

Sherlockians (and Holmesians) gathered in New York to celebrate the Great Detective's 169th birthday during the (very) long weekend from Jan. 4 to 8; reports on many if not most of the goings-on posted soon at the Baker Street Irregulars' web-site <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/tag/reports>. In the meantime, here are a few brief paragraphs to tide you over.

Locals and early arrivals enjoyed the ASH Wednesday dinner, and on Thursday morning the ACD Society's Doylean Awards Ceremony and a running of Wessex Cup were held at the Mysterious Bookshop; the society's web-site is at <www.acdsociety.com>. The BSI's Distinguished Speaker that evening was Dr. Lakshmi Krishnan, who suggested that the medical practice of diagnosis cannot be understood without examining its linkage with detective fiction; her paper will be published in the Baker Street Journal, and her book *The Doctor and the Detective* will be published this year.

On Friday the well-attended William Gillette Memorial Luncheon featured a performance of William Gillette's curtain-raiser "The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes", and the presentation of the annual Susan Rice Mentorship Award (recognizing "commitment to mentoring Sherlockians as a means of keeping green the memory of Sherlock Holmes") to Evelyn Herzog.

Then Irregulars and guests gathered for dinner at the Yale Club, where Lou Lewis offered the first toast to Joan Blankenstein as *The Woman*. The dinner agenda included the usual toasts, and rituals, and spectacular presentations by Betsy Rosenblatt and Dan Stashower. The annual Morley-Montgomery Award went posthumously to Nicholas Utechin, and Mike Kean announced that Steve Rothman was retiring after a record 23 years as the editor of the Baker Street Journal; the new editor of the BSJ is Dan Andriacco, and Steve will be the editor emeritus.

The BSI's new Birthday Honours were awarded to Cindy Brown ("Sam Brown"), Elaine Coppola ("Syracuse"), Erika Dowell ("A First Folio Shakespeare"), Takahiko Endo ("James Armitage"), David Harnois ("James Boswell"), Palle Schantz Lauridsen ("The Royal Family of Scandinavia"), Dore Nash ("The Three Garridebs"), James O'Leary ("James, the Son of the Grimpen Postmaster"), Roberta Pearson ("Nottingham"), Lee Shackelford ("Woodman's Lee"), and John Sherwood ("The Imperial Theatre"). And the BSI's prestigious Two-Shilling Award was bestowed on Greg Ruby.

On Saturday morning Covent Garden West offered the traditional opportunity for dealers to help people who wanted to add to their collections, and at the Saturday luncheon and reception the Dr. John H. Watson Fund's auction attracted enthusiastic bidders; the raffle prize was an etched glass salver with matching glasses and coasters, created by Danna Mancini.

The second annual meeting of the Literary Agents was held via Zoom on Sunday morning; you are welcome to watch video of the proceedings at the "Doings of Doyle" page at Facebook <www.tinyurl.com/3ncb9h2w>. And for those who lasted that long, the last event of the birthday festivities was the Adventuresses' Brunch on Sunday.

Jan 23 #2 There's more about the festivities at Scott Monty's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog <www.tinyurl.com/5284d3rf>. Scott and Burt Wolder also discuss the goings-on at <www.tinyurl.com/bp7386rm>. And you can plan ahead: the next annual dinner will be on Jan. 12, 2024, celebrating Sherlock Holmes' 170th birthday and the 90th (granite) anniversary of the founding of the BSI. Anyone who would like to have information about future events (and much more) is welcome to sign up for "News from the BSI" at <www.tinyurl.com/yc5tsz27>.

The Baker Street Irregulars Press has published two new titles: *The Haven Horror* is the newest addition to the Manuscript Series (211 pp., \$39.95); edited by Phillip Bergem, it offers a facsimile of the manuscript of "The Retired Colourman", with an annotated transcription and scholarly commentary on the manuscript and on various aspects of the story (the Manuscript Series continues to offer readers an opportunity to come close to the moment when the stories were written, and the commentary is delightful).

