arthur Conan Doyle and Robert Sherard in pursuit of a murderer, and it was reprinted in the U.S. as OSCAR WILDE AND A DEATH OF NO IMPORTANCE; the second book in the series will be OSCAR WILDE AND THE RING OF DEATH, due from John Murray in London in May (£14.99).

Who's "America's Sherlock Holmes" in Michael Farquhar's book? William J. Burns, the Pinkerton detective who opened his own agency (and who knew Conan Doyle, although that's not mentioned in the book). The title also has been used to describe Luke May, a pioneering scientific detective in Seattle; Ellis Parker, the chief of detectives in Burlington County, N.J., when the Lindburgh baby was kidnapped; and Encyclopedia Brown, a fictional boy detective in a series of books by Donald J. Sobel.

Mar 08 #6 Reported: a new recording of THE LOST WORLD, read unabridged by Glen McReady on seven CDs, from Naxos Audiobooks (\$34.98); it's also available as an MP3 download at <www.naxosaudiobooks.com> for \$24.49, and you can listen to a sample at the web-site). They also offer most of the Canon (read unabridged by David Timson), four non-Sherlockian stories (read abridged by Carl Rigg), and Hesketh Pearson SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE (read abridged by Tim Pigott-Smith). Timson also has a free 13-minute podcast at <naxosaudiobooks.com/AUDIO/sherlock_holmes_podcast.mp3>.

The Admirable Beach Society was founded to promote reading of the Sherlock Holmes stories at an "admirable beach" (there's a mention of one in "The Lion's Mane"); the society's web-site is at <www.admirablebeach.com>, and members are encouraged to post appropriate photographs. The society's four-color enamel lapel

pin costs \$10.00 postpaid (to the U.S.) or \$12.00 (elsewhere) from Beverly Ellis (48132 Colony Farm Circle, Plymouth, MI 48170).

Collectors of foreign translations of the Sherlock Holmes stories will welcome Don Hobbs' "The Galactic Sherlock Holmes". Don happily bills himself as "The Maniac Collector" and he has a splendid collection of translations, and offers a CD electronic bibliography of non-English and foreign-language editions in PDF format on a CD. A one-year subscription (with two to three updated CDs) costs \$15.00 (to the U.S.); \$20.00 elsewhere.

Joseph and Elaine Coppola have edited VOICES FROM THE STRANGERS' ROOM (San Diego: Aventine Press, 2008; 108 pp., \$14.00) for The Mycroft Holmes Society; it's an anthology of interesting contributions from its members, among them Judith Freeman (who offers considerable sympathy for the goose in her alternative view of "The Blue Carbuncle") and Nancy Beiman (who provided an artistic cover).

Dr. William R. Hanson has designed a special cancel for the Clif-Pex Stamp Show in Clifton Park, N.Y., on Apr. 5; you can send your own (stamped) covers and postcards to the Postmaster, Clif-Pex Station, Clifton Park, NY 12065, with your request for the Sherlock Holmes cancel (requests must be postmarked by May 4).

Gary Lovisi's SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GREAT DETECTIVE IN PAPERBACK (Jun 90 #8) has been revised and expanded with a new title: SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GREAT DETECTIVE IN PAPERBACK AND PASTICHE: A SURVEY, INDEX & VALUE GUIDE, available from Gryphon Books (Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228) for \$55.00 postpaid (180 pp., spiral bound). It's a delightful and extensive survey, with introductions by John Bennett Shaw (from 1990) and Michael Kurland, many illustrations in full color, wide coverage (from 1888 to 2007), and interesting commentary and annotations by Gary, who defines paperback broadly (including publisher's proofs, advance reading copies, print-on-demand books in paper covers, pamphlets published by Sherlockians and Sherlockian societies, and some British and other foreign editions).

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Apr 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Cheng Ziaqing's SHERLOCK IN SHANGHAI: STORIES OF CRIME AND DETECTION (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 2007; 214 pp., \$24.00) offers a selection of fascinating stories by a Chinese author who was inspired by the Canon, but created his own detective, just as August Derleth did with his Solar Pons stories. Cheng's detective is Huo Sang, who is assisted by Bao Lang, and the stories are set in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s. Translator Timothy C. Wong discusses Chinese detective fiction in his preface, and also provides a short biography of Cheng.

It has been quite a while since I mentioned Steve Trussel's "Detectives on Stamp" web-site at <trussel.com/detfic/detect.htm>; it's delightful, as is his "Philatelic Sherlock" web-site at <www.trussel.com/detfic/sholmes.htm>. He includes stamps, covers, postmarks, and Cinderella issues, with almost everything illustrated in full color.

One hardly ever hears of The Great Mouse Detective any more, since Disney gives far more emphasis to characters more important (to them) than Basil of Baker Street, but Evy Herzog spotted DISNEY'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF WORD-FINDS: THE ANIMATED MOVIES (Blue Bell: Kappa Books, 2006; 98 pp., \$3.95), with a one-page word-puzzle based on the film.

Stephen Baker's HOW TO LIVE WITH A NEUROTIC CAT, first published in 1985, is still in print (New York: Gramercy Books, 1999; 128 pp., \$7.99), with

illustrations by Sherlockian artist Jackie Geyer, who (of course) included a Sherlockian illustration.

The Wessex Press continues to use YouTube to make things interesting; their advertisement for their 75th anniversary edition of Vincent Starrett's THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Jan 08 #7) includes audio of Starrett reciting his famous poem "221B". <www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpkaTM554HI> will let you hear how Starrett pronounced "view-halloo".

Tom Pitner has reported Arthur Wontner's "The Sleeping Cardinal" (1931) on DVD from Amazon (\$14.95); that's the British title of the film (which was released in the U.S. as "Sherlock Holmes's Fatal Hour"), and the DVD actually has the American release, presumably recorded from a copy (or perhaps a copy of a copy) of the 16mm print once owned by William K. Everson. Roger Johnson has reported that the print was screened for the Sherlock Holmes Society of London in 1951, at their first film evening, with Wontner in the audience, and the print also was screened for The Priory Scholars of Fordham in 1956. Moonlight Cinema offered the film on VHS cassette some years ago (Sep 99 #6).

It's likely that the DVD is a bootleg, since the box has no address or contact information for the company (Reel Classic Films) other than a URL that leads nowhere. The film's also available on DVD at eBay, where one seller kindly notes that he has downloaded the film onto DVD-R from an NTSC MPEG copy stored on his hard disk, and it is likely that the DVD offered at Amazon was made the same way. The quality of the DVD is average at best (the VHS cassette was somewhat better), but it's nice that more people will have a chance to see an interesting film with Wontner as Sherlock Holmes.

Apr 08 #2 Randall Stock has expanded his interesting "The Best of Sherlock Holmes" web-site to include a new "Sidney Paget Original Drawings and Artwork: A Preliminary Census and Checklist". He has lots of new information, and illustrations, and he extends his coverage to include Paget's non-Sherlockian work. And of course he'd like to hear from anyone who can add to the census by reporting unrecorded originals or identifying where some of the non-Sherlockian work has been published; the new web-site is <www.members.aol.com/_ht_a/shbest/ref/sidney-paget-original-art.htm>.

If you would like to read one of the textbooks Conan Doyle studied before he took his medical degree in 1881, Peter Wood has discovered Joseph Bell's A MANUAL OF THE OPERATIONS OF SURGERY FOR THE USE OF SENIOR STUDENTS, HOUSE SURGEONS, AND JUNIOR PRACTITIONERS on the Internet at web-sites that include <www.gutenberg.org/files/24564/24564-h/24564-h.html>. Bell wrote the book in 1866, and Project Gutenberg has the fifth edition (revised and enlarged) published in 1883.

McMurdo's Camp is the newest Sherlockian society; it meets in Charlevoix, Mich., and has a web-site at <www.mcmurdoscamp.wordpress.com>. There are many society web-sites now, and you'll find links to many of them at Chris Redmond's <www.sherlockian.net/societies/index.html>. If your society has a web-site that's not linked from Chris' site, you should let him know.

Ken Lanza spotted a report in the Harrogate Advertiser that a copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 was discovered by two Oxfam volunteers in a pile of donated books. It will be sold at auction at Bonhams in Oxford on May 20, and the charity hopes that it "will produce a four-figure addition to Oxfam's funds." According to Bonhams, the Beeton's lacks the original wrappers and advertisements and is bound with four other works (all apparently Christmas annuals from other publishers); it's estimated at £7,000-9,000. There's more to the story, of course, and you can read all about it at Randall Stock's <members.aol.com/shbest/ref/bonhams-2008-beetons.htm>

Philip K. Jones has compiled (and continues to compile) an excellent data base for Sherlockian pastiches. There are 6,875 entries (and more to come, of course), and it's available on the Internet at the Illustrious Clients'

web-site at <www.illustriousclients.org/index.php?name=Content&pid=5>.

Robert H. Steele ("The Scowrers") died on Feb. 28. He was a banker and a leader of the Republican party in San Francisco, and an enthusiastic member of the Scowrers and Mollie Maguires of San Francisco, serving as its Bodymaster for forty years until he retired in 1999. He received his Investiture from the Baker Street Irregulars in 1959.

Dave Smith discovered a Krone limited edition "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Sherlock Holmes" fountain pen, and it's an impressive pen indeed: solid sterling silver, intricately detailed with three-dimensional elements to help you solve a mystery that has 14 clues, and with a piece of notebook paper from Conan Doyle's personal writing pad embedded atop the cap. The edition was limited to 50 pens (with a suggested retail price of \$12,500), and it sold out in a few days. The web-site <www.pensinasia.com> displays images of the pen, and you can see other equally imaginative (and still available) Krone pens at <www.kronepen.com>.

Apr 08 #3 The Town & County Public Library in Elburn, Ill., sponsors an annual Dewey Dash, named in honor the Dewey Decimal System, as a fund-raiser for the library. The event started in 2005 and has a different literary theme each year. This year's Dewey Dash was held on Apr. 13 and called "The Game Is Afoot". It was led by its mascot Dr. Watson, with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as a "ghost runner".

Joe Eckrich has begun selling Sherlockian books and ephemera on eBay. Go to <www.ebay.com>, click on "Advanced Search, click on "Items by Seller", and search for "eckrich221".

Watson's Tin Box will host "A Scintillation of Scions" at Amherst House in Columbia, Md., with the intent of bringing together members of mid-Atlantic (and east-coast) Sherlockian societies for "an afternoon of fun, scholarship, and social time." The afternoon event will run from 1:30 to 6:30 and will include afternoon tea, papers, a limerick contest, and a dramatic presentation. More information is available at <www.watsonstinbox.org>.

Content is important when material comes to auction: the letter written by Conan Doyle about "The Hound of the Baskervilles" at auction at Bonhams in London last month (Feb 08 #6) sold for £3,700 (plus premium and tax).

The late Peter Cushing was a painter as well as an actor, and some of his artwork was sold at auction last month, with a total estimate of £12,000. The sale total was more than £20,000, and one of the watercolors sold for £2,000. Holger Hasse displays some of the paintings in full color at his blog <www.hammerandbeyond.blogspot.com/2007/12/peter-cushing-calendar.htm>.

Further to the item (Jul 07 #3) about Edinburgh's new tram line, the Edinburgh Evening News has reported (Apr. 3) that "fans of Sherlock Holmes are angry that the statue of the sleuth in Picardy Place is to be stored up for two years during the city's tram works." The story quoted Roy Upton-Holder as saying "Many feel that the Edinburgh Council will have succeeded where Moriarty and Conan Doyle failed: in getting rid of Sherlock Holmes." Upton-Holder is the founder of the Deerstalkers of Welshpool (a city on England's border with Wales); there is no Sherlockian society in Edinburgh.

A few days later the paper published a letter from C. S. Lincoln of Edinburgh (Apr. 8), who noted that the statue had been erected in Picardy Place to mark the site of Conan Doyle's birthplace, but the building had been demolished in 1969. Lincoln suggested that the statue should be moved to Infirmary Street, where Conan Doyle, in the old infirmary, clerked for Joseph Bell and observed the "amazing, deductive methods of this great doctor."

THE SHADOW OF REICHENBACH FALLS, by John R. King (New York: Forge/Tom Doherty, 2008; 350 pp., \$25.95); Thomas Carnacki, at the Reichenbach on May 4, 1891, "rescues an amnesiac gentleman from the base of the falls only to

find himself and his companion pursued by an evil mastermind whose shadowy powers may reach from the bloody crime scenes of Whitechapel to beyond the grave." Sherlockians will have no trouble identifying the amnesiac gentleman and the evil mastermind, and Thomas is William Hope Hodgson's Carnacki, before he became Carnacki the Ghost-Finder, so there's a strong supernatural content in the story.

Apr 08 #4 ON THE TRAIL OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: AN ILLUSTRATED DEVON TOUR, by Brian W. Pugh and Paul R. Spiring (Sussex: Book Guild, 2008; 125 pp., £12.99), offers narrative chronologies of Conan Doyle, George Turavine Budd, and Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and discusses their connections with Devon (Budd lived in Plymouth, where Conan Doyle doctored with him for a short period, and Fletcher Robinson assisted Conan Doyle with "The Hound of the Baskervilles"); the book also includes an "Arthur Conan Doyle Devon Tour" for those who want to drive to places associated with the three men. Pugh is the curator of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, and has a web-site at <www.the-conan-doyle-crowborough-establishment.com, and Spiring has a Fletcher Robinson web-site at <www.brfonline.biz>, and they present an interesting look at the three men and what they did in Devon. The book also is available in German: AUF DER SPUR VON ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: EINE RUNDREISE DURCH DEVON (Mannheim: Dryas Verlag, 2008; 146 pp., €12.95).

The Hallmark Channel uses late-night slots to broadcast programs for teachers to record for use in the classroom; "The Royal Scandal" (2001) will air May 29, and "The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire" (2002) on June 26 (both at 3:00 am). The programs starred Matt Frewer, Kenneth Welsh as Holmes and Watson, and there is a 27-page "Educator Guide" available for download at <www.hallmarkchannel.com/publish/etc/medialib/shared/educator_guides.html>.

Samantha Wolov has reported some Sherlockian artwork at the opening page of AOL Stalker at <www.aolstalker.com>; it's a data-base of 36,389,569 searches made by AOL users in March, April, and May 2006. AOL removed the data, but the information still is available elsewhere (as is so often the case on the Internet); it is difficult but not impossible to identify searchers.

It may be possible to find out who actually had the telephone number XX.31 (announced by Colonel Damery in "The Illustrious Client"): John Baesch has spotted a story in The Times (Nov. 28) about a new archive of 280 million telephone numbers in the first 104 years of British telephone directories, now available to subscribers at <www.ancestry.com>.

Conan Doyle fought hard to protect mediums from prosecution by the authorities, and eventually the Witchcraft Act (1735) was replaced by the Fraudulent Mediums Act (1951), under which prosecutors must prove fraud and dishonest intent to secure a criminal conviction. Now, according to a story in the Observer (Apr. 6), Britain plans to replace the Fraudulent Mediums Act (under which there have been fewer than ten convictions in the past 20 years) with Consumer Protection Regulations that apply to anyone charging or accepting gifts in exchange for a service, and allow disgruntled customers to sue. Spiritualists, according to the story, are worried that they will be forced to issue disclaimers such as "this is a scientific experiment, the results of which cannot be guaranteed," and to prove they did not "mislead, coerce, or take advantage of" vulnerable customers.

Yuichi Hirayama has resumed his English-language blog about "Sherlockiana in Japan" at <ameblo.jp/shinjapan>. One of the recent entries displays the stamps issued for the recent convention of The Japan Sherlock Holmes Club (as in some other countries, the Japanese postal service allows you to put your own photographs on stamps). His web-site for the Shoso-In Bulletin is at <www1.parkcity.ne.jp/hirayama>.

Apr 08 #5 Charlton Heston died on Apr. 5. His acting career spanned more than 60 years, and his starring roles included Moses, Ben-Hur, Gen. Charles "Chinese" Gordon, El Cid, Cardinal Richelieu and Michelangelo. Heston also played Sherlock Holmes in Paul Giovanni's play "The Crucifer of

Blood" in Los Angeles in 1980 (with Jeremy Brett as Watson), and in a television version of the play in 1991.

ELIMINATE THE IMPOSSIBLE by Alistair Duncan (Stanstead Abbots: MX Publishing, 2008; 260 pp., £9.99), is subtitled as "An Examination of the world of Sherlock Holmes on Page and Screen". Duncan discusses the Canon, focusing on the major characters and providing a synopsis for and comments on each of the stories, and then turns to the major screen and television actors, from Arthur Wontner to Jonathan Pryce. Duncan's commentary is interesting, both when he writes about the stories and the actors, and when he discusses previous Sherlockian scholarship.

Variety has reported (Mar. 31) that Paramount has bought the film rights to David Grann's "The Story of Z" and that Brad Pitt plans to produce and star in a film about Col. P. H. Fawcett, the explorer who vanished in the Mato Grosso in Brazil in 1925. Grann's article was published in The New Yorker (Sept. 19, 2005), and Doubleday plans to publish a book based on the article. Grann mentions Conan Doyle, who met Fawcett in 1910, and there's much more about their meeting in my newsletter (Oct 05 #1).

Marina Stajic forwards a report from the kings of Scandinavia that there is a Sherlock Holmes Pub in Denmark. The pub is in Aarhus, which is where the late Henry Lauritzen lived, and I'm sure that Henry would have enjoyed visits to the establishment. The pub's web-site is <www.sherlock-holmes.dk>, where you'll find a photograph of Holmes and Watson sitting in front of the pub, flanked by two of its waiters.

Plan far ahead: the Marple Newton Players will present William Gillette's "Sherlock Holmes" in Newton Square, Pa., Sept. 19-Oct. 4; the box office is at 610-353-9181 <www.playersstage.org>. The Irving Community Theatre will present Charles Marowitz's "Sherlock's Last Case" in Irving, Tex., Jan. 19-31, 2009 (972-594-6104) <www.irvingtheatre.org>. Vertigo Theatre will present Steven Dietz's "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" in Calgary, Apr. 25 to May 17, 2009 (403-221-3708) <www.vertigotheatre.com>.

Reported: THE RIVALS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited and with an introduction by Nick Rennison (Manchester: No Exit Press, 2008; 320 pp., £9.99); an anthology of stories about other fictional detectives in Victorian and Edwardian London. Presumably similar to Hugh Greene's THE RIVALS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: EARLY DETECTIVE STORIES (1970).

Ralph E. Edwards ("Dr. Barnicot") died on Apr. 2. He was an actuary and vice president of the Baltimore Life Insurance Co., and for many years one of the sparking plugs of The Six Napoleons of Baltimore, as Napoleon #41, Gasogene IX, and Commissionaire #7. Ralph also happily participated in the Carlton Club of Baltimore, and in the electronic mailing list The Hounds of the Internet, contributing each week a set of scholarly and often-amusing "Canon Queeries" for the Canonical tales. He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1963, and their Two-Shilling Award in 1983.

Apr 08 #6 Laphroaig scotch, Lapsang souchong tea, and lemon balm are the ingredients in the rich, smoky Sherlock Holmes, according to a story in the Washington Post (Apr. 4) about new cocktails. The cocktail is available at PX, a 1920s-style speak-easy in Alexandria, Va. Proportions aren't given in the article, but you can ask PX founder Todd Thrasher; the phone number for PX is 703-299-8384.

Sir Christopher Frayling's splendid paper on "The Writing of The Hound of the Baskervilles" (presented during the January birthday festivities) has been published in the spring issue of The Baker Street Journal, with photographs of entries in Conan Doyle's diary for 1901, and considerable detail on just what Conan Doyle was doing when and where while the story was being written. The BSJ, published quarterly, costs \$26.50 a year (\$29.00 foreign), and checks (credit-card payments accepted from foreign subscribers) should be sent to the BSJ (Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331); the BSJ web-

site <www.bakerstreetjournal.com> also accepts subscriptions.

Lawrence Goldman's THE ANATOMY OF DECEPTION (New York: Delacorte, 2008; 352 pp., \$24.00) is a medical thriller that's set in Philadelphia in mid-March 1889; in the first chapter the narrator states that "as Holmes' popularity soared, it thus became sport among physicians to match wits with the fictional detective, eager to demonstrate that if they applied themselves to murder, theft, mayhem, they would achieve similarly sterling results." The first three chapters of the book are available on-line at Bookreporter.com <www.bookreporter.com/reviews2/9780385341349-excerpt.asp>.

<www.hulu.com> is another example of interesting things to be found on the Internet: a joint venture between NBC Universal and News Corp., and advertiser supported (so you don't pay anything), it offers a chance to watch a long list of films and television series, old and new. Sherlockians may be interested in Vincent Price's "Dr. Goldfoot and the Bikini Machine" (1965), and the "Remington Steele" episodes "Steele's Gold" (1983) and "Elementary Steele" (1984). And I'm sure there's other material of interest, but those are the titles that turned up in a quick scan of the web-site's contents. "Are you more in the mood for Farrah Fawcett, or Mr. T?" was the teaser title on a review in New York magazine (Apr. 7).

For racing fans: Karen Murdock spotted a horse named Sherlock Holmes running the 11th race (the Cotejo De Potrillos Stakes) in Santiago, Chile, on Apr. 9 and (according to Kate Karlson) finished third.

