

Jul 18 #1

Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press

The new Baker Street Irregulars web-site is now live, and it's well worth exploring <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com>; there are links to information about the BSI, The Baker Street Journal, the BSI Press, the BSI Trust, and BSI Events, and there's even video encouraging people to subscribe to (and contribute to) the BSJ <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsj-why-subscribe>. Scott Monty has an interesting blog about the BSI's history on the Internet at <www.tinyurl.com/ybj82f5n>.

Harlan Ellison died on June 28. He was a prolific and sometimes controversial author of science-fiction and fantasy whose work included short stories, novels, comics books, films, and television. In a 1987 lecture he explained that those in search of success must read and re-read only one essential book: the collected Sherlock Holmes stories. It's well worth reading his short story "He Who Grew Up Reading Sherlock Holmes" (dedicated to Ray Bradbury), published in the Subterranean Press magazine (summer 2014) and available on-line at the press's web-site <www.tinyurl.com/yc9zpp2o>.

Further to the item (May 18 #5) about the race horse named Sherlock Holmes, racing in Australia, there's also Sherlock, winner of the Kodlipet Plate at Mysore, India, on June 27 <www.tinyurl.com/ybqgj8v4>.

221B Capital <www.221bcapital.com> describes itself as an "equity fund running long/short with a low net exposure." Jillian McIntyre, chief investment officer and portfolio manager, told TheStreet on May 3 that short sellers ought to be tasked with sniffing out fraud in any market, and that the firm is named after Sherlock Holmes' address <www.tinyurl.com/ybvjb8kv>.

Big Chief Studios offers a wide range of (expensive) figures of Holmes and Watson and Moriarty (from the "Sherlock" television series); their web-site is at <www.bigchiefstudios.co.uk/e-mailer/sherlock-special-offers>.

Allen Osborne has started work on compiling a data-base that will indicate which of the many Sherlockian societies have Investitures, and what the Investiture process involves, and he would appreciate hearing from anyone who has information to offer <ibish1854@mail.com>.

Herb Moskowitz has written an interesting and nicely illustrated monograph on William Gillette's film "Sherlock Holmes" (1916); it's a 4.33-MB file, available by e-mail from Herb at <herbphilly@aol.com>.

Google Books offers access to their Ngram Viewer, which charts the frequencies of any set of comma-delimited search strings using a yearly count of occurrences in sources printed between 1500 and 2008; there are more than 5 million books in their data base. You can see how it works at their web-site <www.books.google.com/ngrams>, where, as reported by Mark Alberstat, their default sample search offers an interesting choice of names.

"To gnome is to love me" might be the slogan for Garden Fun, which offers a 14" Sherlock Gnomes (\$59.99) <www.gardenfun.com> that will be just as happy in your home as in your garden. Alas: the company doesn't offer an accompanying Watson Gnome. Sammi Mankini Gnome, however, is available (\$39.99).

Jul 18 #2 A Hollywood Reporter story <www.tinyurl.com/y7q9429q> about the new "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom" discussed earlier dinosaur films, including "The Lost World" (1925), and mentioned "King Kong" (1933), noting that the paper had reported that Radio Pictures and the Los Angeles police department were trying to find two men who had worked as extras on the "Kong" set but had not shown up for their pay checks. "Studio and cops are not worried about the pay checks, but about a machine gun that disappeared."

Henry T. Folsom ("The Golden Pince-Nez") died on May 8. He graduated from Yale University, was president of the Folsom Arms Company, attended Berkeley Divinity School, and in 1957 was ordained, serving as rector of Episcopal churches in New Jersey, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. Intrigued by Canonical chronology, Hank published THROUGH THE YEARS AT BAKER STREET in 1962 and became a Baker Street Irregular in 1965. He won the Morley-Montgomery Award for the best paper in The Baker Street Journal in 1965 (appropriately titled "My Knowledge of the Bible Is a Trifle Rusty..."), received the BSI's Two-Shilling Award in 1986, and for many years presided over The Cornish Horrors in Connecticut.

A story in the Sunday Times (Jan. 17, 2016) began "It has been home to the Doctor Who actor Tom Baker and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but the East Sussex town of Crowborough is about to welcome its most glamorous resident yet," and went on to describe Highwell House, and its new owner Cate Blanchett; you can see a photograph of the house at <www.tinyurl.com/y9ydzjad>. That led to a lot of publicity, from people who didn't read the Sunday Times all that carefully, saying that Conan Doyle actually lived in the house; as Abraham Lincoln once said, "if it's on the Internet it must be true."