Stimulating Medicine, edited by Robert S. Katz and Andrew L. Solberg (225 pp., \$39.95), is subtitled "More Nerve and Knowledge: Doctors, Medicine, and the Sherlockian Canon"; it's the next title in the BSI's Professions Series, and a second volume, so to speak, accompanying their first title in the series, and the anthology continues to explore the many medical aspects of the Canon. Both of the new titles (and many others) can be ordered at <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/tag/books>.

Don't delay: Neil Brand's dramatization of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" with Mark Gatiss as Sherlock Holmes (Dec 22 #6) will be available at the BBC Radio 3 web-site <www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001h56s> only until Feb. 20 (and it's nicely done indeed).

As noted in last month's issue, all of the Sherlock Holmes stories now are in the public domain. You can visit Scott Monty and Burt Wolder's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog <www.tinyurl.com/2s4ck3s4> to listen to them interview Les Klinger, Betsy Rosenblatt, and Ashley Polasek about the significance of the end of Canonical copyright protection.

Radio Times reported on Jan. 19 <www.tinyurl.com/257fh4ks> on the new Audible radio drama "The Baker Street Four" (based on the graphic-novel series *Les Quatre de Baker Street*), with Peterson Joseph as Sherlock Holmes and Bill Nighy as the Baker Street Irregulars' faithful cat Watson. You can listen to a sample from the recording at <www.tinyurl.com/mr3nnkrb>.

Al Gregory <gaslightandfog@verizon.net> kindly offers (via e-mail) his new 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 are Investitured Irregulars).

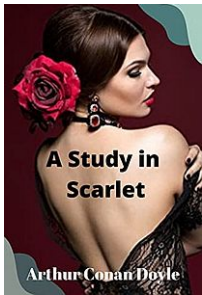
Further to the discussion of ChatGPT (Dec 22 #4), Dave Taylor, who has an interesting technology blog at <www.askdavetaylor.com>, asks his readers, "If you read every book Arthur Conan Doyle ever wrote and remembered every single sentence, do you think you could write new Sherlock Holmes stories in his style?" <www.tinyurl.com/2yuu4dbw>. And provides some intriguing insight for people who pursue pastiches.

Jan 23 #3 The script for David MacGregor's comedy "The Adventure of the Ghost Machine" is now available from TRW Plays (\$12.95 print/\$9.00 digital) <www.trwplays.com/david-macgregor>; MacGregor has great fun with Holmes, Watson, and Irene Adler (who has moved into 221B Baker Street and is pretending to be Mrs. Hudson for the sake of propriety). This time they're involved with Nikola Tesla and Thomas Alva Edison, and (again) the villainous daughter of Prof. Moriarty.

Reginald Goodman's *The Willesden Harpooning: A Holmes Before Watson Novel* (2022; 224 pp., \$7.81) offers a look at Holmes when he was trying to find his vocation as a consulting detective, finding he had a lot to learn before he could establish himself; he solves one mystery easily, and then is confronted with another that is far more difficult.

"Why write a Victorian mystery?" is the question answered by Will Thomas, author of the series of novels about Cyrus Barker and Thomas Llewelyn in a post at Criminal Element (Jan. 3) <www.tinyurl.com/3rzfuvck>; *Heart of the Nile*, the latest in the long series, is due from Minotaur in the spring.

The fall issue of the Baker Street Irregulars Trust's electronic newsletter For the Sake of the Trust has been uploaded to the Trust's web-site at <www.bsitrust.org>. with news about the Trust's activities. You're more than welcome to explore the Trust's web-site to read past issues.



"Don't judge a book by its cover," someone once said. Karen Murdock has noted a new digital edition of *A Study in Scarlet* offered at Amazon <www.tinyurl.com/v69zdxe5> for only \$3.00. One does wonder: Alice Charpentier? Lucy Ferrier?