Phil Attwell reports that the "Doctor who" episode "The Talons of weng-Chiang" (1977) is available on a DVD from the BBC Shop <www.bbcshop.com> discounted to £15.99. The Doctor appears in Sherlockian costume, battling giant rats, and there also is a passing mention of a Mrs. Hudson. According to the BBC this is the first release of an unedited version of the episode, and the DVD's added features include interviews with some of the stars, 25 minutes of behind-the-scenes footage, and an Easter egg. But: the DVD was released in 2003, and it's available for £7.98 at <www.amazon.co.uk> (note: the DVD is in PAL format).

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May 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

An update on the item about International Mystery Writers' Festival at the RiverPark Center in Owensboro, Ky. (Feb 07 #2): there will be seven performances (June 13-21) of Stuart Kaminsky's dramatization of his short-story pastiche "The Final Toast" (1987) and five performances (June 14-22) of Rupert Holmes' adaptation of two episodes (one of them is Sherlockian) of his television series "Remember WENN" (1996); the festival's address is 101 Daviess Street, Owensboro, KY 42303 (877-639-6978) <www.newmysteries.org>.

Sorry about that: the web-site for the Shoso-In Bulletin (Jan 08 #8) now is at <shoso.ninja-web.net> (English) and <page.freett.com/Shoso> (Japanese).

Christopher Paul Carey notes that the Subterranean Press (Box 190106, Burton, MI 48519) <www.subterraneanpress.com> offers two books that will be of interest to admirers of Philip Jos, Farmer's Sherlockian (and other) work. PEARLS FROM PEORIA (2006, 769 pp., \$45.00) offers reprints of "The Two Lord Ruftons" and "A Scarlet in Study" and "The Doge whose Barque was worse Than His Bight". And Carey has edited VENUS ON THE HALF-SHELL AND OTHERS (2008, 328 pp., \$38.00), which includes "The Adventure of the Peerless Peer" and "The Problem of the Sore Bridge--And Others". Both titles also are available at Amazon and elsewhere.

Carey also reports that issue #12 of the magazine Farmerphile is Sherlockian; you can see Keith Howell's cover art showing Farmer in S'ian costume at <www.pjfarmer.com/farmerphile.htm>; the contents include Farmer's "Sher-

lock Holmes and Sufism" (a paper delivered to The Mexborough Lodgers in El Paso in the 1975 and now published for the first time). \$11.00 postpaid to North America (\$15.00 postpaid elsewhere); checks to Michael Croteau, 393 James Street SW, Lilburn, GA 30047 (ask for issue #12). Or you can order on-line at the web-site.

"Street Name Shake-Up Offers Public Chance to Have a Say" was the headline on a story in the Edinburgh Evening News (Mar. 24); Edinburgh will create "banks" of street names for different areas of the city, for use when new developments are built. Local residents will be able to suggest names with connections to the area (in the past the Edinburgh Council made such decisions), and the possibilities noted by the paper include political figures, great thinkers, sporting heroes, and the world of literature, including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

There are many interesting aspects of book collecting, and it can be argued that the most interesting of those aspects is the collectors. You can read about many of them in Nicholas A. Basbanes' splendid *AMONG THE GENTLY MAD: STRATEGIES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE BOOK HUNTER IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY* (Henry Holt and Co., 2002, and Owl Books, 2003); Basbanes tells wonderful stories about collectors, with five pages about Daniel Posnansky (who has collected Conan Doyle for decades, and calls himself as an elitist rather than a completist, and explains the distinction), and two pages about Fred Kittle (who collects the entire DoYLES and Conan Doyle family). Basbanes has an excellent web-site at <www.nicholasbasbanes.com>, with discussion of all of his books, a link to the syndicated weekly radio program "The Book Guys" (with an archive of past programs), and much more.

May 08 #2 Derham Groves, the first Australian to become a member of The Baker Street Irregulars (in 1985, as "Black Jack of Ballarat"), has had a long career as architect, artist, and writer, and his new *THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOLMES: EXPLORING SENSE OF PLACE THROUGH CRIME FICTION* (Black Jack Press, 178 pp.) is a delightful collection of essays that discuss his own work (including his detailed design for a Sherlock Holmes Centre) and the work of his students (who designed rooms and houses inspired by Canonical tales, and a Sherlock Holmes Hotel in New York); there are many illustrations, often in full color.

Derham also reprints an article by R. Thurston Hopkins (from the Melbourne Herald, Aug. 31, 1933) in which he explains that he once asked Conan Doyle where Holmes actually lived, and was told that "that is one of the secrets Mr. Holmes refuses to divulge." But Conan Doyle acknowledged that he had a certain house in his mind's eye, adding that "there are clues in the Sherlock Holmes stories which may help you to locate the house quite definitely in Baker Street." And Hopkins, after considerable research identified the house (93 Baker Street). And Derham publishes, for the first time, an introduction by John Bennett Shaw, written in 1987 for the catalog for Derham's exhibition "Holmes Away from Home" (a different introduction by John appeared in the catalog, and "The Sherlock Holmes Phenomenon" is a nice reminder of John's enthusiasm and expertise).

You can order the book from Michael Jorgensen (392 Station Street, Carlton North, VIC 3054, Australia) <mickjorg@alphalink.com.au>; US\$41.00 postpaid by airmail, US\$36.00 postpaid by seemail. Checks payable to Peter E. Blau can be sent to me at 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817.

David H. Galerstein ("Bert Stevens") died on Apr. 29. He was a teacher and a principal, and a member of the New York City Board of Education. He also was a member of many Sherlockian societies in and around New York, and with Marlene Aig edited the anthology *A SINGULAR SET OF PEOPLE* (1990), and with Carolyn Bryan *A SINGULAR SENSE OF HUMOR: A COMPLICATION OF STUFF AND NON-SENSE BY AND FOR SHERLOCKIANS* (1993). He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1972.

There's a new (well, recent) edition of *MURDER IN BAKER STREET: NEW TALES*

OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, the 2001 anthology edited by Martin H. Greenberg, Jon L. Lellenberg, and Daniel Stashower (New York: MJF Books, 2006; 277 pp., \$7.98 at Barnes & Noble); hardcover, with an atmospheric dust jacket.

The Practical, But Limited, Geologists honored the world's first forensic geologist at dinner in San Antonio on Apr. 23, during the annual meeting of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, and the visitors received a friendly Texas welcome from Ben Fairbank and Richard Lackritz on behalf of The Strange Old Book Collectors. Our next dinners will be in Houston on Oct. 8, and in Denver on June 10.

Paul Spiring has reported the launch of "The Baskerville weekend" (excursions arranged by Baskervilles Carriages); the inaugural weekend was held this month; the featured guest was Edward Hardwicke, who was Dr. Watson in the Granada television series. More information is available at Spiring's B. Fletcher Robinson web-site at <www.bfronline.biz>.

May 08 #3 Sherlockian societies in southern cities (Atlanta, Nashville, Birmingham, and Greenville) will hold their Fifth Annual Gathering of Southern at the Sheraton Read House in Chattanooga, Tenn., on Apr. 18-19, 2009; "The Hound of the Baskervilles" will be the conference theme, and the mailing list is maintained by Kent Ross (721 Hartford Road, Springfield, OH 45503) (678-464-8321) <kenthross@aol.com>.

Alan C. Olding ("Cooee") died on May 6. He was serving in the British Royal Corps of Signals when he participated in the Normandy invasion, and in 1951 he emigrated to Australia, where he founded The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia (which became The Sherlock Holmes Society of Australia, and eventually merged with The Sydney Passengers). He edited the appropriately-named newsletter News from the Diggings, and received his investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1988.

Bochym Manor in Cornwall is for sale for £3 million, according to a story in The Sunday Times (May 25). The house is located on the Lizard peninsula and was once owned by Robert, Count of Mortain (half-brother of William the Conqueror); it is built in stone and laid out in four wings, with ten bedrooms, seven reception rooms, three bathrooms, and 18 acres of grounds with holiday cottages. "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was there just before the first world war," according to the story, and "even set a Sherlock Holmes story on the estate." There's more information about the house at the web-site <www.struttandparker.com>.

It's always a pleasure to discover Conan Doyle's fiction included in anthologies: A SKELETON AT THE HELM, edited by John Richard Stephens (New York: Metro Books, 2008; 343 pp., \$9.98 at Barnes & Noble), contains "The Striped Chest" (one of Conan Doyle's fine "stories of pirates and blue water").

<www.walrusmagazine.com/blogs/2008/05/08/cut-out-the-poetry-watson> is the URL for a blog entry by Jared Bland about the new eight-volume set of paperbacks of the Canon that Penguin has issued in Britain in their Red Classics series at £6.99 each (they've combined HIS LAST BOW and THE CASE-BOOK in one volume). Penguin's senior copywriter Colin Brush has blogged about the set at <www.thepenguinblog.typepad.com/the_penguin_blog/2008/02>, calling them "dramatic, Hammer-horror-film-poster-style" editions. Series designer Coralie Bickford-Smith wrote: "Many people will have a fixed set of idea about Holmes and I wanted to confound these expectations and show that there's more to the character. The vibrant, two-toned covers use typefaces that evoke the Victorian era and an early cinema poster aesthetic emphasizes the adventure and excitement of the stories." The series also includes THE EXPLOITS AND ADVENTURES OF BRIGADIER GERARD (£7.99).

Michael Chabon won a Pulitzer Prize for his novel THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF CAVALIER & CLAY (Apr 01 #3), and his THE FINAL SOLUTION: A STORY OF DETECTION was an intriguing Sherlockian pastiche (Oct 04 #3). His MAPS AND LEGENDS: READING AND WRITING ALONG THE BORDERLANDS (San Francisco: McSweeney's

Books, 2008; 222 pp., \$24.00), his first non-fiction book, is a collection of interesting essays that include "Fan Fictions: On Sherlock Holmes" (revised from its first appearance in the N.Y. Review of Books in Feb. 2005). Chabon's enthusiasms extend to Colman McCarthy, M. R. James, and Will Eisner, and it's an excellent book.

May 08 #4 The Sub-Librarians Scion of the Baker Street Irregulars in the American Library Association will gather at 4:00 pm on Sunday, June 29, in room 207-D at the Anaheim Convention Center (that's Anaheim in California); Les Klinger will be their featured speaker, discussing "Dracula, Sherlock Holmes, and Other Victorian Friends". More information about event is available from Marsha Pollak (Sunnyvale Public Library, 665 West Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086) <mpollak@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us>

Jon Lellenberg has reported that "The Lost Cases of Sherlock Holmes" is the first computer game officially licensed by the Conan Doyle Estate. Legacy Interactive describes it as "a whodunit casual computer game of theft, espionage, and murder" in which players must tap their own powers of observation to solve puzzles and identify the culprits. The game has 16 different cases and more than 100 visual puzzles and mini-games; there is a demo on-line at <www.wolfgaming.net/forums/showthread.php?t=39219>, and Legacy offers a trial download (without charge) and the game itself (\$19.95) on-line <www.legacygames.com/download_games/394/the_lost_cases_of_sherlock_holmes>.

The March issue of the quarterly newsletter of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota offers Dick Sveum's "100 Years Ago" discussion of "The Flag" (Conan Doyle's 1908 addition to "A Duet"), Julie McKuras' "50 Years Ago" tribute to Page Heldenbrand, and Tim Johnson and Gary Thaden's report on Victor Cahn's performance in his play "Sherlock: Solo" in New York, as well as other news from and about the collections. 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>.

"Elementary, My Dear Indy!" is the motto for Bouchercon 40, to be held in Indianapolis on Oct. 15-18, 2009 (Bouchercon is the long-established world mystery convention, run by fans for fans, named in honor of Anthony Boucher, and with a web-site at <www.bouchercon2009.com>). There will be a pre-conference event on Oct. 14 at the Lilly Library in Bloomington; click on "Breaking News" to read all about "Doyle, Boucher, Fleming--This will Blow You Away" (The Lilly has excellent collections of all three authors). The postal address is Bouchercon 2009, c/o The Mystery Company, 233 Second Avenue SW, Carmel, IN 46032.

The spring issue of For the Sake of the Trust (the newsletter of The Baker Street Irregulars Trust) offers Julie McKuras's tribute to David A. Weiss, and news of some recent additions to The Baker Street Irregulars Archives (including a letter written by Christopher Morley in which he noted that "The only clubs I have founded are the Three Hours for Lunch, the Grillparzer Club, and the Baker Street Irregulars--which are all phases of the same great idea: to avoid publicity!") Copies of the newsletter are available on request from Julie McKuras (13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124) <mike9750@aol.com>.

Andy Peck has reported that the Mystery Guild is now offering a "exclusive softcover" edition of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (May 07 #5/Sep 07 #6) for \$21.99 (order no. 05-6751); their address is Box 6325, Indianapolis, IN 46206 <www.mysteryguild.com>. Their "exclusive" edition may or may not be the same as the Quality Paperback Book Club edition.

May 08 #5 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 German: WISSENSCHAFT BEI SHERLOCK HOLMES UND DIE ANFÄNGE DER GERICHTSMEDIZIN (Weinheim: Wiley-VCH, 2008; 234 pp., E14.95). E. J. has an inter-

esting web-site at <www.forensic.to/webhome/ejwagner>.

Gyles Brandreth's OSCAR WILDE AND THE RING OF DEATH (London: John Murray, 2008; 395 pp., £14.99) is the second in his series of mysteries featuring Wilde as the detective, assisted by Robert Sherard as his Watson, and by his friend Arthur Conan Doyle; the mystery is ingenious and the story well told, with excellent period flavor. The U.S. title will be OSCAR WILDE AND A GAME CALLED MURDER (from Touchstone later this year, \$24.00). The first novel in the series, OSCAR WILDE AND THE CANDLELIGHT MURDERS (May 07 #2), was published here as OSCAR WILDE AND A DEATH OF NO IMPORTANCE, and there's a fine web-site at <www.oscarwildemurdermysteries.com>.

"Faeries" is a new musical about the Cottingley fairies, written by Stephen Langston and Wendy McPike, scheduled for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August; there's a web-site at <www.sl-p.org/Edinburghfaeries.thm>.

The newly-discovered copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual (Apr 08 #2) sold at auction at Bonhams in London this month for £15,500 (well above the estimate of £7,000-9000); add 20% for the buyer's premium. The Northern Echo reported (May 21) that it was bought "by a collector from the north west of England who describes himself as a Sherlock fanatic." According to a story in the Oxford Mail (May 21), the 45-year-old Holmes fanatic from the north of England, who asked not to be named, said, "I'm elated and now I need to sort out the money--I'm lucky I have an understanding wife," and that "I'm very happy because I've been collecting Conan Doyle for about 30 years now. Randall Stock has more information about the Oxfam Beeton's at his web-site at <members.aol.com/shbest/ref/bonhams-2008-beetons.htm>.

Bruce Holmes is continuing to expand his explorations of Sherlockian philately (and philatelic Sherlockiana) (Aug 03 #1/Nov 04 #5/Jan 05 #4), and a colorful catalog of his philatelic offerings is available as a .pdf file by e-mail from Bruce at <ebh221b@eastlink.ca>.

Robert H. Schutz ("The Arnsworth Castle Business") died on Apr. 26. He was a chemist, director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's Testing and Certification Laboratory, and an enthusiastic amateur printer, presiding over the Plane Tree Press, from which he published many issues of The Arnsworth Castle Business Index. He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1961.

Martin Heath reports that Bigwood Auctioneers in Stratford upon Avon will have a 42-piece set of silver cutlery at auction on June 27. The cutlery, discovered in Baskerville Hall, is engraved with the Baskerville crest, and there's a press release at <www.bigwoodauctioneers.com> with photographs of the silver. This Baskerville Hall is Clyro Court in Hay-on-wye, where the owners have said for many years that Conan Doyle visited the family often, and found inspiration there for his story (the family asked Conan Doyle to change the setting so that they wouldn't be overrun by tourists).

May 08 #6 Dick Martin died on May 24. He was a fine actor and comedian, most famous for the long-running television series "Laugh-In" that he launched with Dan Rowan in 1968. They impersonated Holmes and Watson in Victor Herbert's "The Red Mill" in St. Louis in 1960, and there is a photograph of them in Canonical costume on p. 250 in Chris Steinbrunner and Norman Michael's THE FILMS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (1978).

Steven Dietz's play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" continues to be popular with regional theaters: it's on at the Park Square Theatre in St. Paul, Minn., through June 22; 20 West 7th Place, St. Paul, MN 55102 (651-291-7005) <www.parksquaretheatre.org>. It's also scheduled at the Hedgerow Theatre in Media, Pa., Oct. 16 through Nov. 16. 64 Rose Valley Road, Media, PA 19063 (610-565-4211) <www.hedgerowtheatre.org>.

"The Death and Life of Sherlock Holmes" is a two-act puppet play adapted by Bob Brock from "The Final Problem" and "The Empty House", first performed

at the Hole in the Wall Puppet Theatre in Lancaster, Pa., in 2000; they'll perform it again on June 6-7 and 13-14. 126 North Water Street, Lancaster, PA 17603 (717-394-8398) <www.holeinthewallpuppettheatre.com>; click on Over 21 Club.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley, won an Agatha from Malice Domestic (best non-fiction), and an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America (best critical/biographical).

Plan ahead: The Baker Street Irregulars' next annual dinner will be held on Jan. 9, 2009, honoring the 150th anniversary of the birth of Arthur Conan Doyle and the 75th anniversary of the founding of the BSI. And The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's next annual dinner will be held on Jan. 17, 2009.

It was in January 1968, during the William Gillette Luncheon in an upstairs room at Keen's Chop House in New York, that a Baker Street Irregulars suggested that The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes might consider picketing the BSI's annual dinner. And so they did. And much earlier, in 1946, the William Gillette Memorial Luncheon was held at Keen's. But Keen's is famous for much more than that: Keen's Pipe Club has a long and distinguished history, and Bruce Harris has an interesting article about the restaurant and the club in the summer issue of Pipes and Tobaccos. \$7.95; 5808 Farrington Place #200, Raleigh, NC 27609 <www.pt-magazine.com>.

Postage rates increased this month, and my newsletter will cost \$10.70 (to the U.S.), \$13.90 (to Canada), and \$16.50 (elsewhere); my circulation department will remind you when it's time to renew.

And my apologies to anyone who sent in something that didn't make it into this month's issue: I've recovered from a computer crash, but lost a few very recent notes that weren't backed up. "Have two copies of anything you ever want to see again" is excellent advice.

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

Jun 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Mike Whelan reports that The Baker Street Irregulars' 'A Study in Scarlet Expedition' to Salt Lake City on Aug. 30, 31, and Sept. 1 (with a welcome Reception on Friday evening, Aug. 29) promises to be a very special event. It's open to all Sherlockians, and "participation in this conference will be a singular experience in scholarship and fellowship in the historic atmosphere of Utah, a backdrop for Holmes' first published case." It's open to all Sherlockians, and there are a few places available for the conference. Additional information is available from Mary Ann Bradley (317-514-8566); if you leave a message, please tell her your e-mail address.

Ken Lanza spotted an interesting article posted by Jem Bloomfield on May 20 at the web-site of the California Literary Review at <calitreview.com/682>; "The Right Side of the Tracks" discusses railways in the classic whodunnit, with due attention to the Canon, and an interesting photograph of a train leaving Paddington Station in 1892.

Amnon Kabatchnik has long been interested in drama, and he has written two books due to be published by Scarecrow Press: BLOOD ON THE STAGE: MILESTONE PLAYS OF CRIME, MYSTERY AND DETECTION: AN ANNOTATED REPERTOIRE, 1900-1925 (384 pp., \$90.00) and SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE STAGE: A CHRONOLOGICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PLAYS FEATURING THE GREAT DETECTIVE (208 pp., \$55.00).

Harvey Korman died on May 29. He was a dedicated comedian whose first major television appearance was in skits in "The Danny Kaye Show" from 1964 to 1967, and when that series was cancelled he went to work on "The Carol

Burnett Show" (for which he won four Emmys), and he starred in many films, including "Blazing Saddles" (1974). It was on "The Carol Burnett Show" in 1972 that he played Watson in a skit in which Anthony Newley was Holmes.

The latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's *The Sherlockian E-Times* will be found at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>; there's a report on the 4th Annual Gathering of Southern Sherlockians with lots of photographs (with captions, so that you can tell who's who), and offers of Sherlockian books and other items of interest.

I still have extra copies of the new Italian stamp honoring Dorando Pietri (Mar 08 #3), who didn't win the marathon in the 1908 Olympics (and wasn't assisted by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle); if you would like to have one of the stamps, just let me know. And if you would like to know more about those Olympics, Jon Lellenberg has noted *THE FIRST LONDON OLYMPICS 1908*, by Rebecca Jenkins (London: Piatkus Books, 2008; 288 pp., £16.99). Also available is *THE 1908 OLYMPICS: THE FIRST LONDON GAMES*, by Keith Baker (Cheltenham: Sportsbooks, 2008; 224 pp., £7.99).

"Buckminster Fuller: Starting with the Universe" is the title of an exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York (through Sept. 21) <www.whitney.org>. Bucky Fuller was a protege and good friend of Christopher Morley in the 1930s, and a member of the Three Hours for Lunch Club, the Grillparzer Sittenpolizeiverein, and The Baker Street Irregulars, and he installed one of his Dymaxion bathrooms in Morley's "knothole" writing studio, now on display in Christopher Morley Park in Roslyn on Long Island.

