

If you're planning to be in New York for the birthday festivities (or anything else), Tom Cynkin has kindly reported that the NYC COVID SAFE app is widely accepted at venues requiring proof of vaccination. It's free, easy to use, and helpful, but it may not be accepted everywhere, so don't leave your vaccination cards at home. Information about access to Baker Street Irregulars events may change; check at www.tinyurl.com/yckt4ecm for the latest requirements, and you can stay truly up to date by signing up for free News from the BSI e-mail www.tinyurl.com/2p8n2ptm.

The Clients of Adrian Mulliner (Sherlockian admirers of Wodehouse and Woodhousean admirers of Holmes) will hold their annual Junior Bloodstain via Zoom at 1:00 pm EST on Jan. 8, discussing Wodehouse's "The Split Infinite". Contact Elaine Coppola emcoppol@syr.edu to request a copy of the story and a Zoom link.

Scott Monty has updated his helpful "Here Are Your #BSIWeekend Tips" (recommended for anyone planning to be in New York for the birthday festivities <http://ihose.co/bsi2022tips>).

Randall Stock has an excellent (and well-illustrated) report at his "Best of Sherlock" web-site on the "Sherlock Holmes in 221 Objects from the Collection of Glen S. Miranker" exhibition that opens at the Grolier Club in New York in January www.tinyurl.com/bddzt.

Lyndsay Faye was interviewed by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder on the "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog www.tinyurl.com/yx2u8na4, talking about *Observations by Gaslight* (her new collection of pastiches), and about many other things.

Leroy L. Panek died on Nov. 5. He worked for decades in the English Department at McDaniel College in Westminster, Md., and became interested in the detective novel in 1974. He was the author of eleven books and twice won Edgar Awards from the Mystery Writers of America, and helped create the Westminster Detective Library, which has as its mission to catalog and publish on-line all the short detective fiction published in the U.S. before 1891. He was the Baker Street Irregulars' Distinguished Speaker during the birthday festivities in 2006 (offering "Thoughts about the Beginning of the Detective Story in America").

The Internet is alive with news/commentary/rumor about a fifth season of the BBC's "Sherlock" television series, and Karen Murdock has reported a three-minute trailer at YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKR62lCxck0; it is one of many such trailers created by hopeful fans.

HM Prison Dartmoor is well-known to Sherlockians, and will be familiar to all who have read "The Hound of the Baskervilles"; many people know that it was built to house French prisoners captured in the war with Napoleon, but not as many know that it also held American prisoners captured during the War of 1812 and not released until 1815 after some were killed in what was called (in the U.S.) the Dartmoor Massacre. A contemporary broadside about the event www.tinyurl.com/ys23u6mt was at auction this month, with a vivid description of what happened, estimated at \$2,000-\$3,000; it sold for \$4,250 (including the buyer's premium).

Dec 21 #2 Stephen Sondheim died on Nov. 26. He began his entertainment career as the lyricist for "West Side Story" (1957), and his many awards included a Tony for best musical for "A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the Forum" (the first Broadway show for which he wrote both words and music) in 1964, an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America in 1974 for the film "The Last of Sheila", the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1985, and an Oscar in 1991 (for best music and original song) for the film "Dick Tracy". He was a Kennedy Center honoree in 1993, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2019; and wrote the song "I Never Do Anything Twice" sung by Régine as the brothel madame in the film "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution" (1976) <www.youtube.com/watch?v=96MvzUWUDIY>.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki was a guest on MSNBC-TV's "Morning Joe" on Dec. 3 <www.youtube.com/watch?v=5p6MOgvsct4>; at 5:21 you can hear her say "No you know what Sherlock?"

Copyright on the Sherlock Holmes stories in the U.S. runs for 95 years after the date of publication, so only two of the stories will be protected in 2022 ("The Veiled Lodger" and "Shoscombe Old Place"), and they will enter the public domain in 2023.

Michelle Birkby's *All Roads Lead to Whitechapel* (New York: Felony & Mayhem, 2019; 265 pp., \$26.00) is the new title for the American edition of her *The House at Baker Street* (2016); it's the first "Baker Street Inquiry" written by Mrs. Hudson, who with the assistance of Mary Watson, Billy, and Wiggins, pursues a case that wasn't (but should have been) of interest to Holmes. The story's well told, and the characters ring true.

Her *No One Notices the Boys* (2021; 295 pp., \$26.00) is the title of the American edition of *The Women of Baker Street* (2019), and it's an excellent sequel, with Mrs. Hudson and Mary once again involved in a complicated mystery as they battle a fiendish criminal.