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) you can now do that easily, thanks to Steve Mason, who provides an updated compilation each month and makes it available to one and all at the Beacon Society's web-site <www.tinyurl.com/ys63328a>.

The Jan.-Feb. issue of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine offers its annual tribute to Sherlock Holmes: a Sherlockian cover; Elizabeth Elwood's mystery involving a Sherlockian theater production; Steve Steinbock's reviews of some Sherlockian (and other) books, Dean Jobb's "Stranger Than Fiction" column about a mystery that intrigued Conan Doyle; John Shen Yen Nee and S. J. Rozan's pastiche "The Killing of Henry Davenport"; an editorial happy birthday from Janet Hutchins; Terence Faherty's parody of "The Reigate Squires"; and an Amlingmeyer Brothers story "Can the Cat Catch the Rat?" by Steve Hockensmith.

What do Frankenstein, Sherlock Holmes, Dracula, Tarzan, the Count of Monte Cristo, and Pinocchio have in common? They are primordial literary myths, according to the novelist Gabriel García Márquez, quoted in an article in the Wall Street Journal (Dec. 27), noted by Karen Murdock. Can you name the authors who created all of those primordial literary myths?

Jan 23 #4 When in Norway: you can stay at the Union Hotel in Øye, where you can "step inside a world treasuring the olden times, when traveling meant introspective discovery, long days of reading and hiking adventures in tweed" <www.unionoye.no>. The hotel boasts that Conan Doyle was one of many celebrities who stayed there, and "fell in love with our country right here, within these walls." It's certainly picturesque, but easy to get to only if you're on a ship cruising in the Hjørundfjord.

Jules Tasca's play "An Evening with Sherlock Holmes" was first performed in 2014 and has had many local productions since then; the script's available from Dramatic Publishing (\$10.95) <www.dramaticpublishing.com>. The evening consists of one-act dramatizations of two Canonical stories ("The Noble Bachelor" and "Charles Augustus Milverton") and his new one-act play "The Disappearance of Adam" (which is nicely imaginative and far more than a mere pastiche). The publisher offers many other Sherlockian plays.

Ron Fish continues to publicize meetings of Sherlockian societies via his Sherlockian Calendar, including gatherings held via Zoom or other technology; it's a great way to find out what's happening, where and when. You can see his format at <www.sherlockiancalendar.com>, and send information about upcoming meetings to him at <ronf404@aol.com>.

For those who like word-search puzzles: *Brain Games: Sherlock Holmes Word Search* (Morton Grove: Publications International, 2018; 192 pp. \$12.98).

The lists of Sherlockian societies that I used to maintain on my old computer are now sadly out of date, but there's still an easy way to for you to find Sherlockian societies and their contacts: Mike McSwiggin prepares annual listings of contact information for "Sherlockian Groups and Societies" for publication in the Baker Street Almanac, and the 2021 listing is available on-line at <www.greenbag.org/almanacs/BS/bsa.html> (it's a large file, so be patient while it downloads); the 2022 listing should be available soon. Mike also presides over a handy-dandy interactive map of geographical Sherlockian societies at the web-site of the Beacon Society, at <www.beaconsociety.com/sherlockian-societies.html>.

"Pulp Friction" is how Heritage Auctions described what they called "one of the sauciest (and spiciest!) troves of pulp magazines ever assembled" <www.tinyurl.com/55zsrpa8>; there may not be any Sherlockian pulps in the upcoming auctions, but do take a look at some of the covers.

The Beacon Society continues to administer the Fortescue Scholarship Honours Program, and more than 120 people have completed all three exams and have received their Doctorate in Sherlockiana. There also are annual Re-Certification exams for those who want to continue on, and there is more information about the Program at <www.tinyurl.com/4s6jtn35>.