Jun 08 #2 WHAT'S YOUR STORY? WATERSTONE'S EXCLUSIVE COLLECTABLE POSTCARD BOOK will be published in a limited edition in July, to benefit the National Year of Reading. Each postcard contains a (very) short story, including a Harry Potter prequel by J. K. Rowling, and a Sherlockian pastiche by Neil Gaiman. You can read about (and pre-order) the book (£5.00 plus shipping) at <www.waterstones.com>, and you can read all of the stories at <www.waterstoneswys.com>. The manuscript for Rowling's story sold for £25,000 at a charity auction at Waterstone's this month.

Mel Ferrer died on June 2. He was an actor, director, and producer who was involved in more than 100 films, including "Lili" (1953), "War and Peace" (1956), and "Wait Until Dark" (1967); he played Moriarty (with Peter Lawford as Holmes and Donald O'Connor as Watson) in the "Save Sherlock Holmes" episode of "Fantasy Island" (1982).

Something for collectors of Sherlockian comic books to pursue: there were three issues of *Classics Illustrated Giants*, the second one being "An Illustrated Library of Exciting Mystery Stories", published in 1949; it contained "Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", "3 Famous Mysteries", "The Moonstone", and Edgar Allan Poe's "Mysteries", and "3 Famous Mysteries" included "The Sign of the Four". It was described as "probably the scarcest comic book to feature Sherlock Holmes" when a copy (in "fantastic condition") was offered at Heritage Auctions this month with a "buy it now" price of \$3405.75 (it wasn't sold).

Reported by Tom Huntington: Bruce Wexler's *THE MYSTERIOUS WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2008; 192 pp., \$14.98); "the illustrated guide to the famous cases, infamous adversaries, and ingenious methods of the great detective".

John Baesch spotted an imaginative "stacked books accent table" (\$169.00) in a recent catalog from Charles Keath (Box 2789, Cedar Rapids, IA 52406) (888-918-4000) <www.charleskeath.com>; the second book from the bottom has a silhouette of Sherlock Holmes on the spine.

The manuscript of "Lady Frances Carfax" was offered by Mark Hime (Biblioc-topus) at the Antiquarian Book Fair in London this month for £250,000 (essentially the same as the \$500,000 he has priced it in his catalogs in re-

cent years), but it did not sell; according to the Calcutta Telegraph (June 15), Hime said he believes the manuscript will find a buyer eventually: "if you want to play, you have to pay." The incomplete manuscript of "His Last Bow" (which Hime has been advertising for \$375,000) was at auction at Sotheby's in New York on June 19 (estimated at \$150,000-200,000), and also went unsold.

THE CASE OF THE LEFT-HANDED LADY (New York: Sleuth/Philomel, 2007; 234 pp., \$12.99) is the second of the three novels in Nancy Springer's series about Enola Holmes, who is the younger sister of Mycroft and Sherlock, and hiding from them in London and solving mysteries on her own; the stories are well written and interesting, and the books are for children aged 9 to 12. THE CASE OF THE PECULIAR PINK FAN and THE CASE OF THE CRYPTIC CRINOLINE will be the fourth and fifth titles in the series. Springer describes herself as a writer/organic word farmer at her web-site at <www.nancyspringer.net>.

Jun 08 #3 DEATH IN THE AIR, by Shane Peacock (Toronto: Tundra, 2008; 254 pp., \$19.95) is the second in his series about "the boy Sherlock Holmes" (who is on his own in London and trying to learn how to be a detective); the characters are interesting and the mystery intriguing. The first novel in the series, EYE OF THE CROW, won the Crime Writers of Canada's Arthur Ellis Award for best young adult crime novel; the Arthur Ellis Awards are imaginatively named after the "nom de travail" of Canada's official hangman. The author's web-site is at <www.shanepeacock.ca>.

Kula Shaker is a British psychedelic rock band that has a Sherlockian promo video for its single "Second Sight" (2007) at YouTube, Mattias Boström has reported; the URL is <www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndwfyekMX-Y>.

Jon Lellenberg spotted a story in the Salisbury (N.C.) Post (June 19) about a new band called Resident Patient (which takes its name from the Sherlock Holmes story); they say that "this delightful quartet has travelled far and wide to assemble the most unique equipment for creating sound, everything ranging from exotic instruments to hand-made circuitry. Their web-site is at <www.residentpatient.jimdo.com>, and you can hear four of their songs at <www.myspace.com/residentpatient>.

The U.S. Postal Service has issued a sheetlet of stamps honoring the husband-and-wife team Charles and Ray Eames, who were famous for their Eames chair and other modern designs; four of the stamps are shown below. They also produced "The Singular Case of the Plural Green Mustache" for the IBM Pavilion at the N.Y. World's Fair (1964-1965); this mechanized puppet show that had Holmes and Watson explained what was then called "2-valued" logic. An early version of the script (as "The Case of the Purloined Train") was published in Esquire (Oct. 1963) and a later version ("The Case of the Elusive Train") in The Baker Street Journal (Dec. 1964).

Karen Murdock spotted a report in the Lancaster New Era (June 11) that Jeremy Sherlock Holmes, 34, was arrested for possession of controlled substances and possession of drug paraphernalia after a vehicle stop in Lancaster

County, Pa. And a report in the Evening Standard (June 17) by their "City Spy" columnist, who wrote that new PR companies find it hard to resist giving themselves new names, but he "quite likes Threepipe, so called because founder Jim Hawker is a Sherlock Holmes fan."

Jun 08 #4 Further to the report (Mar 07 #2) about the Warner Bros. film that will "re-imagine Holmes as an action-adventure sleuth," the Hollywood Reporter noted (June 3) that Guy Ritchie has been hired to write and direct the film, now tentatively planned for 2010. Ritchie, at the moment, is best known as the husband of Madonna (who has not been mentioned as Irene Adler or Mrs. Hudson). Nicole Sperling reported in Entertainment Weekly's "Hollywood Insider" blog that Robert Downey Jr. (who is in theaters now in "Iron Man") "has had his eye on" the project.

Illyria is a British open-air touring company that will be performing their own dramatization of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" from July 20 through Sept. 7 (with a stop at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Aug. 5-16). Their schedule is available at their web-site at <www.illyria.uk.com>.

Tina Rhea spotted a report on a new exhibition on "Jack the Ripper and the East End" at the London Museum's new Docklands branch (through Nov. 2); it is a comprehensive display of photographs, police reports, and curios, and of course the East End was part of Sherlock Holmes' London. The web-site is at <www.museumindocklands.org.uk>.

Spotted by Paul Martin: Wayne Petherick's CRIMINAL PROFILE INTO THE MIND OF THE KILLER (London: Modern Books, 2005); the book has pertinent quotes from the Canon and two full pages describing Holmes as "The First Profiler" (exemplified by his deductions from Watson's watch).

HOLMES: HAYDN'S HEAD was a four-issue comic-book mini-series by Omaha Perez (Jun 05 #2), and it's now available as a graphic novel (San Francisco: AIT/Planet Lar, 2008; 144 pp., \$12.95); Perez called it "a vicious skewering of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's creations," with a Holmes who has "more in common wit with Iggy Pop than Basil Rathbone." He reports that he has retouched dozens of pages and redrawn pieces he wasn't satisfied with; he has a blog at <www.searchintodestroy.blogspot.com>, and the publisher is at 2034 17th Street, San Francisco, CA 94116 <www.ait-planelar.com>.

Holmes and Watson appeared in Andy Lane's "Doctor Who" novel ALL-CONSUMING FIRE (Jul 94 #4) and Conan Doyle in John Peel's EVOLUTION (Feb 95 #6); if you missed them, copies are available (\$6.00 and \$8.00) from the Alien Entertainment Co. (888-734-7386) <www.alientertainmentstore.com>.

Jay Pearlman has his computer up and running again, and the spring issue of the Tonga Times is well worth the wait. Published by the Mini-Tonga Scion Society, the newsletter has colorfully-illustrated articles about the miniature sitting rooms constructed by Yves Charles Fercog in France and by Per Engelson in Sweden, and other news from the wide world of Sherlockian miniatures. A membership covering three issues costs \$11.00 (\$12.00 to Canada/\$14.00 elsewhere) from Jay Pearlman (1656 East 19th Street #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229), and visitors are welcome at the society's excellent web-site at <www.hometown.aol.com/mini-tongasociety/mini1.htm>.

Randall Stock notes a report on a "Sherlock Holmes" five-reel, 25-payline progressive video slot with bonus free spins; there's a review and a "free spins preview" at <www.slotsjam.com/bonusgame/sherlock-holmes.html>. One-arm bandits sure are a lot fancier now than when I last played one.

Jun 08 #5 "Found: The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes" was the headline on a story in the Glasgow Daily Record (June 27) about the records of noted pathologist Sir Bernard Spilsbury, unearthed by one of his heirs and to be sold at auction at Sotheby's in London on July 17 (estimated at £7,000-9,000). Spilsbury was described as "Britain's living successor to mythical Sherlock Holmes" in a story in Time magazine (July 2, 1934) and is

considered the father of professional forensic pathology.

Tina Rhea spotted Vic Lee's "Pardon My Planet" in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (June 20). The pun's an old one, but of course a good puns never die.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley, has been nominated for an Anthony (best critical work) at Bouchercon to be held in Baltimore in October), and for a Macavity (for best mystery non-fiction) from Mystery Readers International (also presented at Bouchercon); MRI is "the largest mystery fan/reader organization in the world." The book already has won an Agatha at Malice Domestic (best non-fiction), and an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America (for best critical/biographical).

Another Anthony nomination (best short story) went to Steve Hockensmith's "Dear Dr. Watson"; it appeared in Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine (in the Feb. 2007 issue), and you can read it on-line at Hockensmith's web-site at <www.stevehockensmith.typepad.com> (look for Archives at the right, click on Big Red's Blog, and scroll down to Aug. 15, 2007).

Films that were never made (unfortunately) include a Warner Bros. version of "The Speckled Band" (Conan Doyle's play); there was a copy of the Samuel French script (apparently a 1930 printing) in their research library (it's now owned by a collector). It is possible, and perhaps even likely, that the British film "The Speckled Band" (1931) that starred Raymond Massey as Holmes preempted plans by Warner Bros. Or they may just have decided to go with "gangster studio" films such as Edgar Robinson's "Little Caesar" and James Cagney's "Public Enemy" (both released in 1931).

Bruce Montgomery ("The Red Circle") died on June 21. He was an excellent and accomplished musician, director the Gilbert & Sullivan Players of Philadelphia and director of musical studies and the University of Pennsylvania (including the Penn Glee Club, the Mask and wig Club, the University Band, and the Penn Singers), and he earned his first paycheck at the age of five when he was cast in "Trial by Jury". Bruce was a second-generation Sherlockian, the son of James Montgomery (who made the song "We Never Mention Aunt Clara" part of the traditions of the S'ian world). Bruce followed in his father's footsteps with the song "We Always Mention Aunt Clara" (which he once described as "Father's Folly, or Great-Aunt Clara Revisited"), and The Baker Street Irregulars awarded him his father's Investiture in 1994.

Jun 08 #6 The graphic novel (well, collection) ROSEBUD GRAPHIC CLASSICS: ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (Apr 02 #7) is now out of print, but two of the stories are reprinted (along with seven other new stories and poems) in GRAPHIC CLASSICS: ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (SECOND EDITION); the contents of the new volume include "The Copper Beeches" and "The Engineer's Thumb". And: ADVENTURE CLASSICS [GRAPHIC CLASSICS VOLUME TWELVE includes "The Crime of the Brigadier"; both collections are available in comic-book shops (\$11.95) and from the publisher: Eureka Productions (878 Grove Road Horeb, WI 53572) <www.graphicclassics.com>. Their GRAPHIC CLASSICS: SPECIAL EDITION (2008) was distributed on Free Comic Book Day, has "John Barrington Cowles"; the company offers a free copy if you purchase any two of their titles.

Phillip Gold (221Books) has bought the Sherlockian collection of the late Jack Kerr (Oct 00 #1), and is offering them for sale at the Advanced Book Exchange <www.abebooks.com/home/221books>. If you have any specific wants you can let him know at 760 East Carlisle Road, Westlake Village, CA 91361 (800-889-2640) <phillipgold_221books@yahoo.com>

"I'm a huge fan of Sherlock Holmes, always was," novel Lee Child told the Chicago Sun-Times (June 22). "In a couple of the books I've put in little Conan Doyle-style tributes to Sherlock Holmes, in the same kind of language Holmes would have used." Child has written 12 books in his "Jack Reacher" series of thriller novels.

The latest issue of Clues: A Journal of Detection (v. 26, n. 1, 2008) is a theme issue devoted to Victorian detective fiction, and it has Maria Cairney's article on "The Healing Art of Detection: Sherlock Holmes and the Disease of Crime in the Strand Magazine". \$30.00 (or \$40.00 a year for two issues) from McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640 (800-253-2187); Clues' web-site's at <www.clues.com>.

Les Klinger spotted an item in The Hollywood Reporter (June 25) about plans by Central Partnership (described as Russia's largest independent film producer and distributor) to make a \$16 million, 32-episode, "Sherlock Holmes" television series. Shooting will begin in the summer of 2009 and continue through 2010; half of the episodes are to be based on the Livanov/Solomin series (1979-1986), and the other half on new adaptations.

Some obituaries for British actors: David Atkins died on Apr. 23; he had a long career as a supporting actor on stage and screen and television, and played Mordecai Smith in Granada's broadcast of "The Sign of Four" (1987). Bernard Archard died on May 1; he had many roles on stage, screen, and television, often appearing as doctors or policemen. He played the coroner Dr. Davidson (with John Neville as Dr. Thorndyke) in a dramatization of R. Austin Freeman's "A Message from the Deep Sea" in the television series "The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes" (1971). Margot Boyd died on May 20; she was a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, appearing in a play directed by George Bernard Shaw; she acted for many years on stage, radio, and television, and played Frau Mathis in a dramatization of Baroness Orczy's "The Woman in the Big Hat" in the same television series.

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

Jul 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

John Baesch reports that Frederic Raphael, reviewing GRAHAM GREENE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (London: Little, Brown, 2008) for the Times Literary Supplement (Jan. 25), writes that "in a mock-modest late letter, to a postulant bibliographer, Greene denied being a literary man, to excuse 'preferring Conan Doyle to Virginia Woolf or E. M. Forster.'" Raphael adds, "who doesn't?"

Richard D. Altick died on Feb. 7. He was a noted literary scholar who had a long career at Ohio State University and wrote often about Victorian life and literature. His essay "Mr. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Samuel Johnson" was published in Vincent Starrett's 221B: STUDIES IN SHERLOCK HOLMES (1940).

"The Edwardians" was an excellent eight-part television series broadcast by the BBC in 1972; "Conan Doyle" featured Nigel Davenport in the title role, and four of the programs (including "Conan Doyle" were broadcast by PBS-TV in the U.S. in 1974 with commentary by Alistair Cooke. I'm not aware that any of the programs were ever issued on VHS cassettes, and it was nice to hear from Jon Lellenberg that the series will be issued in October by BBC Video and Warner Home Video as a DVD set (\$49.98).

Bruce Montgomery died last month (Jun 08 #5), and there will be a memorial service for him on Oct. 4, at the Zellerbach Theater of the Annenberg Center at the University of Pennsylvania; the program will feature performances of several of his favorite pieces by some of the many performers whose lives and careers he guided. If you would like to know more, you should go to <www.montyart.com> and "click here to subscribe to this site's general mailing list."

"Without Robin, there is no Batman. Sherlock Holmes without Watson? Unthinkable." That's the blurb for "Loyal Sidekick" sweatshirts (\$27.95 to \$29.95) and T-shirts (\$17.95 to \$19.95) offered in the new wireless catalog (Box 2599, Hudson, OH 44236) (800-669-9999) <www.thewirelesscatalog.com>. Reported by John Baesch.

The Hounds of the Baskerville (sic) are co-sponsoring the Second Newberry Library Sherlock Holmes-Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium at the Library in Chicago at 9:30 am on Oct. 4; the event is open to the public, and the program will feature Roy E. Pilot ("The White Company: Why an Annotated Version?"), Donald J. Terras ("The Sign of Four and Development of Sherlockian Chicago"), and Julie McKuras ("I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere...").

Artist Steven McGovney sculpts interesting literary teapots, some of which were in the shop at the de Young Museum in San Francisco earlier this year, and one of his sculptures is "The Hound of the Baskervilles". This black-and-white newsletter won't do justice to it, but you can see the teapot at <www.detailsart.com/index.asp?PageAction=VIEWPROD&ProdID=3063>.

Evy Herzog discovered ANNABEL THE ACTRESS STARRING IN: HOUND OF THE BARKERVILLES, written by Ellen Conford and illustrated by Renee W. Andriani (New York: Alladin, 2002; 83 pp., \$15.00 cloth, \$3.99 paper); for ages 9 to 12. "Mystery! Suspense! And a slobbering dog named Binky?!" (it's not Sherlockian except for the allusion in the title of the play).

Jul 08 #2 Further to the report on the death of Bernard Archard (Jun 08 #6): Dave Morrill has reported that Gordon E. Kelley's SHERLOCK HOLMES: SCREEN AND SOUND GUIDE lists Archard in "The Absence of Mr. Glass" (broadcast by BBC Radio 4 on Nov. 28, 1989); based on a Father Brown story written by G. K. Chesterton, the radio dramatization starred Archard as Dr. Hood (who may be a retired Holmes) and Andrew Sachs as Father Brown.

<www.the-turds.co.uk/turds/No-Sh*t-Sherlock.aspx> is the URL for the Unofficial Turds website's new hand-painted poly-resin figurine (11 cm high) available for £9.80 and certainly one of the more unusual Sherlock-figurines. Note: that asterisk is in the URL so that the electronic version of this newsletter will make it through obscenity filters; just type the actual word. Thanks to Mattias Bostrom for reporting this item.

John Baesch spotted a report in the Sunday Times (Mar. 30) that a new edition of T. S. Eliot's OLD POSSUM'S BOOK OF PRACTICAL CATS will be published next year by Faber & Faber to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first edition, and the 80th anniversary of Faber & Faber. The new edition will have illustrations by Axel Scheffler; you can see samples of his earlier work at <www.imagesofdelight.com/client.asp?id=67>. The Times' art editor Richard Brooks suggested that Scheffler's new creations "are likely to be as eagerly awaited by figures in the political world as by young families," because British prime minister Gordon Brown's modus operandi "is said to bear more than a passing resemblance to that of the Mystery Cat, Macavity, who honed the knack of slinking away at times of mayhem and mideameanour."

Randall Stock spotted a story in the Clitheroe Advertiser and Times (July 16) about Stonyhurst College, where Conan Doyle was a student from 1868 to 1875; the college offers a guided tour that includes the table on which Oliver Cromwell slept before the Battle of Preston, and the desk on which Conan Doyle carved his name. According to the college web-site (the URL for the guided tour is <www.stonyhurst.ac.uk/article-854.shtml> you can visit "the Dark Walk which provided Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with his inspiration for Sir Henry Baskerville's murder."

The fourth issue of Albert Mendez' eight-page newsletter The Pipe Smoker's Thing (spring 2008) includes his article "Some Account of the Holmesian Society" (a peripatetic society founded in 1966 and "precipitated from the heights of prosperity to the depths of adversity" in 1988, when a copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 was stolen from the society's bookroom in Paris. Copies are available on request "in consideration of a small donation to help defray the costs of printing and postage" from Albert Mendez (142-35 38th Avenue, Flushing, NY 11354).

The N.Y. Times has reported (July 22) on a surprise infestation of lion's mane jellyfish along the coast of New Jersey and New York. And on July 20 many of the athletes swimming in the New York City Triathlon were stung by the jellyfish; a 32-year-old triathlete died after being pulled unconscious from the Hudson River, but autopsy reports were said to be inconclusive.

Jul 08 #3 Reported: ALAS, POOR SHERLOCK: THE IMPERFECTIONS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE (TO SAY NOTHING OF HIS MEDICAL FRIEND), by Joseph Green and Peter Ridgway Watt (Beckenham: Chancery House Press, 2007; 370 pp., £16.95); "it would appear that no attempt has been made, since Dakin's classic work, to review comprehensively the vast number of imperfections in the Sherlock Holmes Canon."

Columbia Pictures has announced plans to film a comedy that will star Sacha Baron Cohen as Holmes and Will Ferrell as Watson. "Just the idea of Sacha and Will as Sherlock Holmes and Watson makes us laugh," Columbia co-president Matt Tolach told Variety (July 1), "Sacha and Will are two of the funniest and most talented guys on the planet, and having them take on these two iconic character is frankly hilarious."

And further to the report that Warner Bros. has hired Guy Ritchie to write and direct a film portraying Holmes as an "action-adventure sleuth" (Jun 08 #4), it appears unlikely that his wife Madonna will appear in the film: the [London] Sunday Mirror reported that she has decided to move permanently to America, while Ritchie plans to stay in England and wants their son Rocco raised there. "The £50 million he could receive from a divorce settlement pales into insignificance compared to his love for his son," a friend of Ritchie told the newspaper.

Variety has reported (July 9) that Robert Downey Jr. has been cast as Sherlock Holmes in the Warner Bros. action film, which will go into production before the Columbia Pictures comedy. Marni Soupcoff wrote in Canada's National Post (July 18) about some of "the more intriguing entries in Google's latest Hot Trends, an index that tracks the search engine's fastest-rising queries." One of the queries is "deerstalker", Soupcoff said, adding that "the best guess I can offer is that the hat owes its renewed prominence to the limited imaginations of reporters sharing the news" that Downey has been cast as Sherlock Holmes.