When in Spain: you can visit La Pipa <www.pipaclub.eu>. "This clandestine after-hours jazz club is located in a third-story flat in Barcelona's gothic quarter. The Sherlock Holmes themed watering hole is reached by ringing the correct buzzer and is open well into the early hours, making it perfect for post-club debriefs."

Further to the report (Dec 17 #5) that the New Forest National Park Authority had rejected a proposal to demolish the Lyndhurst Park Hotel (the campaign to protect the hotel had cited evidence that Conan Doyle had helped design the redevelopment of the building as a hotel in 1912), the Southern Daily Echo reported on July 3 that the developers had filed an appeal, hoping that a government-appointed planning inspector would allow the proposed development <www.tinyurl.com/yb8gdzvv>.

Javier Olivares' striking artwork for EL PERRO DO LOS BASKERVILLE (2011) is on display at his web-site <www.javierolivares.blogspot.com> [click on 2011 and scroll down].

"Hounds of the Bakersfield" is a song originally written by Bill Kirchen as a tribute to Merle Haggard, and Kirchen now plays, tours, and records with a group of the same name. Guitar Player Magazine has said that he's a "titan of the Telecaster," and a Google search for [hounds of the bakersfield] will turn up links to some of his tracks, including "When the Cowboy Sings" (in which he mentions Sherlock Holmes).

Jul 18 #3 "Holmes, Sweet Holmes" (a 1968 episode of a Canadian 30-minute television series called "Telescope") presented "a visit with Adrian Conan Doyle" at the Château de Lucens, and it's now nicely available in three parts at YouTube; The first part is at <www.tinyurl.com/hllmqpj>, and links to the other two are at the right. There's a lot of Adrian, and a brief view of him driving his Ferrari 250 SWB. Sotheby's recently had an interesting article <www.tinyurl.com/yd8b8k2l> about a Ferrari 250 GTO that is coming up for auction in August, with an estimate of more than \$45 million. Charles Foley, who lived for a time at the Château, notes that the SWB [short wheel base] wasn't as beautiful as the GTO, but nevertheless was fast enough, with a top speed of 168 mph; Adrian sold his Ferrari in 1967 and bought a Lamborghini Miura, the first mid-engined supercar.

How many actors have played the role of Sherlock Holmes? Almost 4,000, according to the count in the latest version of Howard Ostrom's "A-Z List of Sherlock Holmes Performers" <www.nplh.co.uk/a-z-index.html>, which includes more than 8,000 images of the actors; the index also is available directly from Howard <howardostrom@gmail.com>, and he has compiled many other interesting data-bases, available at <www.nplh.co.uk/original-essays.html>.

Miklós Rózsa, a musician best known for his film scores, is credited with almost a hundred films; tracks from ten of them recorded by the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra (with Elmer Bernstein conducting) were released in 1987 on a CD ("Miklós Rózsa: Classic Film Music"). The CD has been reissued by Jay Records (\$12.99) <www.jayrecords.com/recording/miklos-rozsa>, and one of the CD tracks is the "English Waltz" from "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970).

The colorful cover photograph of the spring 2018 issue of The Baker Street Journal shows an interesting bust of Sherlock Holmes, apparently created by M. G. Stead, who is cited in De Waal's THE UNIVERSAL SHERLOCK HOLMES for "a poor likeness of the Literary Agent" [C17602] described as a ceramic figure edition from Finesse Studios in Cornwall, and dated 1987. There's an image of the cover of the BSJ at <www.tinyurl.com/y9t3pev4>; does anyone have any information about M. G. Stead, or the busts of Holmes or Conan Doyle?

Jennie Paton notes that "Shivering Sherlocks" (1948) is available at Vimeo <www.tinyurl.com/ycg82c4t>; it's a "Three Stooges" comedy, not Sherlockian except for the title. However there are two films that do have the Three Stooges in Sherlockian costume: "Horses' Collars" (1935) and "We Want Our Mummy" (1939); all three films are available at YouTube.

Ronald B. De Waal ("Lomax, the Sub-Librarian") died on July 3. His career as a humanities librarian and associate professor at Colorado State University led him to consider creating a bibliography, and, inspired by William S. Baring-Gould's article about The Baker Street Irregulars in Esquire in 1966, he chose "Sherlock Holmes" as his subject, launching a project that resulted in three volumes of a massive record of anything and everything related to the Great Detective: THE WORLD BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SHERLOCK HOLMES AND DR. WATSON (1974), celebrated at a "Sherlock Lives!" conference at CSU in 1975, THE INTERNATIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES (1980), and THE UNIVERSAL SHERLOCK HOLMES (1994). He received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1969, and the BSI's Two-Shilling Award in 1984.