The December issue of the Beacon Society's Not-So-Quarterly Newsletter now is available at the society's web-site <www.beaconsociety.com>, with the latest news from and about the society and its efforts to offer "teachers, librarians, children's museums, and children's theaters with local resources to bring the magic of Sherlock Holmes to life."

Jan 23 #5 J. Allen St. John was an author, artist, and illustrator, perhaps best known for his illustration of Edgar Rice Burroughs' novels, but he also created a spectacular image of Holmes and Watson for the Chicago Sunday Tribune's Magazine of Books (Feb. 13, 1949) to accompany Vincent Starrett's review of John Dickson Carr's *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* <www.pinterest.com/pin/338332990729622515>. Lauren Stump at Shasta/Phoenix offers some of his (non-Sherlockian) original artwork at <www.shastaphoenixart.com/availableartwork>, and Stephen D. Korshak's *The Paintings of J. Allen St. John: Grand Master of Fantasy*.

St. John earlier illustrated "A Scandal in Bohemia" for the anthology *With All My Love* (1945); that artwork can be found on the cover of *Baker Street Miscellanea* (autumn 1982) and in an article in the winter 1982 issue.

Regulation & Imagination: Legal & Literary Perspectives on Fox-Hunting is the thoroughly misleading title of a delightful book edited by Ross E. Davies (Washington: Green Bag Press, 2021; 131 pp., \$65.00). It's actually an exploration of Conan Doyle's "The King of the Foxes" and offers a full-color reprint of the first publication of the story in *The Windsor Magazine*, a facsimile of the manuscript with a transcription and annotations, and essays about the history of the manuscript, illustrators, fox-hunting, and much more, by Doylean scholars and enthusiasts; do not neglect the illustrations on the front and back of the dust jacket, explained in detail on the jacket flaps. The publisher's web-site <www.tinyurl.com/3v8ahmyw> has links to two of the essays, and information on how to order the book.

The next 221B Con (A Fan Con for All Things Sherlock Holmes) will be held in Atlanta, Ga., on Apr. 14-16 <www.221bcon.com>, and you are welcome to apply to be on one or more of their panels <www.221bcon.com/panels>.



It would be nice indeed if the U.S. Postal Service were to issue a stamp to honor the new book about "The King of the Foxes", but in fact it's only a nice coincidence that a new 40¢ stamp shows a red fox. That's the rate for bulk mail (pre-sorted circulars, newsletters, and catalogs), and the stamps available in rolls of 3,000 and 10,000; it will be difficult to find them in post offices, but the Postal Service is well aware that there still are some people who collect stamps, and you can purchase 20-stamp sheets at the USPS web-site <www.tinyurl.com/36puatuf>.

"Tide: For Detectives with Sensitive Skin" is a new television commercial <www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxPyxgh9xgA> reported by Jerry Margolin and found on-line by Jennie Paton.

Further to the recommendation of Anthony Horowitz's "Magpie Murders" television series (Dec 22 #1), the book from which he adapted the series also is nicely done; the solutions to the murders are the same, but it's interesting to see what Horowitz did when he adapted the book for television.

Jerry Margolin has reported a nicely Sherlockian (and affordable) collectible available in Oregon <www.oregonlottery.org/scratch-its/cash-hunt>; the question for collectors is: do you keep it in mint condition?

Jan 23 #6 The Norwegian Explorers' Christmas Annual for 2022 takes "International Holmes" as its theme, with a nice mix of essays, articles, pastiches, poetry, and a puzzle; only a few copies of the 107-page booklet, edited by Ray Riethmeier and Phillip Bergem, are available (\$11.00 postpaid); ask Phillip <pgbergem@gmail.com> if you're in time to order, and he'll tell you how to pay. Back issues for some earlier years, and conference books, also are available.