Peter McIntyre reports that Dr. Doyle (the three-year-old brown gelding) came in 7th (20½ lengths behind the winner) at Gulfstream Park on Dec. 8, continuing to disappoint bettors.

Cliff Goldfarb has reported an interesting discussion of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" at the Lit Century podcast at <www.link.ichtbl.com/42JG949S>; hosts Sandra Newman and Catherine Nichols and special guests discuss one book for each year of the 20th century.

Steve Mason has announced the creation of a new Sherlockian society that surely will find many members in this Age of the Pandemic. More information about the Legion of Zoom will be found at <www.tinyurl.com/2p8zv245>.

Stuart Palmer was a prolific author and screenwriter, as well as a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, and was best known for a series of inventive novels and short stories about his detective Hildegarde Withers. *Hildegarde Withers: Final Riddles?* (Cincinnati: Crippen & Landru, 2021; 235 pp., \$22.00) is a collection of reprints of some of the stories, two Sherlockian pastiches from 1944, and a warm tribute to Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle first published in the Baker Street Journal in 1948. Their website <www.crippenandlandru.com> is well worth exploring.

Dec 21 #3 "Asia and Europe Feel the Pinch as Chinese Tourists Stay Home" was the headline on a story in the N.Y. Times (Dec. 6) spotted by Karen Murdock; Paul Lehame, supervisor of the Sherlock Holmes Museum in London, said about 1,000 people visited per day at its peak, and at least half of them were from China, but after the Museum reopened on May 17, it has attracted only 10 percent of its usual numbers. And about a third of the merchandise and souvenirs sold at the web-site of the Museum is being shipped to China.

Carl L. Heifetz died on Nov. 19. He had a long career in infectious disease research and after his retirement founded Micro Doc, a microbiology consultant firm. He was an enthusiastic Sherlockian, and was an officer of the Pleasant Places of Florida for many years; he also wrote a collection of essays *Sherlock Holmes Through the Microscope* (2018) and two volumes of pastiches.

The Agra Treasurers' annual "Holmes, Doyle, and Friends" conference will be held in person at the Airport Clarion Inn in Dayton, Ohio, on Mar. 11-12; more information is available at <www.agratreasurers.net>.

The complete run of single issues of The Strand Magazine (with all 58 of the Sherlock Holmes stories that appeared in the magazine) offered at Heritage Auctions this month sold for \$45,000 (including the buyer's premium), and there were nice prices paid for other Sherlockian items in the auction <www.tinyurl.com/46dbf8hb>.

Andrew Gulli's "The Strand Magazine" continues to publish colorful annual Sherlock Holmes calendars <www.tinyurl.com/2p8km7j3>, and there's a wide variety of Sherlockiana at its on-line shop <www.tinyurl.com/2p8cthc5>.

Holmes Picks a Winner, by Anna Elliott and Charles Veley, is the latest in the "Sherlock Holmes and Lucy James" series (Wilton, 226 pp., available on Kindle for \$2.99); it's the finale in a three-volume arc that has Holmes, Watson, Lucy, Jack, Becky, and Flynn thwarting a dire plot at Royal Ascot; there's more about the series at <www.sherlockandlucy.com>.

Patrick Horgan died on Oct. 6. He began his acting career on British television in 1954 and went on to perform also on stage and screen. He had many Sherlockian credits, appearing as Captain Gregg in the musical "Baker Street" (1965), as Sir Edward Leighton and then as Sherlock Holmes in the Royal Shakespeare Company revival of Gillette's "Sherlock Holmes" (1974), as Sherlock Holmes in Conan Doyle's "The Speckled Band" (1973 and 1990), as William Gillette in Ken Ludwig's play "Dramatic License" (1983), and as Sherlock Holmes in a 30-second commercial on American television (1990). He also recorded an abridged version of "A Study in Scarlet" for a record (1977), and the entire Canon for the Library of Congress' "Talking Books for the Blind" and his memoirs "The Deception of Sherlock Holmes" (available as audiobooks from Decklin's Domain) <www.decklinsdomain.com>.

The Jan.-Feb. issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine offers its annual tribute to Sherlock Holmes: a Sherlockian cover; Steve Hockensmith's Am-lingmeyer Brothers story "Bad News"; Dean Jobb's "Stranger Than Fiction" column with a tip of the hat to Conan Doyle; Steve Steinbock's reviews of new Sherlockian books; Terrence Faherty's parody of "The Musgrave Ritual"; editor Janet Hutchings' "A 2022 Birthday Party for Sherlock Holmes?"; and Josh Pachter's Ellery Queen pastiche "Their Last Bow".