"We're trying to bring a completely contemporary and entertaining perspective on an intellectual action hero true to his origins where he was more of an action guy originally," Ritchie told MTV at Comic Con in Los Angeles this month. Producer Joel Silver explained that "It's like James Bond in 1891. "Nobody ever did the 'Sherlock Holmes' story as an action movie, and he really was an action guy originally." Ritchie also said that Professor Moriarty will appear in the film, which will not be based on any one story of novel; "it's true to the period, and authentic from where it derives its influence."

Sherlock Holmes' comments on Edgar Allan Poe and Dupin were less than complimentary (in "A Study in Scarlet"), but Conan Doyle offered high praise to Poe in a speech on "The Poe Centenary" at the Hotel Metropole in London on Mar. 1, 1909. The Bronx Historical Society has started work on restoring the five-room Poe Cottage in which Poe lived his last years; the work will cost \$250,000 and is expected to be completed next year, in time for the 200th anniversary of Poe's birth. Construction already is underway on

a \$4.2 million visitor center, also to be completed next year. The cottage has a web-page at <www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/about_parks.html>; click on [historic house museums].

Jul 08 #4 Baron von Herling's "huge 100-horse-power Benz car" was blocking the country lane (in "His Last Bow"), and Fraser Smythe, in an article in the Sherlock Holmes Journal (winter 1992) identified the car as a Benz 39/100 PS. Now Carl Heifetz has found a photograph of the car at <www.peo.de/document/11395/benz-39100-ps-1912-1920.html>, and it's indeed an impressive vehicle.

Spotted by Evy Herzog: ONE-MINUTE MYSTERIES AND BRAIN TEASERS, by Sandy Silverthorne and John Warner (Harvest House, 2007), with Sherlockian (and Watsonian) artwork on the cover of and in the book.

If you've been wondering whether the Baskerville cutlery (May 08 #5) actually sold at the auction on June 27, and how much someone might have paid for it, so am I. Neither Martin Heath nor Bigwood Auctioneers have responded to my queries.

Peter Calamai notes that this year's Scene of the Crime Festival will be held on Aug. 9 at Wolfe Island in Ontario, the birthplace of Canada's first crime writer: Grant Allen. There's an interesting web-site for the festival at <www.sceneofthecrime.ca> with a link to information about Allen, who was a friend of Conan Doyle, and may well have given Conan Doyle a copy of THE ATTIS OF CAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE, WITH DISSERTATIONS ON THE MYTH OF ATTIS, ON THE ORIGIN OF TREE-WORSHIP, AND ON THE GALLIAMBIC METRE BY GRANT ALLEN (1892), which in turn may have inspired the titles of some of the books mentioned in "The Empty House"; Conan Doyle completed Allen's unfinished novel HILDA WADE after Allen died in 1899. <ehlt.flinders.edu.au/english/GA/GAHome.html> is the URL for a detailed web-site about Grant Allen (reported by Christopher Roden).

The new Sherlockian society McMurdo's Camp (Apr 08 #2) has a blog, as more and more societies do now, and the Internet offers an excellent way of making scholarship available: Bill Briggs has written an interesting and nicely-illustrated article ("That Train") about the railroad train that brought Jack McMurdo into the Valley of Fear, and it's available at their web-site at <www.mcmurdoscamp.wordpress.com/2008/05/06/that-train>.

Pat Ward has reported that Christopher Plummer's autobiography IN SPITE OF MYSELF: A MEMOIR will be published this year (it's due from Knopf in October, \$29.95). Plummer played Sherlock Holmes in the 30-minute television film "Silver Blaze" (1977) and in "Murder by Decree" (1979)

More film news: it has been quite some time since the first report on the film "Death Defying Acts" (Aug 05 #1); Guy Pearce stars as Harry Houdini, and Catherine Zeta-Jones as Mary McGarvie, an Edinburgh psychic who tries to claim Houdini's reward for anyone who can contact his mother. The film was screened at the Toronto Film Festival on Sept. 13, 2007, and it premiered in Australia on Mar. 13, 2008; it was scheduled for limited release in the U.S. on July 11. There is no mention of Conan Doyle in the cast and credits.

Jul 08 #5 And there's more of interest to Houdini's fans: Houdini acted in silent films from 1919 to 1923, and HOUDINI: THE MOVIE STAR, a three-DVD set from Kino International (\$39.95), has three of his feature films (some color-tinted as in the original release), almost all of his 15-episode serial "The Master of Mystery", and special features that include films of his escapes and an audio recording.

The Independent has reported (July 27) that the University of London Library may sell the "magical library" of Harry Price because the Higher Education Funding Council has cut support to the university's libraries. Price was a famous psychic investigator and ghost hunter who clashed with Conan Doyle about spiritualism in the 1920s, and Price kept Conan Doyle's correspondence. <www.ucl.ac.uk/exhibitions/harryprice.pdg> is the URL for a catalog of an exhibition of "The Magical Library of Harry Price" at the University in 2004; one of the highlights of the collection is a copy of MALLEUS MALEFICARUM [THE HAMMER OF WITCHES], a treatise on witchcraft that was published in 1487 and is considered by modern magicians as the first book to reveal the secrets of magic.

The summer issue of The Baker Street Journal offers Michael Dirda's amusing "A Study in Starrett" (the paper he presented at this year's annual dinner of the Baker Street Irregulars), Sally Sugarman's "Sherlock Holmes and the Children" (about Sherlock Holmes pastiches written for young readers), and much more, including editor Steve Rothman's announcement that the next BSJ Christmas Annual will be David F. Morrill's "SIGNS of the Times" (his discussion of film versions of "The Sign of the Four" from Arthur Wontner in 1932 to Matt Frewer in 2001). The BSJ, published quarterly, costs \$26.50 a year (or \$29.00 foreign), and checks (credit-card payments accepted from foreign subscribers) can be sent to the BSJ (Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331). There's an option for subscriptions to the BSJ and to the Christmas Annual for \$36.50 (\$40.00 foreign); Steve warns that the Christmas annual likely will go quickly out of print, as last year's did. The BSJ's web-site, at <www.bakerstreetjournal.com>, also accepts subscriptions, and offers other material, including papers written by past winners of the Morley-Montgomery articles from recent issues, and additional BSI publications.

Randall Stock continues to add to his "Sidney Paget Original Drawings and Artwork: A Preliminary Census and Checklist"; there's more detail, and minor corrections, and new entries for more of Paget's non-Sherlockian work: <www.members.aol.com/~ht_a/shbest/ref/sidney-paget-original-art.htm>.

The summer issue of The Sherlock Holmes Journal (winter 2006) has "The Master's Birthday" (David L. Hammer's attempt to demonstrate that Holmes was born on Oct. 10), a fine article on "Sherlock Holmes and the Beginnings of Forensic Science" (by Vincent J. and Paul L. Cirillo), "Phantoms and Fairies" (June Thomson's discussion of Conan Doyle's belief in spiritualism), and additional news and scholarship from Britain and elsewhere. The Sherlock Holmes Society of London welcomes new members: associate members receive only The Sherlock Holmes Journal, and full members also receive notices of meetings. Prices vary depending on where you are and on whether you're an adult or a junior, and details information is available from Robert Ellis (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU England) and at the society's web-site at <www.sherlock-holmes.org/uk>.

Jul 08 #6 The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Public Library will present a lecture by Leslie Klinger on Oct. 23 at 7:00 pm at the Lillian H. Smith Library (239 College Street) on his NEW ANNOTATED DRACULA, and a lecture by Steven Rothman on Nov. 15 at 3:00 pm in the Elizabeth Beeton Auditorium at the Toronto Reference Library (798 Yonge Street); on "Tincture of Conan Doyle: Christopher Morley on Sherlock Holmes". There's no charge for admission to the events, and all members of the public are invited.

THE FATE OF FENELLA (1892) was an early round-robin novel, with each chapter written by a well-known British author, one of them being Conan Doyle; it's a tale of mesmerism and murder, and there's a new edition of the novel (Kansas City: Valancourt Books, 2008; 268 pp., \$17.95), edited and introduced by Andrew Maunder.

The June issue of the quarterly newsletter of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has Don Hobb's "100 Years Ago" discussion of "The Foreign Language Collector", John Bergquist's

"50 Years Ago" report on Edgar W. Smith's THE INCUNABULAR SHERLOCK HOLMES, and curator Tim Johnson's announcement that he has won a Staff Development Grant from the Friends of the Libraries that he plans to use for a trip to Portsmouth to do research in the Richard Lancelyn Green Collection. Copies are available from Richard J. Sveum, (111 Elmer L. Andersen Library, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455) <sveum001@tc.umn.edu>.

It was 25 years ago (Sep 83 #2) that I reported on "Angst in My Pants" (an LP recorded issued in 1982 with songs by the rock group Sparks). One song was "Sherlock Holmes" (with amusing Sherlockian lyrics), and you can read the lyrics on-line at <www.sparks-lyrics.co.uk/angst-in-my-pants.html>; you can also purchase an MP3 download of the song for \$0.99 at <www.amazon.com> (or listen to a brief sample). Ken Lanza gets credit for this discovery.

Ken also spotted a report in the Daily Mail (June 6) on Rachel Rice, who at the age of 10 played Marina Savage in the Granada dramatization of "The Dying Detective" in 1994. She's now starring in the British reality television series, and you can see recent pictures of her at <www.imdb.com>.

Another Internet item noted by Ken is Rod Mollise's "Sherlock Holmes Page: Homage to the Master" at <www.skywatch.brainiac.com/holmes>, where Mollise offers his own annotated versions of seven of the stories, and his paper on "The Erotic Hound" (an examination of the story "using the discourse of Roland Barthes").

The summer issue of The Magic Door (the newsletter published by The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library) has reports by Stephanie Thomas on cigarette cards held in the collection, and by Peggy Perdue on some recently acquired "realia", plus news of the handover of the chairmanship of the Friends by Doug Wrigglesworth to Cliff Goldfarb. Copies of the newsletter are available from Doug Wrigglesworth (16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, ON L9N 1H4, Canada) <doug.wrig@sympatico.ca>.

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Aug 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Logan Clendening was an early Sherlockian, friend of Vincent Starrett and Alexander Woollcott, and author of the amusing and often-reprinted pastiche "The Case of the Missing Patriarchs" (1934). He was an ardent Dickensian, and his A HANDBOOK TO PICKWICK PAPERS (1936), recently noted by Jon Lellenberg, is a delightful and well-written example of how much fun can be found in the pursuit of literature. His description of "Pickwick Papers" begins: "Humble and meek in its beginning, acclaimed by no reviews, it and its successors were soon rescued by the good taste of the man in the street, and they were read as no books have ever been read before or since. They were read so diligently, in fact, that the critics were somewhat alienated: for while they recognize that this is the ultimate function of a book, the extent to which Dickens is read has always struck the professional litterateur as slightly vulgar." As apt, surely, for the Sherlock Holmes stories as for "Pickwick Papers".

Dick Rutter has reported SHERLOCK HOLMES Y EL CASO DE LA JOYA AZUL, adapted for children by Rosa Moyat and with colorful illustrations by Roger Olmos, published this year by Lumen in Spanish and in Catalan (E13.95). There is no Spanish version of Amazon, but <www.fnac.es> is a good web-site, and you can see the cover in full color. Thanks to Antonio Iriarte for identifying the useful web-site.

"With help from Arthur Conan Doyle, the Doctor and his friends discover a plot to take over the world" is the blurb for Terrance Dicks' new "Doctor Who" novel REVENGE OF THE JUDOON (London: BBC Books, 2008; 112 pp., £1.99). John Baesch kindly forwarded a report from the Sunday Times (Mar. 16) "the Doctor originally fought to save Balmoral and Edward VII with the help of

winston Churchill. Unfortunately the television people liked the idea, and thought they might keep winston in reserve for a future episode," so Dicks had to make do with a cameo from Arthur Conan Doyle instead.

Further to the report (Jul 08 #3) on two different Sherlock Holmes films, from Warner Bros. and from Columbia, work on the Warner Bros. film, originally scheduled for 2010, will start on Oct. 6. As for the second film, to star Sacha Baron Cohen and Will Ferrell, Warner Bros. director Guy Ritchie said that "they don't even have a script yet." And there's more: in an interview in the Montreal Gazette (Aug. 6), Downey said that his mind's a total blank when it comes to figuring out how to portray Holmes. "I'm like: 'Okay they're going to pay me to do this movie and I don't have a f---ing idea in my head.'" He's also having trouble with his English accent. "I go: 'Wait! maybe it should be more like this.' Then: 'No! You don't want to do that!' Damn it! I hope I figure this out before we start shooting. Now, I'm in fear and anxiety."

THE FATE OF FENELLA appeared in The Gentlewoman beginning with the Christmas number in 1891, and it was an early round-robin novel by 24 well-known British authors, including Arthur Conan Doyle and Bram Stoker; the new edition (Kansas City: Valancourt Books, 2008; 268 pp., \$17.95) has a long introduction by Andrew Maunder, who sets the novel in context, describes its reception by the critics, and explains who the authors were (they may have been well known at the time, but most of them aren't now).

Aug 08 #2 Joseph Green and Peter Ridgway Watt's ALAS, POOR SHERLOCK: THE IMPERFECTIONS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE (TO SAY NOTHING OF HIS MEDICAL FRIEND) (Beckenham: Chancery House, 2007; 370 pp., £16.95) draws upon earlier scholarship for a discussion of the many contradictions, inconsistencies, and errors that are to be found in the Canon; they rely in great part on annotations by William S. Baring-Gould and Leslie S. Klinger, and the relatively brief treatment of the later stories seems to have been the result of Klinger's "reference library" not having been completed when their book went to press.

Andrew Lycett spoke about his biography of Conan Doyle at the Toronto Public Library on Oct. 25, 2007, and you can listen to his 79-minute lecture (with introductions by Peggy Perdue and Doug Wrigglesworth) at the web-site of the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection www.acdcollection.org [click on "Links"].

Alfred Weiner wants to sell his collection of Sherlockian books, magazines, and recordings, and is asking \$695.00 plus shipping; you can request a catalog of his material: 4105 Marietta Drive, Vestal, NY 13850 (607-722-6251) <almar@stny.rr.com>.

John Baesch has provided news of Queen Victoria's bloomers at auction this month in England. Her modest cotton drawers with a 50-inch waist and monogrammed with a tiny VR, sold for £4,500 to a "lady of Leisure" from Canada. A royal chemise with a 66-inch bust sold for £3,800 and the Queen's night-dress, measuring 50 inches from shoulder to hem, sold for £5,200. Her Majesty's unmentionables were kept by one of her ladies-in-waiting, and were sent to auction by a family from Lincolnshire. Another set of her bloomers was on display at Sherlock's Baker Street Pub in Houston in 1982, and may still be there.

Joseph H. Gillies ("The Aluminium Crutch") died on Aug. 4. He was an executive with the Philco-Ford Corp., and a long-time member of The Sons of the Copper Beeches; he received his investiture from the Baker Street Irregulars in 1962.

More news (well, gossip) about the Warner Bros. film that will star Robert Downey Jr. as Holmes: the web-site <www.showbizspy.com> reported on Aug. 8 that "British hardman Jason Statham is hoping to land the role of Dr. Watson" in the film," and that Ritchie is reportedly planning to cast his wife

Madonna to play an unfortunate victim of a serial killer being pursued by Holmes. Other reports have Mark Strong cast to play the villain, and Liverpool being scouted for locations. And you can see a faked photograph of Robert "Iron Man" Downey Jr. in Sherlockian costume by searching for "sherlock" at <www.network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs>.

There's also gossip about the Columbia film starring Sacha Baron Cohen and Will Ferrell: screenwriter Etan Cohen told MTV that "what's been exciting is to do a giant comedy but at the same time try to be true to the mechanics of a Sherlock Holmes story like using the Victorian forensics that Conan Doyle used." Cohen added that he has "books about Victorian forensics, all the stories, and dictionaries for Victorian slang," and that "it looks like I'm writing a bad senior thesis on Holmes."

Aug 08 #3 "Art in the Blood: Sherlock Holmes and the Arts" 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. 8; the festivities will begin with morning coffee in the Edgar Allan Poe Room at 10:00 am, and end at 1:00 pm. There's no charge, and the library is at 400 Cathedral Street in Baltimore.

Terence Rigby died on Aug. 10. He had a long career on stage, screen, and television; he played Dr. Watson in Tom Baker's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1982), and Inspector Layton in Ian Richardson's "The Sign of Four" (1983). The British Library has an interesting interview with Rigby at its web-site <www.bl.uk/projects/theatrearchive/rigby.html>.

And the British Library's Theatre Archive Project is well worth exploring: it also has interviews with Edward Hardwicke and Ian Richardson, and a useful search engine for finding others.

<www.cbc.ca/wordsatlarge/blog/2008/08/the_game_is_afoot_experts_on_s.html> is the URL for interesting Canadian audio from the CBC: a 15-minute interview with Thelma Beam, Mark Hacksley, and Wilfrid de Freitas (1987), and a 23-minute interview with Peggy Perdue, Charles Prepolec, and Peter Calamai (2006). Thanks to Ken Lanza for this discovery.

Mark Terry (at Facsimile Dust Jackets, 1568 48th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122 <www.facsimiledustjackets.com> offers reproductions of dust jackets for collectors who lack authentic dust jackets; the company has some 4,000 jackets in its archive (which he plans to expand), and each jacket has the printed statement "Facsimile Dust Jackets L.L.C." on the front or back flap (\$22.00 each). The facsimiles are excellently produced in full color, and of course there are Sherlockian and Doylean jackets in the archive. Andy Moursund offers the same images as posters (\$25.00 each); there's a "poster" link at the web-site, or you can contact Andy directly at 11303 Soward Court, Kensington, MD 20895 (301-922-8081) <andym108@yahoo.com>.

LADYBUG GIRL is an imaginative book for young readers, written by Jacky Davis and illustrated by David Soman (New York: Dial/Penguin, 2008; \$16.99), with Lulu (aka Ladybug Girl) in Sherlockian costume on the rear endpapers.

Peter L. Stern is offering an interesting set of the "Crowborough Edition" of Conan Doyle's works (published in 1930 in 24 volumes, with his signature in the first volume); the set has the dust jackets and is in the original shipping crate, lacking the lid but with the contemporary shipping labels.

\$20,000; 15 Court Square, Boston, MA 01208 (617-542-2376) <psbook@aol.com>.

Eldridge Plays and Musicals has a web-site at <www.histage.com> where they offer three plays of interest to Sherlockians: Billy St. John's "Fantastic Friends" has a scene from "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes", Robert Mattson's "The Four Biggest Guys in Rock and Other Comedies" includes his short play "The Retirement Holmes", and Mattson's "The Man Who Thought He Was Sherlock Holmes" is a comedy featuring a man who is so psychiatrically

challenged that he thinks he's Sherlock Holmes and his psychiatrist is Dr. Watson. You can download PDF previews at their web-site, and their postal address is Box 14367, Tallahassee, FL 32317.

Aug 08 #4 Reported: SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE THREE POISONED PAWNS (Breese Books, 2008; 204 pp., \$18.95), with three pastiches: "Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of Hamlet" (Emanuel E. Garcia), "Sherlock Holmes and the Belgravian Letter" (Roger Jaynes), and "Sherlock Holmes and the High-cliffe Invitation" (Eddie Maguire). Available (\$18.95 plus shipping) from Classic Specialties (Box 1958, Cincinnati, OH 45219) and at their web-site <www.sherlock-holmes.com/aug08_special.htm>.

Will Thomas' THE BLACK HAND (New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 2008; 289 pp., \$14.00) is the fifth in his Victorian mystery series featuring Cyrus Barker (an homage to Holmes' rival in "The Retired Colourman") and his assistant Thomas Llewelyn. It's an excellent continuation of the series, with Barker and Llewelyn involved in a battle between the Camorra and the Mafia, and as always there's excellent late-Victorian atmosphere.

OSCAR WILDE AND A GAME CALLED MURDER, by Gyles Brandreth (New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster, 2008; 402 pp., \$24.00 cloth, \$14.00 paper) is the American edition of his OSCAR WILDE AND THE RING OF DEATH (May 08 #5); it features Oscar Wilde as the detective, assisted by Robert Sherard (as his Watson), and by his friend Arthur Conan Doyle; the mystery's ingenious and the story well told, with excellent period flavor.

The New York City Collectible Paperback & Pulp Fiction Expo will be held on Oct. 19 at the Holiday Inn on 57th Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, Gary Lovisi reports; the guests will include Marvin Kaye, Ron Goulart, and Peter Straub. More information is available from Gary (call 718-646-6126 after 5:00 pm).

Jon Lellenberg reports that the new British trade paperback of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (from HarperPerennial, \$12.99) contains a few minor corrections, including typos. The American trade paperback is due from Penguin Books in September.

Gary E. Combs Autographs (3 Sheridan Square #7-H, New York, NY 10014 (212-242-7209) <www.combsautographs.com> recently offered (for \$1,500) an interesting letter from Conan Doyle: Jane Dewey Rinear, who had met Conan Doyle at a seance, wrote to him in 1927 on the stationery of the Associated True Story Clubs of America asking him to tell their 10 million readers a few of his ideas on what constitutes a charming woman. His response, written at the top of her letter (as often was the case in his later years), was: "I find all that I could imagine in my own wife. She is on the one hand practical and capable in the affairs of every day life. On the other hand she has always preserved that touch of romance which gives a glamour to existence. When a woman is good & kind right through she gets a hold of a man which is permanent and which his reason as well as his emotions endorses."