Gillette Castle is currently closed for tours, and work is underway on renovating the castle's terrace; tours will resume on May 27. In the meantime, Susan Dahlinger reports, there's a virtual tour available on-line at the Gillette Castle State Park web-site <www.tinyurl.com/yc38p73j>. The web-site of the Friends of Gillette Castle State Park also is well worth exploring <www.gillettecastlefriends.org>.

The Parallel Case of St. Louis has announced their "Holmes in the Heartland" conference on July 28-30; more information is available at their web-site <www.parallelcasestl.wixsite.com/home/holmes-in-the-heartland>.

The fall issue of *The Magic Door* (published by the friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library) offers full reports on the Jubilee@221B conference, news from the Library and the Collection, and much more. You can request a copy of the newsletter from Cliff Goldfarb (Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto M4W 2G8, Canada) <cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca>.

Maurice Breslow's *Full Circle: Sherlock Holmes's Greatest Challenge Ever* (Altona: Friesen Press, 2022; 115 pp., \$14.99) presents Holmes with a dire problem: Conan Doyle has decided to dispose of Holmes at the Reichenbach. Their worlds collide, and overlap, and the novella provides an intriguing solution.

Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle in the Newspapers, Volume 6, October 1894, edited and annotated by Mattias Boström and Mark Alberstat (Indianapolis: Gasogene Books, 2023; 258 pp., \$38.95), continues the series launched in 2015; the first volume covered ten years, and this one reprints only some of the articles published in the month that saw Conan Doyle on his highly-publicized tour in the United States.

Also from Gasogene: *You Know My Methods, Watson*, edited by Andy and Shelly Gage (Indianapolis: Illustrious Clients, 2023; 113 pp., \$19.99) is the society's third case-notes, offering a fine mix of articles, toasts, poetry, drama, and explorations of the history of the Clients. The *Sherlock Holmes Review: 2022 Sherlockian Annual* (78 pp., \$24.95) has a wide variety of new articles and reminiscences, Canonical and Sherlockian interesting (Steve Doyle has an especially nice story in the Collectors' Corner.) And while it's not new, Christopher Redmond's *A Quick Succession of Subjects* (2016; 276 pp., \$19.95), a collection of lectures and speeches from 1978 to 2015, includes "Advice from Professor Moriarty on the Presentation of Sherlockian Papers" (which will be of interest and value to anyone who is considering speechifying about Sherlock Holmes). Gasogene's books can be ordered at <www.gasogenebooks.com>.

Jan 23 #7 Do you think copyright protection in the U.S. is complicated? Canada has just changed its regulations to provide protection for 70 (rather than 50) years from the death of the author. Fear not: Conan Doyle's works went into public domain in Canada in 1980, and even if the new regulations were retroaction, his protection would have ended in 2000. The CBC explained it all on Jan. 7 <www.tinyurl.com/mr2zz5cp>.

The December issue of the quarterly newsletter published by The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, offers detailed reports on the International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes (at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul through Apr. 2) and the mini-conference held last October), celebrations of A. A. Milne and D. Martin Dakin, and news from and about the collections; copies of the newsletter can be requested from Timothy Johnson, #15-G Elmer L. Andersen Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455 <johns976@umn.com>. Planning's underway for a full-scale conference in Minneapolis in 2024.

Linda Bailey's *Arthur Who Wrote Sherlock* (Tundra Book Group, 2022; 56 pp., \$18.99) is written for children aged 5-9 years, and it's a delightful introduction to the life and work of Conan Doyle, enhanced by Isabelle Follath's colorful artwork.

A recent article in *The Times* reported on "the 22 poshest villages in the UK," and one of them was Forest Row, which was described as "a beacon of progressiveness" and "a posh hippy enclave sloshing with private wealth." Obviously it has changed since Holmes and Watson stayed at the Brambletye Hotel in Forest Row (in "Black Peter").

Howard Ostrom's "Silent Doyle: Non-Sherlockian Conan Doyle and the Silent Film Era" <www.nplh.co.uk/silentdoyle.html> is an informative and nicely-illustrated discussion of the subject; it is unfortunate that most of the films are not known to have survived.