Jul 18 #4 William Hobbs died on July 10. Born in Britain, he grew up in Australia, where he took up fencing and almost made the country's fencing squad for the Olympics in Melbourne; he also tried acting in repertory theater, and went on to a decades-long career as a fight director and stuntman. He was credited as fight arranger on Gene Wilder's "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother" (1975), and (according to his obituary in the Hollywood Reporter) once said that Wilder was his most promising actor pupil.

Jack Benny had a long career on radio, and was heard as Sherlock Holmes on "The Chevrolet Show" on June 2, 1933 in the second of two episodes of "Who Killed Mr. X?"; you can listen to the show at <www.tinyurl.com/y9tpv7zs>.

Designed by Geeks <www.designedbygeeks.com> offers a variety of Sherlockian SVGs and other merchandise (including an imaginative "Mind Palace Mug"); in case you're wondering about what an SVG is, it's an abbreviation for Scalable Vector Graphics, an image format that's used with computerized sewing machines, electronic cutters, and standard computer printers (their other merchandise doesn't require technology more advanced than credit cards).

Greg Ruby reports that The Numismatic Friends of Sherlock Holmes will hold a dinner meeting during the World's Fair of Money in Philadelphia on Aug. 15, and local (and visiting) Sherlockians are welcome; details are available from Greg <221b@fourthgarrideb.com>, and reservations are requested by Aug. 13.

Sam Hearn's SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE DISAPPEARING DIAMOND (New York: Scholastic, 2018; 176 pp., \$12.99) is written for young readers (ages 8-12) and attractively illustrated by the author; young John Watson arrives at Baker Street Academy in London as a new student and finds new friends, including Sherlock Holmes, Mrs. Hudson, and a hound named Baskerville, and of course there's a mystery to be solved. SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE BAKER STREET CURSE will be the next in the series.

Sherlock Holmes and Sigmund Freud worked together in Nicholas Meyer's THE SEVEN-PER-CENT SOLUTION (1974), and now Netflix has announced that it will make its first Austrian drama series "Freud" with the young neurologist in pursuit of a serial killer in Vienna, assisted by a medium named Fleur Salomé and a police detective named Kiss. The series will be made in German, but will be streamed in other countries, presumably dubbed or subtitled.

The seventh season of the CBS-TV series "Elementary" officially began production on July 11, but there's no word so far of how many episodes there will be, or when the season will premiere.

Joel Senter died on July 23. Joel and his wife Carolyn maintained Classic Specialties since the 1980s, selling (and sometimes publishing) a wide variety of Sherlockiana from their web-site, and in 2005 they launched their Sherlockian E-Times, a delightful electronic newsletter. Joel was an enthusiast in the world of old-time radio, and a stalwart member of the Tankerville Club of Cincinnati; in 2000 he was interviewed by Jim Hawkins for the web-site of the Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem, and it's on-line at <www.nashvillescholars.net/cjsenterbio.html>.

Jul 18 #5 The N.Y. Book Review has an interesting podcast, and a recent program ("True Crime Starring the Creator of Sherlock Holmes") presented Margalit Fox talking about her new book CONAN DOYLE FOR THE DEFENSE (May 18 #5) <www.tinyurl.com/yalmtwkd>. An earlier podcast ("From Brooklyn to the Gulag") included Michael Sims discussing his biography ARTHUR AND SHERLOCK: CONAN DOYLE AND THE CREATION OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Mar 17 #5) <www.tinyurl.com/y984ku48>.

Kim Newman's PROFESSOR MORIARTY: THE HOUND OF THE D'URBERVILLES (Dec 11 #2) has been optioned for television by Playground Entertainment, Lenny Picker reports. According to Deadline Hollywood (July 23), Newman announced that the book is in development as a long-form (mini-series) TV project; Playground has produced series that include "Wolf Hall" (2015), "Howards End" (2017), and "Little Women" (2017). Newman's book offers seven stories told by Col. Moran about his association with Prof. Moriarty.

Cliff Goldfarb has kindly reported Gray Basnight's article "A Brief History of Cryptography in Crime Fiction" <www.tinyurl.com/ybp3f34m>; it's an interesting discussion of "Biblical codes, Holmesian ciphers, and Poe's Encryptions." The article appeared on Crime Reads <www.crimereads.com>, an intriguing web-site that has many other posts of interest; you can search for [sherlock] and [conan doyle] to see much more.