Dec 21 #4 The national Aeronautics and Space Administration has reported <www.tinyurl.com/2p8j494s> that SHERLOC has discovered organic material on Mars. SHERLOC (an acronym for the Scanning Habitable Environments with Raman and Luminescence for Organics and Chemicals instrument on NASA's Perseverance rover) found organics both inside a rock and in dust on other rocks; it won't be until samples are returned to Earth that scientists will be able to determine whether the organic molecules have biological or non-biological origins.

Laurie R. King is kindly celebrating the holiday by making a free download of the Mary Russell short story "Mary's Christmas" available to her fans at <www.laurierking.com/books/mary-russells-war/overview>.

Les Moskowitz died on Dec. 16. He was a consulting actuary and an energetic user of computers. Les also was a long-time member of the Six Napoleons, Watson's Tin Box, the Red Circle, and other Sherlockian societies, and for many years presided over the Hounds of the Internet mailing list, where his messages were "scribbled by a drunken-looking groom, ill-kempt and side-whiskered, with an inflamed face and disreputable clothes."

John Alan Maxwell illustrated "The Speckled Band" in *The Golden Book* (Dec. 1930); some decidedly non-Sherlockian artwork inscribed to the mentalist Joseph Dunninger was at auction this month <www.tinyurl.com/2p8vt3wp>, estimated at \$300-\$600; it sold for \$180.

Further to the report of a "Sherlock Holmes Afternoon Tea" at the Holmes Hotel in Marylebone (Oct 21 #5), My London has published an enthusiastic review of the festivities <www.tinyurl.com/2p8wmvjf>.

Doug Reside, curator of the Billy Rose Theatre Division at the New York Public Library, has blogged about "Sherlock Holmes on Stage"; the NYPL has some real treasures in its collection <www.tinyurl.com/2p9dkt4f>.

Reported: "The Captain of the Pole-Star" included in *The Valancourt Book of Victorian Christmas Ghost Stories*, edited by Tara Moore (Richmond: Valancourt Books, 2016; 292 pp., \$30.00).

Last March the Internet Archive launched the Internet Archive Scholar, a data-base of millions of open-access papers <www.scholar.archive.org>. A search for ["sherlock holmes"] yields 9,510 hits (if you don't use quotation marks you get 10,336 hits); there are 5,799 hits for ["conan doyle"].

The Sherlock Holmes Club of Hungary offers a Sherlockian calendar for 2022 <www.sherlockian-sherlock.com/sherlock-holmes-calendar-2022.php>; the artwork's by József Sváb, and it's a free download.

There was a time when Hollywood stars who declined to appear in television commercials in the U.S. were happy to do so on foreign television, knowing that American audience were unlikely to see them. That's no longer true, thanks to the Internet, which also has made it possible to see some of the older commercials, such as the one that starred Kirk Douglas in Sherlockian costume, promoting Maxim Coffee in Japan in 1979. It's readily available now, at <www.tinyurl.com/3vcdcxks>. Douglas made more (non-Sherlockian) commercials for Maxim, and Yuichi Hirayama has reported that you can see them at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=vt5zBdYa6ss>.

Dec 21 #5 New generations of Sherlockians may not know that John Lennon (yes, that John Lennon) wrote a Sherlockian pastiche "The Singular Experience of Miss Ann Duffield"; William Burton McCormick's interesting essay about the pastiche was posted at the SleuthSayers blog on Nov. 17 <www.tinyurl.com/2p8jm94m>, kindly reported by Les Klinger.

Former prosecutor Stephen Lee will deliver a webinar on "Sherlock Holmes and the Art of Evidence" on Jan. 12 at 12:00 pm CST for the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association; it's free, and there's a registration button at <www.fedbarchicago.org/event/sherlock-holmes-2022>. If there's a conflict because of travel to the birthday festivities in New York, the webinar will be recorded and available on-line.

Anne Rice died on Dec. 11. A prolific and best-selling author, she used both her own name and pseudonyms, and was best known for her "The Vampire Chronicles" series of novels. She dedicated her novel *The Mummy, or Ramses the Damned* (1989) "to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for his great mummy stories 'Lot No. 249' and 'The Ring of Thoth'".