Irene's Cabinet is an annual anthology edited by Beth Austin for Watson's Tin Box, and this year's issue (46 pp.) offers Andrew Solberg's account of his first meeting with Sherlock Holmes, John Sherwood's "Jack the Ripper: A Sherlockian Approach", and the winning essay in the society's annual contest for seventh-graders in Howard County, Md. \$15.00 postpaid Beth Austin (9455 Chadburn Place, Gaithersburg, MD 20886); copies of annuals from 2003 through 2007 also are available (same price).

Aug 08 #5 Larry Townsend died on July 29. Townsend was active in the gay and leather communities for decades, and (writing as J. Watson) was the author of THE SEXUAL ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (1971); it was hardcore homosexual pornography, far more shocking in 1971 than it was when it was reprinted in 1993 (and still not for the easily shocked or annoyed).

Clive Francis' play "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (starring Peter Egan as

Holmes and Philip Franks as Watson) will be performed at the Theatre Royal in Bath on Oct. 13-18, on its way to the West End in London. The box office address is Sawclose, Bath BA1 1ET, England <www.theatreroyal.org.uk>.

Anyone who has seen Robert Sabuda's books knows how wonderful they are, and if you have never seen one you should visit a bookstore and look at one (or more). He creates incredible pop-up books, and his *ENCYCLOPEDIA MYTHOLOGICA: FAIRIES AND MAGICAL CREATURES*, designed with co-author Matthew Reinhart (Cambridge: Candlewick, 2008; \$27.99) includes the Cottingley Fairies (but without any mention of Conan Doyle). Go to www.candlewick.com and click on [advance search] and search for Sabuda as author to see photographs of inside spreads from his books (and there's video for many of his books).

You can go to <www.tripadvisor.com/PressCenter-i200-c1-Press-Releases.html> to read a press release from the TripAdvisor Media Network that rates the "Top 10 Literary Destinations" (according to its editors): London, Stratford-upon-Avon, Edinburgh, Dublin, New York, Concord, Paris, San Francisco, Rome, and St. Petersburg. Sherlock Holmes is cited for both London and Edinburgh.

An auction forecast: a first book edition of *A STUDY IN SCARLET* will be at auction at Christie's in London in November, estimated at £5,000-8,000. It isn't described at their web-site yet.

David Ian Davies offers an imaginative new Sherlock Holmes pen based on a design by Tom Richmond, available for \$12.95 (plus shipping) from One Voice Recordings, 1685 Halpert Street, Encino, CA 91436 (818-501-8145); you can see the pen at his web-site at <www.onevoicerecordings.com>.

David Palmer's "Spirit of Place" is a hand-crafted stained-glass portrait of Arthur Conan Doyle, with appropriate Portsmouth landmarks in the background, and it's now on display at the Cochrane Gallery in London through Nov. 28; the exhibition moves to the Stained Glass Museum at Ely Cathedral in January. You can see the portrait in full color at the society's web-site at <www.bsmgp.org.uk/Events/40cm2_exhibition_panels_and_prices.htm>, and it's for sale for £975; if you're interested, Palmer's e-mail address is <davidnpalmeruk@comcast.net>.

A bibliographic query: Dell published two comic books under the title "New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" in 1961 and 1962, and they were reprinted by Eternity Comics/Malibu Graphics as "Sherlock Holmes Casebook" in 1989, all without credits for stories or artwork. But the listings in "The Universal Sherlock Holmes" credit Edith Meiser for the stories and Frank Giacoia for the artwork. If anyone has any evidence identifying the author and artist, please let me know (the artwork looks like Giacoia's, but I don't know of an actual credit for him); the writer seems to have been Paul S. Newman.

Aug 08 #6 Steven Dietz's play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" will be produced by the Peninsula Players at the Theatre in a Garden in Fish Creek, Wis., Sept. 3 through Oct. 19, 2008 (W-4351 Peninsula Players Road, Fish Creek, WI 54212) (920-868-3287) <www.peninsulaplayers.com>. And the Abbeville Opera House in Abbeville, S.C., on Mar. 13-21, 2009; Box 247, Abbeville, SC 29620 <www.theabbevilleoperahouse.com>.

John Ruyle ("Baron Dowson") died on Aug. 15. John was an imaginative and prolific printer whose Sherlockian and non-Sherlockian work included books, bookmarks, programs, souvenirs, and letterheads. He invented Turlock Loams (who appeared in a long series of parodies), composed limericks and other poetry, and presided over the Pequod Press (which was only one of the many intriguing names he devised from which to publish his work). John received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1983.

Doug Elliott notes that *RATTUS HOLMES IN THE CASE OF THE SPOILSPORTS* also features Felis Watson in "a tale of sport and athletes who cheat by taking banned drugs." The story is a comic strip published in English, Spanish,

and French by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001618/161868E.pdf. The illustration (below) also shows the evil coach Moriarty, and the comic strip was published just in time to tie in with the Olympics in Beijing.

Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine (Nov. 2008) has Len Moffatt's poem "What a Friend We Have in Sherlock (A Hymn to Holmes)"; his "The Raving: A Poe-etic Version of the Baskerville Legend" was published in the Feb. 1998 issue of EQMM. Len and his wife June co-chaired Bouchercon in Culver City in 1976, in Los Angeles in 1972, and in Pasadena in 1991; they were the fan guests of honor in 1985, and received the lifetime achievement award in 1999.

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

Sep 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

"Do the Strand" (Roxy Music): The Sherlock Holmes Archetype and Its Influence is the title of the Sherlockian panel at Bouchercon on Oct. 11 at 8:30 am, with Sophie Hannah (moderator), Peter E. Blau, Steve Hecox, Laurie R. King, and Hank Phillippi Ryan; there's more information about Bouchercon at www.charmedtodeath.com. And in case you're wondering who Roxy Music is (I sure didn't know), they're an English art rock group that was founded in 1971, and one of their songs is "Do the Strand" (according to the lyrics, available on the Internet, the strand is a dance rather than an avenue or a magazine).

I asked about the comic books "New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" published by Dell in 1961 and 1962 (Aug 08 #5). I recently learned that the stories were written by Paul S. Newman, and they weren't his only Sherlockian work. His widow Carol Newman has reported that in 1954 he wrote the proposal that sold the "Sherlock Holmes" comic strip, which was to be illustrated by Don Komisarow and Lou Fine, to the N.Y. Herald Tribune syndicate; the syndicate took 50% of the proceeds, and Adrian Conan Doyle demanded half of the other 50%, the team bowed out and the syndicate brought in Edith Meiser and Frank Giacoia. Newman then wrote the stories for the Dell's comic books, and in 1962 Henry Lester, representing the Conan Doyle estate, optioned a Sherlock Holmes screen treatment from Newman. And according to the GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS (1998), Newman was the most prolific comic-book writer, with more than 4,000 published stories for 360 different comic-book titles.

The new book WHO THE HELL IS PANSY O'HARA? has one of the most imaginative titles that I've seen recently. Jenny Bond and Chris Sheedy explore "the fascinating stories behind 50 of the world's best-loved books" (New York:

Penguin Books, 2008; 318 pp., \$13.00), and the best-loved books include (of course) THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES. Pansy O'Hara, in case you haven't figured it out, is the heroine of a book written by Peggy Walsh, who wrote as Margaret Mitchell and changed the name of her heroine to Scarlet.

BERTRAM FLETCHER ROBINSON, by Brian W. Pugh and Paul R. Spiring (London: MX Publishing, 2008; 234 pp., £18.99/\$28.95 cloth or £12.99/\$19.95 paper), is subtitled "A Footnote to The Hound of the Baskervilles", but it's far more than a footnote: the authors offer detailed documentation of the life and career of Fletcher Robinson (who did much more than provide assistance to Conan Doyle with THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES), and a final chapter discussing the controversy over that assistance, plus a detailed bibliography of Fletcher Robinson's writings.

Plan ahead: the L.A. Theatre works will perform "The Lost world" on May 13-17, 2009, at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, and later broadcast a recording of the show on their weekly series "The Play's the Thing" on KPCC-FM. This is the adaptation by John de Lancie and Nat Segaloff that was issued on an "Alien Voices" audiocassette and starred with Armin Shimerman as Challenger and Dwight Schultz as Malone (Nov 97 #6); the performance was videotaped and later broadcast by the Sci-Fi channel (Jul 98 #6). Visit <www.latw.org> and <www.scpr.org/programs/latw> for more information about the production company and the radio series. And thanks to Ken Lanza for spotting the announcement.

Sep 08 #2 Reported: Mary Ann Gillies' THE PROFESSIONAL LITERARY AGENT IN BRITAIN, 1880-1920 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007; 304 pp., \$65.00); there's considerable attention paid to A. P. Watt, who is generally acknowledged as having been the world's first professional literary agent, and who had Conan Doyle as a client for many years. Also: SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE MONTANA CHRONICLES, by John S. Fitzpatrick (Atlanta: Riverbend Publishing, 2008; 239 pp., \$12.95); Holmes solves four mysteries in Montana in the late 1880s.

You probably won't read movie gossip in every issue, but: the [London] Sun reported on Sept. 1 that Russell Crowe had been cast as Watson in the new film that will star Robert Downey Jr. as Holmes; the article (with a doctored photograph of Crowe "as he might look in Baker Street") may still be seen at <www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/showbiz/bizarre/article1630338.ece>. And the Guardian reported (Sept. 2) that director Guy Ritchie told reporters that "I don't have a Watson. Somebody just told me that I have Russell Crowe lined up but that's news to me."

The latest catalog from Video Collectables offers a Sherlock Holmes Clock made of Botticino marble with an illustration by Sidney Paget, similar to the sets of coasters available earlier (Nov 06 #6 and May 07 #3), for \$49.98. Box 385, Lewiston, NY 14095 (800-268-3891) <www.collectables.com>.

"The Lost Special" (1932) was a 12-episode Universal Pictures serial based on Conan Doyle's story (considered by many to be Apocryphal), up-dated and set in the American west, and it's now available (I believe for the first time) on a single DVD (212 minutes) for \$10.00 (postpaid to U.S. addresses) from Dale Knott (Serials & Such, 7159 Hope Hill Road, Brooksville, FL 34601) <www.serialsandsuch.com>. Prints of the serial were screened in the past by Chris Steinbrunner and others, and although the quality of the DVD is only fair, it is great fun to see what they've done with (and to) the story.

Kevin Parker reports that the full-cast audio drama DOCTOR WHO: ASSASSIN IN THE LIMELIGHT (written by Robert Ross) has Arthur Conan Doyle in Washington in 1865 [yes, that's 1865]; available on two CDs (\$25.82) or as a download (\$12.95) from Big Finish (PO Box 3787, Maidenhead, Berks. SL6 3TF, England)

<www.bigfinish.com>.

Things change rapidly on the Internet: Musgraves Matters, published by Rafe McGregor for The Musgraves (Sep 07 #1) morphed into Cobwebby Bottles, and that's been succeeded by his blog, which has frequent Sherlockian content, at <www/rafemcgregor.blogspot.com>.

There's more about "The Lost Special": a 30-minute dramatization, with Orson Welles in the leading role, was broadcast in the "Suspense" radio series on WABC (New York) on Sept. 30, 1943; it also aired on the Armed Forces Radio Service, and an AFRS transcription disk survived and is now available on the Internet at <randsesotericotr.podbean.com/category/suspense> (scroll down to the entry for May 3, 2008).

Sep 08 #3 The 'A Study in Scarlet Expedition' to Salt Lake City over the Labor Day weekend was great fun, and due attention was paid to Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; participants received A TANGLED SKEIN: A COMPANION VOLUME TO THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS' EXPEDITION TO THE COUNTRY OF THE SAINTS (edited by Leslie S. Klinger, with copies of the papers that were presented during the weekend). A few copies of the 159-page book are still available for \$21.95 plus shipping (\$3.00 to the U.S.), and the expedition's colorful lapel pin also is available for \$10.00 postpaid; checks payable to Michael W. Homer can be sent to Mike at Suitter Axland, 8 East Broadway #200, Salt Lake City, UT 84111 <mhomer@sautah.com>.

Les Klinger reports that there's plenty of Sherlockian content in his THE NEW ANNOTATED DRACULA (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008; 672 pp., \$39.95); the official publication date is Oct. 13, but the book likely will be available earlier than that. Les explains that he mentions "The Sussex Vampire" in the introduction, and discusses the intersection of Holmes and Dracula in an essay on "Dracula after Stoker", and introduces the Sherlockian "game" to the world of Dracula (Stoker said in one of his introductions that the whole thing is true, and Les follows that path).

Further to the item on the Baskerville cutlery at auction at Bigwood Auctioneers on June 27, Martin Heath has reported that the cutlery went unsold when bidding failed to meet the reserve (L4,000), adding that "perhaps it may carry a curse!" Bigwood's press release, with photographs, can still be seen at <www.bigwood.co.uk/Default.aspx?id=447247>.

The Exeter Diocese Consistory Court has dismissed the application by Rodger Garrick-Steele to exhume Bertram Fletcher Robinson's body, according to an article in the Mid-Devon Advertiser (Aug. 29). Garrick-Steele has for many years accused Conan Doyle of murdering Fletcher Robinson, and filed the application two years ago (Sep 06 #1). Sir Andrew McFarlane, the chancellor of the court, said that Garrick-Steele's theory implicated not only Conan Doyle but also Fletcher Robinson's wife, her brother, the doctor who signed the death certificate, the undertakers, and the rector of Ipplepen, and Sir Andrew said that Garrick-Steele's allegations are "empty and self-serving," and that "on the basis of the material that he has placed before this court he appears to be a totally unreliable historian."

"Holmes Again" is the title of a non-credit course being taught at Indiana State University in Terre Haute this fall, with lectures on five Monday evenings from Oct. 20 to Nov. 17. Judith Francis reports that she will use films and radio shows and television programs, with discussion of different actors' interpretations, and the class will read A STUDY IN SCARLET and one short story. She has offered the course before, and says that it attracts variety of adults "including nuns from St. Mary of the Woods College and a gentleman who likes to arrive for the last class wearing a deerstalker."

Ed Hoch was a prolific short-story author, with a dozen excellent Sherlockian pastiches published in magazines and anthologies beginning in 1973, and they've now been collected in THE SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES OF EDWARD D. HOCH (Brooklyn: Gryphon Books, 2008; 171 pp., \$20.00), with an introduction that

Ed wrote last year, and an appreciation by Gary Lovisi. Gryphon's address is Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228 <www.gryphonbooks.com>.

Sep 08 #4 Jennet Conant's *THE IRREGULARS: ROALD DAHL AND THE BRITISH SPY RING IN WAR-TIME WASHINGTON* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008; 391 pp., \$27.95) has been widely reviewed, and some of the reviews report that Dahl and other members of the British Security Coordination (BSC) were known as the Baker Street Irregulars. Jon Lellenberg has pointed out that it was the Special Operations Executive (SOE) that were known by that nickname, because their original offices in 1940 were in Baker Street.

Don Izban has announced plans for his birthday party for Sherlock Holmes, whose birthday, Don insists, was on Oct. 10. But the party will be held on Oct. 18, at the Ridgemoor Country Club in Chicago, with dinner, entertainment, and prizes, and on Oct. 19 Don's famous tour of Graceland Cemetery, followed by breakfast at legendary Jack's Restaurant. More information is available from Donald B. Izban (1012 Rene Court, Park Ridge, IL 60068).

Aziz Bin Adam has reported two translations of Sherlock Holmes stories into Bahasa Melayu (Indonesian): *SHERLOCK HOLMES: PERUNDING DETEKTIF PERTAMA DUNIA* and *SHERLOCK HOLMES 2: DETEKTIF YANG PENUH KEJUTAN*. You can view them at <pts.com.my/index.php/buku/2047> and <pts.com.my/index.php/buku/2178>, and order the second one at <www.mph.com.my>.

Joe Coppola has found an interesting resource for images: the N.Y. Public Library's Digital Gallery at <digitalgallery.nypl.org>. Search for [conan doyle] and [sherlock holmes]; you'll find prints from four scenes from "A Squeedunk Sherlock Holmes" (1909), a short film made by the Edison Manufacturing Co. (and except for the title, non-Sherlockian). As well as lots of other images.

I've reported on Logan Clendening's *A HANDBOOK TO PICKWICK PAPERS* (Aug 08 #1), and I also recommend *SKYE HIGH: THE RECORD OF A TOUR THROUGH SCOTLAND IN THE WAKE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON AND JAMES BOSWELL* (1938); it's Sherlockian in a minor way, with a short chapter on "Sherlock Holmes" and a few other references to Conan Doyle, and it's well written and of great interest to anyone who enjoys Johnson and Boswell, and a vicarious tour with two excellent writers.

<www.estudioenesarlata.com> is the URL for a mystery-specialist bookstore in Madrid. It has a Sherlockian section, and the owner, Juan Salvador, has a blog (the Spanish word for "blog" is "blog") with a truly amusing "Alice in Wonderland" illustration.

WILDE ABOUT HOLMES, by Milo Yelisiyevich (New York: Comic Masque, 2008; 363 pp., \$19.95), is a pastiche that brings Sherlock Holmes and Oscar Wilde and Lillie Langtry to New York in 1884 and involves them in Grover Cleveland's campaign for the presidency; there's a lot of dialogue lifted from the Canon, and from Wilde and Wittgenstein (carefully footnoted), and situations also recycled from the Canon.

The Knothole is the occasional newsletter from The Christopher Morley Knot-hole Association, and the July issue has pictures of the cabin where Morley did so much of his writing on Long Island (there's now also a Gissing Commemorative Dog Run); members of the Association pay \$20.00 a year (checks to the CMKA, c/o The Bryant Library, Paper Mill Road, Roslyn, NY 11576).

Sep 08 #5 John Entwistle, best known as the bass guitarist for The Who, also was an artist whose work has been collected and released in limited-edition reproductions. Four of his sketches of a character he called "Cosmic Sherlock Holmes" will be sold by the Heritage Auction Galleries on Oct. 5, and you can see the artwork at their web-site <www.ha.com> (search for lot #50075); the opening bid is \$600.

The latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's *The Sherlockian E-Times* will

be found at <www.sherlock-holmes.com>, with news of their Sherlockian calendar for 2009, reminiscences of the S'ian conference held in Bennington in 1994, and offers of new S'ian prints, as well as books and other material.

Many Doyleans (and Sherlockians) enjoy a good ghost story, and M. R. James wrote some fine ones; Robert Lloyd Parry will perform "Oh whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad" and "The Ash Tree" at the 76th Street Theater Lab, 236 West 78th Street, in New York from Oct. 22 to Nov. 8 (212-362-0329). He'll also be performing in Portland, Maine, and Washington, D.C.; details at his web-site <www.nunkie.co.uk>.

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London has published two new books: HOLMES & WATSON COUNTRY: TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF SOLUTIONS, by Bernard Davies, is a two-volume collection of his scholarship and research (£50.00 for the special edition and £30.00 for the regular edition); and HOLMES AND WATSON: A NEW CHRONOLOGY OF THEIR ADVENTURES, by Vincent Delay (chairman of the Societe d'etudes holmesiennes de la Suisse romande), is a revised translation (from the French) of his dating of all the recorded and unrecorded adventures (£10.00); shipping is extra, and costs vary; information is available from Judi Ellis (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU, England) and at <www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk> (click on features). Her e-mail address is <shs1221b@aol.com>.

Laurie R. King has been posting to her blog about this and that, and occasionally about the next Mary Russell mystery, THE LANGUAGE OF BEES, which (in August) had reached the rewrite stage. Her blog, and much else, will be found at her web-site <www.laurierking.com>.

There are more Sherlockian and Doylean web-sites than one can visit in anything less than unlimited time, but you might want to take a look at Marsha Perry's "The Chronicles of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" at <www.siracd.com>; the web-site offers some amusing games, and a way to create and send your own Sherlockian greeting cards.

Andrew Clark has reported that he was passing through the Marylebone underground station this month and heard an announcement over the public address system: "Inspector Lestrade to the office, please." And he wondered for a moment whether this was a code phrase intended to alert railway staff to an emergency (hospitals sometimes use such phrases: "paging Dr. Firestone to three west" can mean "there's a fire in the west wing of the third floor"). Andrew also reports that the underground is considering replacing the faded Sherlockian tile murals that decorate the platforms and concourses at the Baker Street station (and he hopes they will continue the S'ian theme), and that the refurbishment of the former Abbey National building on the site of 221B Baker Street is nearing completion.

Sep 08 #6 Craig Bowsby's two-act play "The Hound of London" (first performed in Canada in 1987) was produced for Canadian television and broadcast in 1993, with Patrick Macnee as Holmes and John Scott-Paget as Watson. It was available some years ago on VHS, and you can now buy a DVD (\$15.00 plus shipping) at <stores.ebay.com/appledonmanor> or from Cathy A. Connor (171-A Rink Street #222, Peterborough, ON K9J 2K6, Canada). If ordering by mail, shipping is \$5.00 to the U.S., \$4.00 to Canada, and \$7.00 elsewhere, and you can pay by personal check.