Alexander Orlov has noted a "Detective Sherlock Holmes: Hidden Object Game" from CrispApp <www.tinyurl.com/y9q4oqsu>, available (free) at the Microsoft store; you can download and play it in Russian and English. The artwork on the opening screen is Sherlockian; there may be more Sherlockian content to be discovered by those who are willing to play through it all. There are other Sherlock Holmes games available at the Microsoft store, as well as 40 apps; search for [sherlock holmes].

Swinhay House (the home of Charles Augustus Magnussen in the finale of the third series of "Sherlock"), will be open to the public for the first time ever, for just one day, on Sept. 16 <www.tinyurl.com/yd7yrmve>. The home of Sir David McMurtry, who has made the house available as part of Heritage Open Days this year, is in North Nibley in Gloucestershire.

John B. Koelle ("The Sussex Vampire") died on Apr. 25. Jack graduated from Swarthmore College and served in the U.S. Air Force; he retired in 1958 and worked as an electric engineer for many years. He enjoyed classical music, and diving and underwater photography, and was warm and welcoming to Sherlockians, Jack received his Investiture from The Baker Street Irregulars in 1965, and its Two-Shilling Award in 1986. He was a long-time member of the Sons of the Copper Beeches, serving as the society's Head Mastiff from 1971 to 1984, and always was glad to report that the Sons were alive and drinking in Philadelphia.

Angela Misri's NO MATTER HOW IMPROBABLE (Fierce Ink, 2016; 243 pp., \$16.99) is the third in a series about the adventures of Portia Adams, who has discovered that she's the granddaughter of both Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, and that her mysterious guardian and advisor is Irene Adler; Portia is pursuing her own career as a consulting detective in London. The author's web-site is at <www.aportiaadamsadventure.com>.

Jul 18 #6 Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery" is being performed at the Powerhouse in New Canaan, Conn., through Aug. 11 <www.tpnrc.org>, the Peninsula Theatre in Woy Woy, N.S.W., until Aug. 12 <www.woywoy.lt.com>, and at the Kalamazoo Civic Theatre in Kalamazoo, Mich., through Aug. 20 <www.kazoocivic.com>. The play also is due at the Fallon House Theatre in Columbia, Calif., Aug. 31-Sept. 30 <www.sierrarep.org>; at the Bay Area Harbour Playhouse in Dickinson, Tex., Oct. 12 through Nov. 4 <www.harbourtheatre.com>; and the Seacoast Repertory Theatre in Portsmouth, N.H., Oct. 18-28 <www.seacoastrep.org>.

Victoria Hudson-Muir's new "The Dark Discovery of Sherlock Holmes" is being performed at the Bell Homestead National Historic Site, in Brantford, Ont., through Aug. 11 <www.branttheatre.com>.

"The Hound of the Baskervilles" (by R. Hamilton Wright and David Pichette) is being performed at the Anacortes Community Theatre in Anacortes, Wash., through Aug. 18 <www.acttheatre.com>.

Robert Brock's marionette production "The Death & Life of Sherlock Holmes" is running at Lancaster Marionette Theatre in Lancaster, Pa., through Nov. 17 <www.lancastermarionette.org>.

"The Empty Glass: Sherlock Holmes Comes to Dover" will be performed at the Biggs Museum of American Art in Dover, Del., on Aug. 18; the web-site's at <www.tinyurl.com/y7hyf434>.

David Elendune's new play "Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of Moriarty!" will be performed at the Langham Court Theatre in Victoria, B.C., Aug. 23-Sept. 1, during the Victoria Fringe <www.tinyurl.com/y7yk2fnf>.

The Blackeyed Theatre will be touring Nick Lane's new dramatization "Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four" in Britain, Sept. 10-Apr. 6; the schedule is at <www.blackeyedtheatre.co.uk>.

Ken Ludwig's "The Game's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays" is scheduled at the Lancaster Playhouse in White Stone, Va., Sept. 14-29; their web-site's at <www.lancasterplayers.org>.

Jeffrey Hatcher's "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Suicide Club" is due at the Long Beach Playhouse in Long Beach, Calif., Sept. 22-Oct. 20 <www.lbplayhouse.org>.

"Sherlock Holmes: The Baker Street Irregulars" (written by Eric Coble and based on the graphic novels by Tony Lee and Dan Boulwood), has been scheduled at the Valley Center Stage in North Bend, Wash., Oct. 12-27; web-site at <www.vallyecenterstage.org>.

"Das Sherlock Musical" is a German/British production that will premiere at the Urania Theater in Cologne on Nov. 7 <www.thesherlockmusical.com>, and then tour in Germany and Britain.

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