"See Louis Wain's Exuberant Cat Art at the Hospital Where He Spent His Later Years" is the headline on a story at the Smithsonian magazine web-site on Dec. 23. Wain was famous as "the man who drew cats," one of which was his postcard rendition of a delightfully Sherlockian cat dressed as William Gillette dressed as Sherlock Holmes (Sep 21 #3). Benedict Cumberbatch stars as Wain in the new film "The Electrical Life of Louis Wain", and the article includes a link to a virtual tour of the exhibition at the Bethlem Museum of the Mind.

The Library of Congress Crime Classics series was launched in 2020, with the goal of reprinting "some of the finest American crime writing from the 1860s to the 1960s," selected and annotated by Leslie S. Klinger, who was interviewed recently by Andrew F. Gulli for *The Strand Magazine*; you can read the interview at <www.tinyurl.com/3amh9kr7>.

The "Sherlock Holmes and Lucy James" series (written by Anna Elliott and Charles Veley), includes short stories as well as novels, all available on Kindle, and four volumes of short stories now have been published as trade paperbacks <www.preview.mailerlite.com/ilu4r4/1848574774645626240/t6h4>.

James Lovegrove's *The Beast of the Stapletons* (New York: Titan, 2021; 404 pp., \$19.99) brings Holmes and Watson back to Baskerville Hall, five years after they rescued Sir Henry from the Hound, to solve another murder, and face the possibility that Stapleton still lives and plans revenge; there are plenty of suspects, twists, and turns.

National Geographic celebrated this year's 70th anniversary of the creation of Dartmoor National Park with some spectacular photographs posted at their web-site on Dec. 23 <www.tinyurl.com/bdcs8x3z>.

It's time to learn a new word: "retcon". According to Merriam-Webster, it was added to their dictionary in October and is a shortened form for "retroactive continuity" ("a literary device in which the form or content of a previously established narrative is changed"). Their on-line discussion of the new word is (appropriately) illustrated with Sherlockian artwork by Sidney Paget <www.tinyurl.com/yjt66hxx>, and the word was used in an opinion column in the *Washington Post* on Dec. 23 <www.tinyurl.com/2p82mccr>.

Dec 21 #6 Les Klinger has reported an interesting article about a "cottage industry" with echoes in "The Creeping Man" in the fall 2021 issue of Hektoen International: A Journal of Medical Humanities; it's available at the journal's web-site <www.tinyurl.com/4sjms555>. Searches for [conan doyle] and [sherlock holmes] will yield more articles in past issues of the journal.

The Internet has been full of colorful season's greetings from Sherlockians and Sherlockian societies, and one of the best is from the Société Sherlock Holmes de France <www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgUnNK2GY-o>.

Vladimir Tatosov died on Dec. 24. He began acting on stage in St. Petersburg and went on to a long career in Russian film and television, and was Baron Von Herling in the Livanov/Solomin television series "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson" (1987).

Theatrics: "Sherlock Holmes and the Hooded Lance" (by Pat Whymark and Julian Harries) is touring in Britain through Jan. 13; more information will be found at <www.commongroundtc.co.uk>.

Pat Whymark's new comedy "Sherlock Holmes Meets Count Dracula" is touring in Britain through Jan. 23 <www.commongroundtc.co.uk/xmas-show-2021-22>.

Wayne R. Scott's "Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles" has been scheduled at the LifeHouse Theater in Redlands, Calif., on Jan. 15-30 <www.lifehousetheater.com>.

Bart Lovin's "The Novel Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Valley of Fear" will be performed at the Hardin County Schools Performing Arts Center in Elizabethtown, Ky., Jan. 28-31 <www.thepac.net>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" will be performed at the Elgin Art Showcase in Elgin, Ill., Jan. 28-Feb. 12 <www.elgin-theatre.org>; also at the Stage-Center Theatre in Bryan, Texas, Aug. 4-20 <www.stagecenter.net>.

Brit Ward's "Sherlock Holmes and the Sinister Trio" will be performed at the Connie Gotsch Little Theater at San Juan College in Farmington, N.M., Feb. 18-27 <www.theater-ensemble-arts.square.site>

Brian Guehring's "Sherlock Holmes and the First Baker Street Irregular" is due at Kernersville Elementary School in Kernersville, N.C., Feb. 25-Mar. 5 <www.kltheatre.com>.

I've long described this newsletter as "six or more pages of whatever gossip I find appropriate, much of it quite trivial, but most of it Sherlockian or Doylean." If you would like to run a word-search on a large file with all of the text since March 1985 (that's when I entered the computer age) can now do just that, thanks to Steve Mason, who updates his compilation each month and makes it available at the web-site of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star <www.tinyurl.com/ybxh2y2m>.

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