Further to the report (Jun 08 #3) on the recent postage stamps honoring Charles and Ray Eames, Dr. William R. Hanson has designed a cachet for a first day cover that honors the N.Y. World's Fair IBM Pavilion and its Sherlockian puppet show. The cost of the cover (with one of the stamps) is \$10.00 postpaid to the U.S. (\$11.00 elsewhere); his address is 78 West Notre Dame Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801, and he asks that you pay with currency

or U.S. postal money orders.

A bit more about Guy Ritchie's new "Sherlock Holmes" film: he was interviewed by the Associated Press in Toronto (Sept. 5) and said: "One of the schools I went to was a boarding

school. If we shut up, behaved ourselves at night, they used to play us a Sherlock Holmes story through the speakers. They used to pipe them down to us. I suppose I've had an affection for Sherlock Holmes even since then." And Variety reported (Sept. 18) that Jude Law is "in talks" for the role of Dr. Watson, to star with Robert Downey Jr. as Sherlock Holmes. According to the Hollywood Reporter (Sept. 25), Rachel McAdams has been cast as Irene Adler (Sienna Miller, previously rumored as Irene Adler, dropped out of the project, it seems, because she didn't want to work with her former fiance Jude Law). And the villain, played by Mark Strong, is named Blackwood.

You can go to hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/houghton/doyle_symposium.html for an update on "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: A Sesquicentennial Assessment" (the symposium that will be held at Harvard's Houghton Library on May 7-9, 2009. Details on registration will be available later this year.

"Christopher Morley was an actor and female impersonator who specialized in cross-dressing roles," according to the Internet Movie Data Base. And no, that's not the founder of The Baker Street Irregulars; the actor flourished in the 1970s and 1980s, and his character on "General Hospital" was "possibly the influence for Larry Gelbart's screenplay for 'Tootsie'." You can read more about this at www.imdb.com/name/nm0606869/bio. Credit Ann Marlowe for this discovery.

Clive Francis' play "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (starring Peter Egan as Holmes and Philip Franks as Watson) will be touring in England, opening at the Theatre Royal in Plymouth on Oct. 7 and closing at the Royal & Derngate Theatre in Northampton on Nov. 8. More information on the tour is available at www.baskervillehound.co.uk.

Sep 08 #7 Plan ahead: The Baker Street Breakfast Club has announced their second conference at Bennington College in Vermont, on June 24-27, 2010; if you would like to be on the mailing list for "Sherlock Holmes: The Man and His Worlds", you can contact Sally Sugarman (Box 407, Shaftsbury, VT 05262) sugarman@bennington.edu. Their first conference, held 15 years ago (Jul 94 #1) was well-attended (with more than 100 people on hand) and offered an excellent program.

SHERLOCK HOLMES WAS WRONG: REOPENING THE CASE OF THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, by Pierre Bayard (New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2008; 193 pp., \$20.00), is the English translation of his L'AFFAIRE DU CHIEN DES BASKERVILLE (Feb 08 #3). He is a psychoanalyst and a professor of French literature, and he believes that "the world that the literary text produces is an incomplete world." Taking that approach to the Canon, Bayard explains that Sherlock Holmes got it wrong: Sir Charles Baskerville wasn't killed by Jack Stapleton with the help of a gigantic hound. And he identifies a different murder victim in the story, and a different murderer, and does it with style and scholarship.

Yet another production of Steven Dietz's play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure": at the Indiana Repertory Theatre in Indianapolis through Oct. 10. The theater is at 140 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317-635-5277) www.irtlive.com.

A new catalog from the BBC America Shop offers discounts on BASIL RATHBONE IN THE COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES COLLECTION (all 14 films, plus special features, on 5 DVDs), now \$110.98; JEREMY BRETT AS SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION (all 41 episodes, plus special features, on 12 DVDs), now \$195.95; THE COMPLETE CONAN DOYLE SHERLOCK HOLMES COLLECTION (all 60 stories, with Clive Merrison and Michael Williams, on 64 CDs, now \$169.98); and

THE EDWARDIANS (8 episodes, one with Nigel Davenport as Conan Doyle, on 41 DVDs), now \$42.98.

Georgiana Cavendish, 5th Duchess of Devonshire, gave her name to the style of hat worn by Mary Sutherland (in "A Case of Identity"), and her portrait by Gainsborough was stolen by Adam Worth (who was described as the Napoleon of crime long before that title was given to the evil Prof. Moriarty). And Keira Knightly plays the title role in the film "The Duchess", which opened in the U.K. on Sept. 5 and in the U.S. on Sept. 19; Ralph Fiennes plays the Duke of Devonshire.

Carl Heifetz has noted an amusing (and Sherlockian) "MacNelly's Shoe" comic strip in the St. Petersburg Times (Sept. 21); Jeff MacNelly died in 2000, and the strip is being continued by Chris Cassatt and Gary Brookins. You can see the strip at <macnelly.com/archives.php>.

When in England: if you've enjoyed Conan Doyle's THE WHITE COMPANY and SIR NIGEL, you're in good company (Charles Addams, Barbara Tuchman, President Eisenhower, P. G. Wodehouse, George MacDonald Fraser, Nicholas Meyer, and John Ford, among others). And you can visit Sir Nigel Loring's tomb, which is in All Saints Parish Church, Chalgrave, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. It was consecrated in 1220, and it's included in Simon Jenkins' ENGLAND'S THOUSAND BEST CHURCHES. The church's web-site is at <www.allsaintschalgrave.co.uk>.

Sep 08 #8 Freddy the Pig continues to delight his many fans, most recently in THE WIT & WISDOM OF FREDDY AND HIS FRIENDS, by Walter R. Brooks, with illustrations by Kurt Wiese and a warm introduction by Michael Cart (Woodstock: Overlook Press, 2000; 251 pp., \$23.95). The book's a compilation, and some of the illustration are Sherlockian, and it's now available at a discount: \$11.00 postpaid from Kevin W. Parker (3 Ridge Road #E, Greenbelt, MD 20770). The Friends of Freddy have a web-site (of course), at <www.freddythepig.org>.

Spotted by Ev Herzog: A FIELD GUIDE TO MONSTERS, by Dave Elliott (Irvington: Hylas, 2004; 191 pp., \$19.95), has an introduction by Abraham Van Hel-sing and an entry for the Hound of the Baskervilles; now on discount tables at \$4.99.

One hears of Sherlock everywhere. Luke Harding, the Guardian's correspondent in Moscow, interviewed Andrei Lugovoi earlier this year (May 21); Lugovoi is the man British prosecutors claim murdered the Russian dissident Alexander Litvinenko in London by poisoning his tea with radioactive polonium (the Russian government has refused to extradite Lugovoi for trial in Britain). "Surprisingly, given his status as a fugitive from British justice, Lugovoi turns out to be an Anglophile," Harding wrote. "He says that he still likes many things about Britain--whisky, football, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle--a copy of the complete Sherlock Holmes stories sits on a bookshelf. 'I've read all of Sherlock Holmes,' he says, adding that he is especially fond of Conan Doyle's dinosaur adventure novel, The Lost World." A tip of the deerstalker to Dough Elliott, who spotted the report.

Terri Haugen has reported that John Nassivera's play "The Penultimate Problem of Sherlock Holmes" will be performed at the Bellingham Theatre Guild Playhouse from Jan. 30 through Feb. 15, 2009; 1600 H Street, Bellingham, WA 98225 (360-733-1811) <www.bellinghamtheatreguild.com>.

The Shanghai Daily reported (Sept. 15) that a Nanjing-based club is organizing the world's largest competition (2009 players) of the murder-mystery game "Police and Killer" and has applied to the Guinness World Records for recognition. There are four roles in the game: police, killer, civilian, and judge, determined by drawing lots, and players keep their identity secret, except for the judge. The game is "believed to have had its origins in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories about Sherlock Holmes" and to have been "introduced to the Chinese mainland in the late 1990s by overseas Chinese students who had been to Silicon Valley in the U.S."

Forecast: THE ADVENTURES OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, by Russell Miller (London: Harvill Secker, 480 pp., £20.00, due in October); a new biography.

SHERLOCK HOLMES IN PORTRAITS AND POSES is the title of Bill Dorn's imaginative calendar for 2009, with time lines for the cases, notations of holidays, and Ian Malcolm Earls's portraits of Conan Doyle and various Canonical characters. \$13.95 postpaid from William S. Dorn (2045 South Monroe Street, Denver, CO 80210); his web-site's at <www.thesherlockstore.com>.

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

Oct 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Bouchercon 39 in Baltimore was enjoyable, especially for the editors of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS (Jon L. Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley); the book won an Anthony for best critical work, and Dan was on hand to accept the award, which made for a proverbial hat trick: the book also has won an Agatha from Malice Domestic and an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of American.

Bouchercon 40 will be held in Indianapolis on Oct. 15-18, 2009; Bouchercon 41 in San Francisco, Oct. 14-17, 2010 (Laurie R. King will be guest of honor); and Bouchercon 42 in St. Louis (Sept. 15-18). Bouchercon is the long-established world mystery convention, run by fans for fans, named in honor of Anthony Boucher, and it's a grand opportunity to meet authors and fans. You can register now for "Elementary, My Dear Indy!"; their web-site is at <www.bouchercon2009.com>.

You can read more about Bouchercon in Baltimore in various blogs, including Laurie's, which you can find at <www.laurierking.com>. Laurie had quite a few fans sitting up front at her various panels, and I'm sure they will be posting to Yahoo groups such as Letters of Mary; you can sign up for that one at <www.groups.yahoo.com/group/Letters_Of_Mary>.

And if you'd like to see nominees and winners of awards for books, films, and albums, there's the Award Annals web-site at <www.awardannals.com> that you can search by author or title to see who's won what over the years.

The latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's The Sherlockian E-Times will be found at <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times08-9.htm>, offering a report on this year's Sherlock Holmes and All That Jazz Society gathering in Cincinnati (next year's event will be in St. Louis) and news of new items available: Tracy J. Revels' book SHERLOCK HOLMES: MOSTLY PARODIES; Donald Thomas' THE EXECUTION OF SHERLOCK HOLMES AND OTHER TALES FEATURING THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE; a CD reissue of Anthony Smith-Masters' FAVOURITE MUSIC OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Sep 91 #6); and a CD of Eddie Maguire's pastiche SHERLOCK HOLMES: DEATH AT THE CRICKET (Aug 96 #4) read by Nicholas Utechin.

"Truth, betrayal, and passion collide as the world's most famous detective and his beloved Watson investigate a prank turned deadly." That's in C. P. Stancich's new play ("Sherlock Holmes and the Doom of Devilsmoor") that was presented this month by the Theater Company of Lafayette; the play will run through Nov. 8 at the Mary Miller Theater (300 East Simpson Street, Lafayette, CO 8026 (720-209-2154) <www.tclstage.org>.

Chris Roden reports the British Library will soon issue two three-CD sets in their "Spoken Word" series, one being "British Writers", which will include the recording made by Conan Doyle in 1930, as well as recordings by P. G. Wodehouse, Virginia Woolf, Ian Fleming, Rudyard Kipling, and Harold Pinter; each set will cost £19.95. "British Writers" is not yet listed at the British Library's web-site <www.bl.uk/shop>, but it can be pre-ordered (at a discount) at <whsmith.co.uk> at. The Conan Doyle recording was included in a set issued by the British Library in 2003; Chris reports that

the earlier set was withdrawn because of copyright issues.

Oct 08 #2 It has been a bit more than 30 years since the first two books in John Gardner's "Moriarty" series were first published, and many readers may not remember just how good a writer he was. MORIARTY (Orlando: Harcourt, 2008; 300 pp., \$24.00) is a fine reminder: Moriarty is as evil and intelligent as ever, and the story is well told. There's also a British edition (London: Quercus, 2008; 320 pp., £14.99). Gardner, who was a member of The Baker Street Irregulars (with the Investiture "Moriarty"), died last year (Aug 07 #1), but fortunately was able to complete the trilogy before his death; he has written about his life and career, and about Moriarty, and his many other books, at his web-site <www.john-gardner.com>, and new readers will want to pursue THE RETURN OF MORIARTY (1974) and THE REVENGE OF MORIARTY (1975).

Les Klinger has been on tour promoting his THE NEW ANNOTATED DRACULA (Sep 08 #3), and the tour continues into November. You can find the schedule at <www.lesliesklinger.com> (click on Events). Les was interviewed about the book at Zombo's Closet of Horror last month; do a Google search for [zombos klinger].

<www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAnor9cdC2Q> is the URL for a three-minute video from a press conference marking the start of work on the "Sherlock Holmes" film Guy Ritchie is making for Warner Bros., with most of the principals on hand, including Kelly Reilly, who will play Watson's love interest Mary.

The Internet does make it easy to share images as well as words: it didn't take long for photographs to be taken during filming for Guy Ritchie's "Sherlock Holmes" in London to reach the Internet. <www.justjared.buzznet.com> offers a good assortment; search for [sherlock holmes], and click on Link. Many bloggers reported that Robert Downey Jr. has decided to reinvent Sherlock Holmes as Charlie Chaplin, but some of them realized that Holmes was a master of disguise.

Randall Stock has a new URL for his excellent web-site "The Best of Sherlock Holmes": <www.bestofsherlock.com>.

And Randall is continuing to expand his "Sidney Paget Original Drawings and Artwork: A Preliminary Census and Checklist"; there's information about one of the illustrations for "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and other updates, at <www.bestofsherlock.com/sidney-paget-original-art.htm>.

"The Case of the Portsmouth Doctor" was the first exhibition from Richard Lancelyn Green's collection at the Portsmouth City Museum, in 2006, and a specially-adapted version of the exhibition opened in Portsmouth's sister city Maizuru in Japan on Oct. 18, running through Nov. 30; you can see the poster at <www.conandoyllecollection.co.uk/lancelyn-green-downloads/Maizuru> and you can request more information about the exhibition from Hiroshi Kojima <shoukou@post.city.maizuru.kyoto.jp>.

John S. Fitzgerald's SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE MONTANA CHRONICLES (Helena: Riverbend Publishing, 2008; 239 pp., \$12.95) has Holmes and Watson twice visiting western Montana to solve four cases; Fitzgerald tells his readers a great deal about the history of the area and its mining industry.

Oct 08 #3 Further to the report (Sep 08 #1) that L.A. Theatre Works will perform "The Lost World" in Los Angeles next year, it turns out that there's a company touring the U.S. through Apr. 4, with a double bill of "The Lost World" and "War of the Worlds". The schedule of their tour is available at <www.ltw.org/Tour/tour/Tours.html>.

The Rosenbach Museum & Library in Philadelphia held a hands-on tour called "Sleuths & Spies" on Oct. 8, and their manuscript of "The Empty House" was one of the feature items. It will be repeated on Dec. 1, and there's more

information at their web-site at www.rosenbach.org/program

The September issue of the quarterly newsletter of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has Robert Brusica's "100 Years Ago" discussion of Freeman Tilden's early parody "The Last Return of Sherlock Holmes", Jon Lellenberg's "50 Years Ago" tribute to Elmer Davis, and news from and about the collections. 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>.

There will be three performances of Andrew Joffe's two-act dramatization of "The Blue Carbuncle" (as a staged reading with music, and with Paul Singleton as Sherlock Holmes) at the Theatre Encino on Nov. 15 and 16; 17500 Burbank Boulevard, Encino, CA 91316 (818-973-2262) <www.singletonactor.com>.

<www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/lifeinboxes.html> is the URL for an exhibition of "Life in Boxes: Comic Art & Artifacts" at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia through Mar. 22. The exhibition is drawn from BSJ editor Steve Rothman's recent donation of more than 5,000 books and 20,000 comic books to the Penn Libraries. Steve reports that Sherlockian comics are included in the exhibition. You can read an article about the exhibition (and Steve) at <www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v55/n09/pow.html>.

The Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes London (formerly the Sherlock Holmes Hotel) at 108 Baker Street will celebrate Christmas with a "Sherlock Holmes Murder Mystery" (according to an announcement spotted by Ken Lanza). The events will be offered beginning Nov. 1, and there's more information available at <www.murdermysteryshop.com>.

We may get to see a movie based on Conan Doyle's "Brigadier Gerard" stories. According to a story in the Hollywood Reporter (Oct. 15), Steve Carell has been "attached to" a film about the Brigadier; Carell appeared in "The 40 Year Old Virgin" (2005) and "Get Smart (2008), and now stars in the television series "The Office". "King of the Hill" writers John Altshuler and David Krinsky are at work on the script. "Attached to" appears to be Hollywood-speak for "he's interested."

Brigadier Gerard has been in films before, starting with "Brigadier Gerard" (1915, with Lewis Waller as Gerard). "The Fighting Eagle" (1927) with Rod La Rocque as Gerard) is available on DVD from Grapevine Video (Box 46161, Phoenix, AZ 85063 <www.grapevinevideo.com>, and "The Adventures of Gerard" (1970, with Peter McEnery as Gerard) was broadcast by BBC-2 in Britain in 1994, but seems not to be available commercially (although off-the-air recordings do exist).

Oct 08 #4 Further to the report on the new film "The Duchess" (in which Keira Knightly plays Georgiana Cavendish, 5th Duchess of Devonshire), there also are some Doylean connections. Phil Bergem has reported that Charles Altamont Doyle (Conan Doyle's father) was one of the illustrators of Grace and Philip Wharton's THE QUEENS OF SOCIETY (1860), which contains his illustration of "The Beautiful Duchess of Devonshire: A Kiss for a Vote." And Ruth Berman has noted that in Conan Doyle's A DUET: WITH AN OCCASIONAL CHORUS (1899) Mrs. Hunt Mortimore talks about going to a fancy-dress ball as the "Duchess of Devonshire" and discusses the details of her costume.

Dave Buchanan's "The Baker Street Kids: The Riverbank Chase" is a new one-act play based on "The Sign of Four" and written for a mixed cast of 11-14 year olds, and it's nicely done. Spotlight Publications, 259 The Moorings, Dalgety Bay, Fife KY11 9GX, Great Britain <www.spotlightpublications.com>.

If you've ever wondered why Nero Wolfe lives on West 35th Street, here's a reminder from almost thirty years ago: John J. McAleer reported in The Armchair Detective (winter 1979) that it's because Rex Stout remembered seeing William Gillette in "Sherlock Holmes" at the Garrick Theater on West 35th

Street in New York. Bantam has reissued four of Stout's Nero Wolfe novels: FER-DE-LANCE/THE LEAGUE OF FRIGHTENED MEN and SOME BURIED CAESAR/THE GOLDEN SPIDERS (\$15.00 each); for those who came in late, John D. Clark suggested many years ago that Nero Wolfe inherited his father's deductive prowess and his uncle's gargantuan physique (Stout would neither confirm nor deny this, but said that when the world was ready, the Baker Street Irregulars would be the first to know).

Gayle Lange Puhl shepherded groups of Evansville High School to Europe in 2006 and 2008, and made sure they were aware of the Sherlockian and Doylean aspects of places they visited. And she has described their trips, in some detail, as <www.cheeseheadintheuk.blogspot.com>.

UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) made Edinburgh the first "world city of literature" (Nov 04 #5), and the city launched a "One Book--One Edinburgh" reading campaign. THE LOST WORLD has been chosen for 2009, and thousands of free copies will be distributed through libraries, schools, and supporting partner organizations. The book's cover will feature Wallace & Gromit (courtesy of Aardman Animations), you can learn more about the campaign, and see the cover design, at <www.cityofliterature.com>.

Mark Alberstat's 2009 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.

Andrew Lycett's CONAN DOYLE: THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES has been reissued as a trade paperback (London: Phoenix, 2008; 600 pp., £10.99); the American edition, titled THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, has a trade paperback due in November (New York: Free Press, 2008; 576 pp., \$16.95).

Oct 08 #5 Sherlock Holmes' 155th birthday will be celebrated on Friday, Jan. 9, with the traditional festivities in New York, but the first formal event will be The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes' ASH Wednesday dinner starting at 6:00 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 John Lescroart, an author and a musician, whose twenty books include SON OF HOLMES (1986) and RASPUTIN'S REVENGE (1987), featuring Auguste Lupa; his web-site <www.johnlescroart.com> offers samples from his books and records. The lecture will cost \$11.00; seating will be limited, and you should purchase tickets early (details below); no tickets will be sold at the door.

The Beacon Society's annual meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Friday on the second floor of the Algonquin to present Annual Beacon Award recognizing efforts of individuals to introduce Sherlock Holmes to young people.

Otto Penzler will hold his traditional open house 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 sta-

tion (one block from the shop). If you get lost, the bookshop's telephone number is 212-587-1011.

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 <susan221bee@gmail.com> (125 Washington Place #2-E, New York, NY 10014); early reservations are advised for this event.

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). <www.gaslightgalanyc.org> is the URL for their web-site (you are advised to reserve early, and requested to include your e-mail address and primary Sherlockian society affiliation).

People who aren't ready for bed after the annual dinner or the gala might wish to join an informal gathering at O'Lunney's Times Square Pub (145 West 45th Street between 6th Avenue and Broadway).

Oct 08 #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 9:30 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); 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 \$75.00 (details below) or \$85.00 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); space at the event is limited, and more information is available from Chrys Kegley (9338 Sophia Avenue, North Hills, CA 91343) (818-894-1501) <ccobsla@socal.rr.com>.