It is getting harder and harder to find open-stack libraries, in which it is possible to browse the shelves, but one of the best and largest is the Mui Ho Fine Arts Library at Cornell University <www.tinyurl.com/55npb48y>.

Piers Haggard died on Jan. 11. He began his theatrical career in Britain in 1960 as an assistant director at the Royal Court, then moved to film and television, and was awarded an OBE in the New Year Honours in 2016; he directed the "Madame Sara" episode of the ITV series "The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes" (1971).

The Baker Street Irregulars in Oxfordshire: they were the Special Operations Executive (SOE), who called themselves the Baker Street Irregulars because during WW2 their headquarters were at 64 Baker Street. They were also called "the Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare" and sometimes it was said that SOE stood for "Stately 'omes of England" after the many country homes and estates they used during the war. One of those stately homes was still used by the intelligence services until the 1970s, when it was sold and carefully restored; it's now on the market again (at £6,000,000), and you can read all about it at <www.tinyurl.com/djvaz7vc>.

Jan 23 #8 Will Thomas' *Fierce Poison* (New York: Minotaur, 2022; 294 pp., \$27.99) is the next in his grand series that stars private enquiry agents Cyrus Barker (an homage to Holmes' rival in "The Retired Colourman") and (now) partner Thomas Llewelyn; it's 1893, and the story puts them and their friends in dire peril at the hands of a mysterious poisoner. The tale's well told, and the supporting characters are as interesting as the stars; the book is an excellent addition to the series.

The last Sherlock Holmes stories aren't the only things to enter the public domain this year. Here's something you may not have thought was protected by copyright: <www.tinyurl.com/sxtbbfmr>.

"The only thing needed to be a Sherlockian is a curious mind and the free edition of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* - Nick Martorelli, interviewed by Robb Nunn on his "Interesting Though Elementary" blog, which continues to offer a fine mix of essays and interviews <www.tinyurl.com/5ym74vsk>.

Theatrical news: Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" is running at the Reno Little Theater in Reno, Nev., through Feb. 12 <www.renolittletheater.org>. It's also due at the Theatre Off The Square in Weatherford, Tex., on Feb. 3-19 <www.theatreoffthesquare.org>; and at the Olathe West Theatre in Olathe, Kan., Mar. 3-4 <www.owtheatre.com>.

The new musical "Sherlock Holmes and the Poisonwood" will be performed at the Other Palace in London, Feb. 2-4 <www.theturbinetheatre.com>.

Joshua L. Peugh's new musical "My Dear Watson" was performed at The Grandel in St. Louis, Mo., Jan. 27-28, and it will be streamed on-line, Feb. 3-5 <www.kranzbergartsfoundation.org/the-grandel>.

The Red Throated League (of the Norwegian Explorers) will perform "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing Heiress" at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, Minn., on Feb. 4 <www.mnhs.org/event/9630>.

Lesley Hart will discuss her "Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Lipstick, Ketchup and Blood" (with excerpts performed by Deirde Davis) at the Pitlochry Festival Theatre in Pitlochry, Perthshire, on Feb. 12 (it's her adaptation of "A Study in Scarlet") <www.pitlochryfestivaltheatre.com>.

Samuel Safa's "Sherlock Holmes: l'Aventure Musicale" will be performed at the 13eme Art theater in Paris, Feb. 18-Mar. 4 <www.tinyurl.com/2s4dwcdx>.

Jeffrey Hatcher's "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Suicide Club" will be performed at the Lakeland Cultural Arts Center in Littleton, N.C., Mar. 24-Apr. 1 <www.lakelandcac.org>.

"Baker Street Irregulars" (by Flip Kobler and Cindy Marcus) is to be performed at the Kettering Children's Theatre in Kettering, Ohio, from Mar. 24 to Apr. 2 <www.playkettering.org>.

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