The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes will hold an informal buffet brunch on Sunday; more information to come later (as they say, stay tuned).

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 Mary Ann Bradley, 7938 Mill Stream Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46278 <mabmfw@aol.com>.

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 \$185.00 (or \$285.00 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; call 212-840-6800 and mention The Baker Street Irregulars (and make the call soon: the rooms sell out earlier and earlier each year).

Mary Ellen Rich kindly continues to advise 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.travelocity.com>,

Oct 08 #7 <www.hotels.com>, <www.expedia.com>, and <www.quikbook.com>; it would be wise if you then to check the hotel's web-site and ask for the best rate (and you shouldn't forget about non-optional extras such as 14% state and city taxes). The Seafarers International GuestHouse near Union Square Park (212-677-4800) <www.sihnyc.org> also has inexpensive accommodations.

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 (returning to our regular programming) it's always a pleasure to discover August Derleth's "Solar Pons" stories in print: "The China Cottage" is one of 58 stories in ALFRED HITCHCOCK: TALES OF TERROR, edited by Eleanor Sullivan (1986), which has been reprinted this year by Gallahad Books for Barnes & Noble (\$9.98).

Paul Brundage spotted a story about 12 minutes of silent-film footage taken in London in 1904 and recently discovered in Australia; you can see some of the footage at <www.skynews.com>; search for [london 1904]. The documentary ("Living London") was made by American film pioneer Charles Urban.

Celia Gregory died on Sept. 8. She began her acting career on stage early in the 1970s, and went on to appear on the Sunday Times list of Britain's most promising actresses. She also worked in television, and played Maria Gibson in Granada's "Thor Bridge" (1991).

John Baesch spotted a report in the Daily Mail (Oct. 17): "Benedict Cumberbatch will play Sherlock Holmes in a modern-day setting. Holmes will actually be a contemporary detective, not some sort of time traveller. Steve Moffat, who works on the Dr. Who dramas, has written an hour-long pilot episode with Mark Gatiss. If senior executives at the BBC like what they see, a series will be commissioned."

The Baker Street Irregulars' triennial running of The Silver Blaze will be combined with the 50th annual running of the Chicago Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course on Oct. 31, 2009, and there will be a brunch at the Butterfield Country Club in Oak Park on Nov. 1. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Oak Brook Doubletree with a special rate of \$89.00 per night (plus 9% tax); the number of rooms at the special rate is limited, and you are advised to reserve early (and you can cancel later if you can't come). Call 800-222-8733, and be sure to request the BSI-Watsonian rate. More details are available from Susan Z. Diamond (16W603 3rd Avenue, Bensenville, IL 60106) (630-227-9127 <szdiamond@comcast.net>).

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

Nov 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

A late addition to the list of events during the birthday festivities: The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes have arranged an informal buffet brunch on Sunday, Jan. 11, 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 Lyndsay Faye Lehner (450 West 162nd Street, New York, NY 10032). Overseas guests can reserve via e-mail, and pay at the door; her e-mail address is <lyndsayfaye@hotmail.com>.

Russell Miller's THE ADVENTURES OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE (New York: St. Martin's Press/Thomas Dunne Books, 2008; 544 pp., \$27.95) is an excellent addition to a shelf of biographies of Sir Arthur; the book is well written, and it offers new and interesting information, because Miller has had access to, and has made good use of, not only the family papers and correspondence but also material collected by the late Richard Lancelyn Green and bequeathed to the Portsmouth Library. Green cast his net widely, and owned letters from, to, and about Conan Doyle and his family, and all of this has helped Miller create an excellent, and entertaining biography. And there's a British edition (London: Harvill Secker, 2008; 480 pp., £20.00).

Baker Street West 1 is "a Sherlockian journal from the western USA" and now in its 14th year; the summer issue (50 pp.) has Joella D. Hultgren's "Sher-Do-Ku #2 (Sudoku can be played with letters as well as numerals), plus other interesting S'ian 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.

Sherlockiana: Meddelelser fra Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark, is now in its 53rd year, offering news of Sherlockian goings-on in Denmark (and now color illustrations; it's all in Danish, and a fine demonstration of what one of the older Sherlockian societies is doing. Bjarne Rother Jensen is the editor (Sjællandsgade 16, 3.th, 8800 Viborg, Denmark).

"India's multibillion rupee film industry, which has been fuming over a ban on smoking scenes in films, now has reason to smile. The health ministry is ready to allow the depiction of iconic characters with their favourite poison stick, according to a report (Oct. 20) by the Indo-Asian News Service. Winston Churchill and Sherlock Holmes can now be shown smoking in new films --although with a warning at the beginning and ending of the film about the dangers of smoking. The Indian government banned smoking in public places as of Oct. 2, and the health minister has estimated that on-screen smoking is accountable for more than 60 percent of new smokers. Credit Karen Murdock for spotting the story.

Audrey Peterson died on Feb. 12. She was a college English teacher as well as an author (one of her series was about English professor Claire Camden); her VICTORIAN MASTERS OF MYSTERY: FROM WILKIE COLLINS TO CONAN DOYLE (1984) included a chapter on "Arthur Conan Doyle and the Great Detective", and she was one of the speakers at the special program "Sherlock Holmes at 100" at UCLA in 1987.

Nov 08 #2 John Entwistle's sketches of "Cosmic Sherlock Holmes" went to auction this month (Sep 08 #5) and were bought by Jerry Margolin, who says they will go very nicely with his Entwistle drawing of Pete Townshend as Holmes. Entwistle and Townshend were both members of the rock band The Who. So far no one seems to have identified anything Sherlockian in any of The Who's recordings.

Modern technology certainly makes things more interesting: the web-site for Bouchercon 2009 <www.charmedtodeath.com> has video of one-hour interviews with guests of honor Lawrence Block, Laura Lippman, John Harvey, and Robert

Rosenwald and Barbara Peters.

More modern technology: Paul Singleton's web-site <www.singletonactor.com> has photographs of him as Sherlock Holmes in Andrew Joffe's dramatization of "The Blue Carbuncle" and a clip showing Paul as a doctor in a scene with Susan Lucci on the television series "All My Children" earlier this year.

Len Deighton's "Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Swindle" is the first short story he has written in more than 30 years (and imaginatively Sherlockian rather than a pastiche), and it's one of the 17 stories in THE VERDICT OF US ALL: STORIES BY THE DETECTION CLUB FOR H.R.F. KEATING, edited by Peter Lovesey (Norfolk: Crippen & Landru, 2006; 223 pp., \$43.00 cloth or \$20.00 paper); the special cloth edition is signed by the editor and has an additional story in a separate pamphlet. Box 9315, Norfolk, VA 23505 (877-622-6656) <www.crippenlandru.com>. Douglas G. Greene, the proprietor of Crippen and Landru, does an excellent job of finding interesting short stories, old and new, for his anthologies and collections.

"Where are they now?" department: Guy Henry, who made his small-screen debut in the title role of Granada series "Young Sherlock Holmes: The Mystery of the Manor House" (1982), played Cassius in the HBO series "Rome" (2005-2007) and this year was Jonathan Sewall in the HBO series "John Adams".

Reported: Sigmund Freud in Sherlockian costume on the cover of IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING: A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF AMERICAN DETECTIVE FICTION, by Alexander N. Howe (Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2008; 296 pp., \$35.00); "the first chapter identifies several instances of hysteria within the fiction of two of the genre's pioneers, Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle."

Andrew Gulli launched his new Strand Magazine in 1998, and has reached issue #25 (and of course is now well established rather than new); the latest issue (June-Sept. 2008) offers an excellent mix of fiction, interviews, and articles, including Michael Kurland's short story "The Picture of Oscar Wilde" (which of course features Moriarty rather than Holmes). \$6.95 (Box 1418, Birmingham, MI 48012) (800-300-6652) <www.strandmag.com>.

Jonathan Goodman died on Jan. 10. widely praised as Britain's leading historian of crime, he edited the "Celebrated Trials" series and many anthologies, and wrote books about true crimes; his BLOODY VERSICLES: THE RHYMES OF CRIME (1971), included a "chryme" about Sherlock Holmes.

Nov 08 #3 IN SPITE OF MYSELF: A MEMOIR, by Christopher Plummer (New York: Knopf, 2008; 656 pp., \$29.95), is his autobiography; he played Sherlock Holmes in "Silver Blaze" (1977) and "Murder by Decree" (1979), and as General Chang in "Star Trek: The Undiscovered Country" (1991) exclaimed "The game's afoot!" (but Chang was quoting Shakespeare rather than the Canon). Plummer is a wonderful story teller, and an interesting writer. He explains that he got along like a house afire with Basil Rathbone (they acted together in the play "J.B."), and he enjoyed playing Holmes with James Mason ("who turned in the best Watson I've ever seen"). The book lacks an index, who may be frustrating for some readers (the secret numbers are 288-289 and 564-565).

The Penguin trade paperback edition of ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS, edited by Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley) is now available (706 pp., \$18.00).

The latest issue of the SBIOS Post is at hand from Don Izban (the SBIOS is the Sherlockians By Invitation Only Society), with his announcement of the next SBIOS national gathering: a Burger Bust, in or near Chicago, on Aug. 1; more information will be available some time next year (1012 Rene Court, Park Ridge, IL 60068).

The Centerstage Theatre Arts Conservatory will present Paul Giovanni's "The Crucifer of Blood" Feb. 27-Mar. 15 at the Knutzen Family Theater (200 S.W. Dash Point Road, Federal Way, WA 98023) <www.centerstagetheatre.com> (253-661-1444).

James B. Hillestad, who presides over the Toy Soldier Museum, has written an interesting article about "The Legendary Sherlock Holmes" for Toy Soldier & Model Figure magazine (Dec. 2008): it's a well-illustrated exploration of Sherlockian miniature figures, and you can read it on-line at his web-site <www.the-toy-soldier.com> (click on "articles"). Some of the sets of figures may be available from Jim (1343 Paradise Falls, Cresco, PA 19326 (750-629-7227) <jmhill@ptd.net>; you can ask him for details.

Tutis Digital Publishing in India has launched an on-line catalog of more than 4,000 "Tutis Classics" now available at Amazon and many other on-line stores; their web-site's at <www.tutis.com>, and they offer 23 volumes of Conan Doyle's work (Sherlockian and non-Sherlockian).

The November issue of The Dispatch (edited by Vic Lahti for The Afghanistan Perceivers of Oklahoma) calls attention to The Word Detective, a newspaper column written by Evan Morris for many years and now available on-line at <www.word-detective.com>. The web-site includes an extensive archive, and one of the phrases he discussed (in Dec. 2005) was "brown study", with mention of its use in "The Resident Patient". It's a fine web-site for anyone interested in words and language.

The Practical, But Limited, Geologists (aka The Friends of Sherlock Holmes) honored the world's first forensic geologist with drinks and dinner at Artista in Houson on Oct. 8, with a warm welcome to the visiting geologists provided by members of The John Openshaw Society. Our next meetings will be in Denver on June 10, and in Portland on Oct. 21.

Nov 08 #4 Cultural literacy is an interesting concept that has been described as requiring "the broad range of trivia and the use of that trivia in the creation of a communal language and a collective knowledge." An interesting example of this occurred in the Washington Post on Nov. 4, when the lead editorial was headlined "The war That Didn't Bark". The editorial contained no mention of Sherlock Holmes or a Sherlock Holmes story, and the copy editor who wrote the headline obviously expected that readers would understand the context without any explanation.

Another interesting example of cultural literacy is the frequent use of the phrase "the --% solution" without reference to Nicholas Meyer's novel. The writers who use the phrase assume that their readers know what's going on. One also reads descriptions of someone villainous as a "Moriarty", without mention of who Moriarty was and where he's to be found; the readers are expected to know that.

Paul G. Churchill ("Corot") died on Nov. 7. He had a long career in education and was an enthusiastic member of the Six Napoleons and other nearby Sherlockian societies; Paul enjoyed appearing as Watson, and even more in presenting his "evidence boxes" at society meetings: he had souvenirs for each of the Canonical cases, and when he couldn't find authentic material he was happy to provide skillful forgeries. His "evidence box" for "The Illustrious Client" was especially interesting, because he had Baron Gruner's "lust diary" complete with the Baron's photographs and descriptions (in French, of course) of his conquests.

<www.genericradio.com> offers a wide variety of old-time radio scripts that you can read on-line or download, and three of them are Sherlockian: "The Musgrave Ritual" (Dec. 11, 1939), "The Case of the Dead Adventuress" (Feb. 5, 1945), and "The Adventure of the Tolling Bell" (Apr. 7, 1947). And "The Lost Special" from "Suspense" (Sept. 30, 1943).

The Crowded Kitchen Players will perform Ara Balieb's play "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Christmas Goose", Dec. 5-21, at McCoolle's Arts and Events Place in Quakertown, Pa., Dec. 5-21. The box-office phone number is (610-395-7176) <www.barliebwallace.com/sherlock.html>.

The saga of The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen continues with THE BLACK DOSSIER, a new graphic novel written by Alan Moore and illustrated by Kevin O'Neill (from Wildstorm, 2007); the story's set in 1958, but there are mentions of Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes, the Diogenes Club, and Moriarty. The book is available in softcover (\$19.95), hardcover (\$29.95), and as an "absolute edition" (\$99.00).

P. N. Elrod (better known in Sherlockian circles as Patti Nead Elrod, creator of the "Baker Street Irregulars") began her THE VAMPIRE FILES book series with BLOODLIST and LIFE BLOOD (Jun 90 #3), featuring Jack Fleming (once a reporter and now a vampire) and his private-detective friend Charles Escott (whose name is not the only S'ian echo in the series, which is set in gangland Chicago in the 1930s). The series reached #11 IN 2006 with SONG IN THE DARK, and the next book will be DARK ROAD RISING, due from Ace as a trade paperback next year. Her web-site at <www.vampwriter.com> has news and some of her short stories about Fleming and Escott.

Nov 08 #5 Michael Crichton died on Nov. 4. He was a prolific author, of books and scripts, and a film director, who began his career in 1969 with THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN (which he dedicated to Conan Doyle). Before his movie "Jurassic Park" opened in 1993 he said in a N.Y. Times interview that "we're both failed doctors who found storytelling more congenial than healing. Sometimes I think I've devoted my life to rewriting Conan Doyle in different ways." And in 2003 he wrote in his introduction to the Modern Library edition of Conan Doyle's THE LOST WORLD that "Conan Doyle did something far more influential than invent a character, he invented a particular kind of fantasy story, and demonstrated a successful way to tell it."

Reported: SIGERSON AT THE POLE, by Mary Ellen Daugherty (Scion of the Green Dragon, 1997) has been reprinted by Classic Specialties (\$5.95). And SHERLOCK HOLMES AT THE RAFFLES HOTEL, by John Hall (new from Breese Books, 172 pp., \$18.95). Both pastiches are available from Classic Specialties (Box 1958, Cincinnati, OH 45219) <www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

John Baesch has kindly forwarded the results of a poll of book critics published in the Daily Telegraph (Sept. 20) that ranked the 50 greatest villains in literature. #46 was Moriarty (from "The Final Problem"), between Long John Silver (from Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island") at #47 and the White Witch (from C. S. Lewis' "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe") at #45). #2 was Samuel Whiskers (from Beatrix Potter's "The Tale of Samuel Whiskers"), and #1 was Satan (from John Milton's "Paradise Lost").

Reported: Bob Garcia's DUEL EN ENFER: SHERLOCK HOLMES CONTRE JACK L'EVEN-TREUR [DUEL IN HELL: SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. JACK THE RIPPER (Paris: Editions du Rocher, 2008; 352 pp., €19.90). And his earlier pastiche LE TESTAMENT DE SHERLOCK HOLMES [THE WILL OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (2005) is still in print.

BERTRAM FLETCHER ROBINSON: A FOOTNOTE TO THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, by Brian W. Pugh and Paul R. Spiring (Sep 08 #1), now has a paperback edition (London: MX Publishing, 2008; 248 pp., £12.99). And their ON THE TRAIL OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: AN ILLUSTRATED DEVON TOUR (Mar 08 #1) has been published in Spanish: TRAS LAS HUELLAS DE ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: UN VIAJE ILUSTRADO POR DEVON (London: MX Publishing, 2008; 168 pp., £12.99). Both are available at Amazon in the US and the UK, and at other on-line bookshops.

REICHENBACH FALLS is the title of the indie-pop band Ravens & Chimes' first CD (Los Angeles: Better Looking Records, 2007; \$14.98). "I grew up reading a lot of old stuff, fairy tales, Sherlock Holmes, and stories," band member Asher Lack told an interviewer, explaining that the album title comes from the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Marjorie Laidee has spotted a Novosti report (Nov. 10) from Novgorod: statues of Sherlock Holmes have been awarded to the 16 best police officers in Russia's Novgorod region; the awards were carved out of marble by local craftsmen, and the event was held to mark Police Officer's Day. "The prize event is a rare positive news story for Russian police, who have been criticized of late over a series of fatal and near-fatal attacks," according to Novosti. "The most shocking of these came at the end of October when three police officers in the Russian Volga city of Saratov admitted to burning an Armenian national alive after attempting to beat a confession out of him."

Nov 08 #6 Shane Peacock's EYE OF THE CROW: THE BOY SHERLOCK HOLMES (Aug 07 #2) was one of five finalists for the TD Canadian Children's Literature Award for "the most distinguished book of the year" written in English. The winner of the \$20,000 prize was ELIJAH OF BUXTON, by Christopher Paul Curtis (the other four authors will receive \$2,500 each).

Petri wine sponsored the "Sherlock Holmes" radio series from 1943 to 1950, and bottled and sold wine that was far better than the wine sold more recently under that name, and if you would like to know more about the history of the original company, you can run a Google search for [petri family wine industry]. That will turn up "The Petri Family in the wine Industry", an oral-history interview with Louis Petri that's part of a wine-industry archive at the Bancroft Library at the University of California (Berkeley), and the text is available on-line (look for "View the book" at the left).

W. H. Auden praised Sherlock Holmes in his essay "The Guilty Vicarage" (in Harper's Magazine, May 1948), but I only now learned about the play "Sherlock Holmes Chez Duhamel" that he wrote in 1932, while he was teaching at the Larchfield School in Helensburgh (northwest of Glasgow). The play is mentioned in THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO W. H. AUDEN, edited by Stan Smith (2004), which quotes the Helensburgh and Gareloch Times as saying that the play was performed by pupils at the annual Prize Day in 1932. Smith says that the play is "now lost."

Imaginative and artistic statues of Holmes, Watson, and Moriarty, created by James Black, were distributed by Luther Norris in the 1970s, and one of Black's Sherlock Holmes statues (signed and dated 1973) will be at auction at Midwest Auction Galleries <www.liveauctioneers.com/item/5880125> on Dec. 7 (it's lot 881); the postal address is 665 North Lapeer Road, Oxford, MI 48371 (877-236-8181).

The Sherlock Holmes Society of London's new Christmas card is titled "It's a cold night" and has an attractive full-color design by Gemma Tiley; you can see the artwork (and order packets of the cards) at the Society's website <www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk>. The Society will hold its annual dinner on Jan. 17 in the Members' Dining Room at the House of Commons; the guest of honor will be Gyles Brandreth, who has written two pastiches about Oscar Wilde and Arthur Conan Doyle. The Society's announcement notes that Brandreth is a sought-after after-dinner speaker, and is featured in the Guinness Book of Records for having made the world's longest-ever after-dinner speech: to raise funds for the National Playing Fields Association he spoke non-stop for twelve hours.

Jon Lellenberg reports an announcement from Google that it has begun to digitize Life magazine's archives (about 10 million images), and has already completed 20% of the project; only a small fraction of the images were ever published in the magazine. Go to <www.images.google.com> and search for a subject followed by source:life; [conan doyle source:life] turns up 146 images, most of them are illustrations from the stories, but a dozen of them are photographs of various members of the family. A search for [sherlock holmes source:life] produces 160 images, again most of the illustrations, but with some interesting photographs on the last screen (you're invited to figure out who's in the photographs, and where and when they were taken).

Nov 08 #7 Reported: SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE CASE OF THE BIZARRE ALIBI, by Frank Thomas (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2008; 136 pp., \$20.99); he was a prolific author of pastiches, and died in 2006 (this title apparently was first published by Xlibris in 2004). Thomas' THE SECRET FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (2002), SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SACRED SWORD (2003), and SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE PANAMANIAN GIRLS (2004) also are available from Xlibris. And there's an interesting entry for him at <www.wikipedia.org>.

Sherlockiana: Meddelelser fra Sherlock Holmes Klubben i Danmark, is now in its 53rd year, offering news of Sherlockian goings-on in Denmark (and now color illustrations; it's all in Danish, and a fine demonstration of what one of the older Sherlockian societies is doing. Bjarne Rother Jensen is the editor (Sjællandsgade 16, 3.th, 8800 Viborg, Denmark).

Fans of Peter Cushing may want to pursue Christopher Gullo's biography IN ALL SINCERITY...PETER CUSHING (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2004; 420 pp., \$34.99 cloth, \$24.99 paper); Cushing played Sherlock Holmes on screen and television, and wrote forewords for Sherlockian books. Gullo also presides over the Peter Cushing Association at <www.petercushing.co.uk>.

The October issue of The Moor (published in Swedish by The Baskerville Hall Club of Sweden) reports that Ted Bergman, now 80 years old, is continuing to work on his "Sherlock Holmes i Sverige--en bibliografi" (bringing it up to 2008). It's available on the Internet (with a nice photograph of Ted) at <www.sherlockholmesisverige.wordpress.com>; all in Swedish, but if you scroll down to the end of the screen you'll find a link to "Ted Bergman Archive File" where there's a link to "221B Baker Street Model House" (which has some excellent color photographs of Ted's miniature of the premises at 221B).

Ed. Lange's play "Sherlock's Legacy" was produced at the N.Y. State Theatre Institute in 2005, and it's now available in the Institute's "Family Classic AudioBook" series on two CDs in an original-cast recording; \$16.96 (37 First Street, Troy, NY 12180) <www.nysti.org/merchandise.htm>. His earlier play "Sherlock's Secret Life" (1997) also is available at the same price.

Further to the report on plans for a film based on the "Brigadier Gerard" stories (Oct 08 #3), Michael Chabon had some nice things to say about the Brigadier in a four-minute segment on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered: You Must Read This" on Jan. 30. Chabon's "Charmed by a Dashing Brigadier" can still be read and heard on-line at the National Public Radio web-site at <www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=18521656>.

The Northwest Classical Theater Company is performing "Sherlock Holmes: The Speckled Band" (that's Conan Doyle's play) at the Shoe Box Theater in Portland through Dec. 28. The theater is at 2110 SE 10th Avenue, Portland, OR 97214 (971-244-3740) <www.nwctc.org>.

Watch for a repeat: "Live from Lincoln Center: Shaham @ the Penthouse" was broadcast by PBS-TV this month to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of Pablo de Sarasate. Violinist Gil Shaham played some of Sarasate's works, and at the end of the program the announcer discussed Sarasate and "The Red-Headed League".

Nov 08 #8 "Law & Order" creator and executive producer Dick Wolf received the International Emmy Founders Award this month; the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences honored him for extending the reach of his "Law & Order" franchise into almost every corner of the globe. Five years ago he won a special Edgar award from the Mystery Writers of America; "I grew up with Conan Doyle," he once told a reporter (May 03 #4), "That's what I read when I was growing up. Sherlock Holmes is still my favorite fictional character. I started with the Hardy Boys, and then moved on to Sherlock Holmes."

Holmes & Watson Real Estate Inspection offers their services in California,

Ken Lanza reports; their web-site's at <www.holmes-watson-inspection.com>.

"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; they continue to tour, and there was an interesting article about them in the Washington Post (Nov. 28). Go to <www.washingtonpost.com> and search for [they might be serious]. Their tour schedule's available at their web-site at <www.tmbg.com>, where you can also listen to their podcasts.

Reported: AMERICAN LIGHTNING: TERROR, MYSTERY, MOVIE-MAKING, AND THE CRIME OF THE CENTURY, by Howard Blum (New York: Crown, 2008; 339 pp., \$24.95); an account of the bombing of the Los Angeles Times building in 1910 (the lead investigator was William J. Burns, who later met Conan Doyle and may well have helped inspire the writing of THE VALLEY OF FEAR).

The autumn issue of The Magic Door (the newsletter published by The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library) has the first part of an article on "Grant Allen & Arthur Conan Doyle: A Victorian Odd Couple" (by Peter Calamai), a report on "The Case of the Misattributed Letter" (by Peggy Perdue), and greetings from the new head of the Friends (Cliff Goldfarb); copies of the newsletter are available on request from Clifford S. Goldfarb (22 Markdale Avenue, Toronto, ON M6C, 1T1, Canada <cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca>).

The [Norwich] Eastern Daily Press has reported (Nov. 24, 2008) the discovery at a local antiques fair the autograph book in which Conan Doyle first saw the stick drawings that inspired the dancing men cipher; he was staying at a hotel in Happisburgh in May 1903, when he was asked for an autograph and saw in the autograph book the owner's young son Gilbert Cubitt's stick figures. Thanks to Sandy Kozinn, you can read the story, and see the page in the autograph book, at <tinyurl.com/57bu9t>.

Michael Mallory's THE EXPLOITS OF THE SECOND MRS. WATSON (Dallas: Top Publications, 2008; 280 pp., \$14.95) is a collection of 13 stories (previously published in magazines and an anthology) about Amelia Watson, who has a talent for detection as well as a sense of humor. She also has appeared in THE ADVENTURES OF THE SECOND MRS. WATSON (2000) and in the novel MURDER IN THE BATH (2003).

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

Dec 08 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

Updating the previous report on Don Hobbs' "The Galactic Sherlock Holmes" (Mar 08 #6): his CD electronic bibliography of translations of the Sherlock Holmes stories, including both English in non-Roman alphabets and foreign-language editions, is a splendid example of what can be done in the electronic world. The CD is in PDF format, now with 685 pages and 89 alphabets and languages, and with full-color illustrations of the covers of many of the translations. A one-year subscription (with two to three updated CDs) costs \$15.00 (to the U.S.) or \$20.00 elsewhere.

THE CHRONICLES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, by Paul D. Gilbert (London: Robert Hall, 2008; 224 pp., £18.99), is a collection of seven new pastiches based on the unrecorded cases. His earlier THE LOST FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (2007) had seven other new pastiches.

Al Gregory spotted a press release from Serica Energy, a British oil company that holds offshore leases in the East Irish Sea; Serica has identified two prospects in the Triassic Sherwood sandstone, and has named them Conan and Doyle. They hope to drill Conan in 2009, and estimate the potential to be as much as one trillion cubic feet of natural gas (the U.S. used about 23.1 tcf of natural gas in 2007).

Robert Q. Carver ("The Case of Mme. Montpensier") died on Nov. 27. Bob was one of the founders of The Diogenes Club of Brooklyn (one of the interesting older societies included in Jon Lellenberg's archival-history volume on the late 40s) and more recently of The Three Garridebs (Sue Vizoskie noted his very humorous, and occasionally bawdy, songs and dramatic presentations at their meetings). He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1962.

Frogwares continues to produce Sherlockian adventure games for computers: "Sherlock Holmes vs. Jack the Ripper" is to be released in Europe in March. You can see screen shots now at <www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com/en/sh>.

Gasogene Books/The Wessex Press continues to make excellent use of YouTube to promote conferences and books, the latest being a two-minute trailer for their upcoming THE APOCRYPHA OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (the tenth volume edited by Les Klinger for their Sherlock Holmes Reference Library); you can see the video at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VrQyj-o3mg>. The book will go on sale in the dealers room during the birthday festivities in New York in January.

YouTube does have interesting video: Jim Henson conducted an international workshop on "Puppetry for Film and Television" in France in 1987, and you can view a six-minute video at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRYUIRYGZ5E&NR=1> that has two appearances by a Sherlock Holmes puppet.

Stuart Kaminsky's dramatization of his pastiche "The Final Toast" had its world premiere at the International Mystery Writers' Festival in Kentucky last June, and it is now scheduled by Theatre Northwest at the Theatre on the Square in Tacoma from Feb. 13 to Mar. 1, 2009 (901 Broadway, Tacoma, WA 98402) (253-591-5894); there's a blog about the play at the company's website at <www.theatrenorthwest.net>.

Dec 08 #2 Interesting Sherlockiana continues to appear in Japan, discovered by Masamichi Higurashi: a CD with an audio dramatization (in Japanese) of "A Study in Scarlet" from Act One Co. (2006); Y2,800. And two manga (graphic-novel) adaptations of tales from the Canon (with an occasional pastiche or parody) by women writers and artists: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES were published by Aoba Shuppan in 2006 and 2007; Y876 each.

Forrest J Ackerman died on Dec. 4. A legend in the world of science fiction and horror, and as editor of the fanzine Imagination! published Ray Bradbury's first story in 1938, and as a literary agent represented Bradbury and Isaac Asimov. He coined the phrase "sci-fi" in 1954 when he was listening to a car radio and heard the announcer mention "hi-fi" (Forry's wife told him "Forget it, it will never catch on"), and launched the magazine Famous Monsters of Filmland in 1958. His greatest accomplishment, to the thousands of people who visited his "Ackermansion" in Los Angeles, was his collection of books, magazines, photographs, and memorabilia: his treasures included the bolts from the neck of Boris Karloff's Frankenstein monster, Bela Lugosi's Dracula ring, and the small models of pterodactyls used by Willis H. O'Brien in the films "The Lost World" and "King Kong".

Reported: SHAMAN OR SHERLOCK?: THE NATIVE AMERICAN DETECTIVE, by Gina Macdonald and Andrew Macdonald, with Mary Ann Sheridan (Westport: Greenwood, 2002; 312 pp., \$131.95); an academic discussion of Native American fiction.

GASLIGHT GRIMOIRE: FANTASTIC TALES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is an excellent anthology edited by J. R. Campbell and Charles Prepolec (Calgary: Edge, 2008; 336 pp., \$16.95); eleven new pastiches, each with an atmospheric full-page illustration by Phil Cornell. "Expect a few shivers along the way," David Stuart Davies warns in his foreword. The publisher has an interesting website at <www.gaslightgrimoire.blogspot.com>.

Ken Lanza spotted the Sherlock Holmes Collection at a web-site called The

Voice of Reason <www.thevoiceofreason.com/sherlock/index.html>; they offer free e-book downloads of much of the Canon, three episodes from the Ronald Howard television series, and four of the Rathbone/Bruce films.

Jasper Jones is an 11-year-old student/detective who's known as "Sherlock Jones" and is featured with his friend Penny Gordon in four Christian-fiction mysteries written by Ed Dunlop and published by the Bob Jones University Press for readers aged 9-12. SHERLOCK JONES: THE ASSASSINATION PLOT (Greenville: JourneyForth, 2005; 116 pp., \$8.99) is the first in the series, followed by THE WILLOUGHBY BANK ROBBERY, THE MISSING DIAMOND, and THE PHANTOM AIRPLANE.

The television series "House" (broadcast by Fox) continues to include Sherlockian references and allusions (among them: House's apartment number is 221B). The episode "Joy to the world" (Dec. 9) has House receiving a copy of Joseph Bell's MANUAL OF THE OPERATIONS OF SURGERY as a Christmas present and his associate Wilson explaining that it was given to House by a former student named Irene Adler ("the one who got away"); the book is real (Apr 08 #2). If you don't want to wait for a repeat, you can watch the episode on-line at <www.fox.com/house>.

Dec 08 #3 The Italian film "Gomorra" won five European Film Awards this month: best picture, best director, best actor, best cinematography, and best screenplay. The drama is based a book by Roberto Saviano (the English translation, GOMORRAH: A PERSONAL JOURNEY INTO THE VIOLENT INTERNATIONAL EMPIRE OF NAPLES' ORGANIZED CRIME SYSTEM, was published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux last year); Saviano has round-the-clock police protection, after receiving death threats, and Sherlockians will recognize the name of the organized crime system in Naples: the Camorra.

The latest issue of Carolyn and Joel Senter's The Sherlockian E-Times will be found at <www.sherlock-holmes.com/e_times08-12.htm>, with some nice photographs of the late Paul Churchill and his Sherlockiana, and offers of old and new Sherlockian merchandise.

"A miniature library held on a video game cartridge is being launched for Christmas to get kids reading," the [London] Sun reported (Dec. 9); Nintendo, partnered with HarperCollins, has announced a "100 Classic Book Collection" for the Nintendo DS. Sherlock Holmes is included, and the cartridge costs L19.99. A company spokesman said that they hope to target a new generation of readers.

Warren Randall's new lapel pin honors the 75th anniversary of The Baker Street Irregulars as well as the BSI bus excursion to Christopher Morley's Knothole on Long Island on Jan. 11: Tom Stix, Julian Wolff, Edgar W. Smith, and Morley himself are passengers on the bus driven by Sherlock Holmes. Pin collectors who will not be at the birthday festivities in New York can order the pin from Randall (15 Fawn Lane, South Setauket, NY 11720); \$11.00 postpaid.

John Ringham died on Oct. 20. He had a long career on stage and television in Britain, and played Inspector Lanner in Granada's "The Resident Patient" (1985).

The fall issue of Jay Pearlman's Tonga Times (published by the Mini-Tonga Scion Society) has a long and well-illustrated article about gasogenes and seltzogenes, and news from the wide world of Sherlockian miniatures. Membership includes three issues of the newsletter and costs \$12.00 (\$13.00 to Canada/\$15.00 elsewhere) from Jay (1656 East 19th Street #2-E, Brooklyn, NY 11229); payment in U.S. dollars, please.

British publisher Atlantic Books has launched a "Crime Classics" series of reprints with afterwords by Robert Giddings (L7.99) that will include (in May) "Favourite Sherlock Holmes Stories" (based on Conan Doyle's choice of

the best of the Canon).

"Better late than never" department: Kathleen Kaska's THE SHERLOCK HOLMES TRIVIOGRAPHY AND QUIZ BOOK (Dallas: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2000; 210 pp., \$10.95) is out of print, but available at reasonable prices at web-sites; it has concise summaries of each story, mini-histories of their publishing background, quizzes on each story, and interesting bits of Sherlockian and Doylean trivia, plus a chapter on Doyle as writer and spiritualist and some Sherlockian crossword puzzles as well.

Dec 08 #4 Peter Ashman has reported a fine web-site for people who want Sherlockian (and other) audio: <www.audible.com>; you need not be a member, but members get a discount when they download, and the company offers more than 50,000 titles. You can listen on your computer, or burn a CD, and they have a wide selection, including Derek Jacobi's unabridged readings of the four long stories and THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

Production is underway on Laurie R. King's THE LANGUAGE OF BEES (which is due in April); you can see a picture of the cover at <www.randomhouse.com>, and read her blog about the book at <www.laurierking.com/wp/php/?cat=26>.

Herlock Solmes is a great detective who appears in "The Adventures of Sherlock Mario" (broadcast on Oct. 3, 1989, in the syndicated television series "The Super Mario Bros. Super Show!"). The television series was based on the classic video game, and at one point in the episode Mario dons Solmes' deerstalker and calls himself Sherlock Mario. There's more about Herlock Solmes at <www.mariowiki.com/The_Adventures_of_Sherlock_Mario>.

The East Lynne Theater Company has announced their 2009 season, which will include Craig Wichman's radio-theater dramatization of "The Speckled Band" on Mar. 20-21, and his dramatization of "The Blue Carbuncle" on Nov. 6-7, at the First Presbyterian Church in Cape May, N.J. The box-office address is 121 Fourth Avenue, West Cape May, NJ 08204 (609-884-5898); web-site at <www.eastlynnetheater.org>.

Hugh A. Mulligan died on Nov. 26. He joined the Associated Press in 1951 and retired in 2000 after visiting 146 countries, and once said that he was "most happy that I never became an expert on anything," and that "not being anything allowed you to cover everything." He filed many stories over the years about Holmes and Conan Doyle and Sherlockians, and his books included an amusing pastiche A CHRISTMAS TO FORGET AT 221B (2002). The book is still in print at <www.hilliardandharris.com>.

Mitch Higurashi continues to make Sherlock Holmes and Sherlockiana available to Japanese readers: his translations of all nine volumes of the Canon have been published by Kobunsha, and his translation of Steve Hockensmith's HOLMES ON THE RANGE has been published by Hayakawa. The Dec. 2007 issue of Hayakawa's Mystery Magazine had Sherlockian content that included Mitch's report on recent events around the world, and he has edited the Japan Sherlock Holmes Club's 30th anniversary volume for The Black-Headed League.

Dec 08 #5 Editor Janet Hutchings notes that the Feb. 2009 issue of Ellery

Queen's Mystery Magazine, which will on the newsstands during the birthday celebrations, marks the 66th consecutive year that copies have been distributed at the Baker Street Irregulars' annual dinner; the issue has Barry Waldman's Sherlockian cover art, Steve Hockensmith's new Amlingmeyer brothers pastiche ("Greetings from Purgatory" has them on the way to their next novel, which will be CRACK IN THE LENS), a reprint of a pastiche by Edward D. Hoch ("The Adventure of the Dying Ship"), and Jon L. Breen's review of recent Sherlockian books.

There were some interesting scripts offered in a Profiles in History auction on eBay this month: one lot of 42 scripts included 23 story outlines and screenplays (including variant drafts and typescripts) from Basil Rathbone's 1940s series for Universal, two variant treatments for Clive Brook's "The Return of Sherlock Holmes" (1929), a script from "Paramount on Parade" (1930, with Brook as Holmes), and scripts for Roger Moore's television film "Sherlock Holmes in New York" (1976), Gene Wilder's "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother" (1975), and George C. Scott's "They Might Be Giants" (1971). Another lot with 45 items had screenplays and drafts from Irwin Allen's films, including "The Lost World" (1960), and other material. The Collectors Book Store opened in Hollywood 1965 and specialized in rare comics books, science-fiction pulp magazines, and movie memorabilia. The store began to focus on movie and television memorabilia in 1983, and when it closed recently the owners decided to sell everything by auction. The hammer price on the Irwin Allen lot was \$3,750 (add 20% buyer's premium), and the hammer price on the Sherlockian lot was \$2,750.

"The London fog rolls in, and out of the darkness emerge two figures. One is tall, eccentric in his habits, always in search of mysteries and puzzles; the other is his brave and loyal companion, clearly a military man ... Holmes and Watson? No, Prince Florizel of Bohemia and Colonel Geraldine, the dashing heroes of Robert Louis Stevenson's NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS (1882)." Michael Dirda, in his excellent discussion of Stevenson in the Book World section of the Washington Post (Dec. 14); you can read the rest of the article at their web-site <www.washingtonpost.com>.

The Public Radio Exchange at <www.prx.org> has some interesting Sherlockian audio, including the Quicksilver Radio Theater's recordings of Craig Wichman's dramatizations of "The Speckled Band" and "The Blue Carbuncle" (the latter program is accompanied by Wichman's adaptation of "The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes"); register for a free account that allows you to listen to their audio on-line).

"From Out of That Shadow" is the title of an exhibition that's scheduled at the University of Virginia, Mar. 7 through Aug. 1, and at the University of Texas (Austin), Sept. 8 through Jan. 4, honoring the bicentennial of Edgar Allan Poe. Exhibition highlights will include Poe's writing desk, records of his student days, a brooch containing his hair, manuscripts and letters, and Arthur Rackham's original artwork for TALES OF MYSTERY & IMAGINATION. Co-curator Richard Oram noted in a University of Texas press release that the exhibition's scope extends outside Poe's lifetime to include his considerable and often overlooked importance to authors such as Conan Doyle, "whose Sherlock Holmes owes much to Poe's brainy detective Dupin."

Dec 08 #6 Further to the item (Oct 08 #7) on plans for a television series starring Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock Holmes in a modern-day setting, the Daily Telegraph reported (Dec. 19) that Martin Freeman will play Watson; filming will begin in January in Wales on a one-hour pilot scheduled to air on the BBC next fall. Charles Prepolec has reported that Mark Gatiss, one of the writers, discusses the project in an interview with Bill Hussey at <www.horrorreanimated.com>.

The latest issue of For the Sake of the Trust (the newsletter of The Baker Street Irregulars Trust) offers Peter X. Accardo's report from the Houghton Library at Harvard (where the Trust archives are held), a photograph of the presentation of the trophy at the 1962 running of The Silver Blaze at Aque-

duct (with Tupper Bigelow, Rex Stout, Alec Robb, Julian Wolff, and Tom Stix Sr.), and a report from Trust chairman Tom Francis. You can request copies of the newsletter from Julie McKuras (13512 Granada Avenue, Apple Valley, MN 55124) <mike9750@aol.com>.

At hand from John Baesch is a report in National Geographic (June) on the Index Translationum maintained by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization); it's an international bibliography of translations, created in 1932 and now computerized: the data base contains about 1.7 million bibliographic entries for books published in more than 130 countries and more than 800 languages. The URL's far too long for this newsletter, but you can run a Google search for [index translationum]. The "top 50" authors start with Walt Disney Productions at 8,941, followed by Agatha Christie at 6,516, Jules Verne at 4,162, and William Shakespeare at 3,550. Arthur Conan Doyle ranks #18 at 1,944, between Papa Joannes Paulus II at 1,960, and Alexandre Dumas Pere at 1,917. The on-line data-base contains entries from 1979 onward.

AN HONORABLE SOLDIER--THE TRUE STORY OF COLONEL SEBASTIAN MORAN, by Jerry Kegley (North Hills: Curious Tiger Press, 2006), takes a new and interesting look at Moran's life and career. The 28-page pamphlet, illustrated in color and black and white, costs \$10.00 postpaid from Jerry, at 9338 Sophia Avenue, North Hills, CA 91343.

Planning continues for The Baker Street Breakfast Club's "Sherlock Holmes: The Man and His World" conference in June 2010 (Sep 08 #7); the "call for papers" is available from Sally Sugarman (Box 407, Shaftsbury, VT 05262), and at the society's web-site at <www.bakerstreetbreakfastclub.org>.

"Mad Movies with the L.A. Connection" was a 30-minute series broadcast by Nickelodeon cable in 1985; they removed original soundtracks and edited the films down to about 20 minutes, adding new dialogue, sound effects, and music, and the results were hilarious. They parodied Rathbone's "Dressed to Kill" and "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon", and then a one-hour parody of "The woman in Green". John Sherwood reports that the parody of "The woman in Green" aired on A&E cable some years ago; and that it's now available (without commercials) on DVD (as "Movie Madness Mystery with the L.A. Connection") from A&E for \$24.95; (800-380-5692) <www.aetv.com>.

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