

SHERLOC (an abbreviation for Scanning Habitable Environment with Raman and Luminescence for Organics and Chemicals), is now on board the Perseverance rover on Mars, and it has been operating for three years; it malfunctioned in January, but it's back in action now, and there's more about SHERLOC at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's web-site, which is online at www.tinyurl.com/9bdzdvss.

"The story of early cinema may have been different had Wordsworth Donisthorpe been better at blackmail." There's nothing Sherlockian about Irfan Shah's essay at the Public Domain Review web-site (June 24), but it's well worth reading www.tinyurl.com/y62433js. Donisthorpe, was (according to Shah) a forgotten polymath, political individualist, chess reformer, and inventor of a peculiar kind of film camera. Wool combing in England also was involved in this intriguing bit of history.

It seems that Scuttlebutt is not only something in the title of a newsletter. It's also a sandwich, conceived by Carolina Fidanza at her restaurant Saltie in Brooklyn. The restaurant has been closed, but Ray Betzner has found a recipe at the N.Y. Times web-site www.tinyurl.com/bp8dcbht.

"Collectors are not odd," according to the late Jim Lehrer (in an essay in Smithsonian magazine (March 1990), "we are merely possessed with a need to collect certain things that some people might consider odd." Lehrer gladly described himself as a world-class collector of depot signs and other memorabilia). There's an article on "Britain's most eccentric collectors" at the Country Life web-site (Jun 22) www.tinyurl.com/mrxbuw6y (none of them are Sherlockians, but they're still eccentric).

Jennie Paton discovered a documentary on "'Hidden Killers of the Victorian Home" www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sy7iUoWi_-U. The good old days weren't as good as they could have been.

Stephen Fry appeared on BBC-2's "Celebrity Mastermind" series in 2004, answering (or not answering) questions about "Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes"; he answered 8 of the 14 questions correctly. Jennie Paton found video of his appearance www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdxafxQe-BC, and you're welcome to see how well you do.

There's an International Buster Keaton Society, and a Keaton Journal, and (reported by Andrew Malec) an interesting article about the film "Sherlock Jr." (1924) at www.tinyurl.com/yezwdvk8.

The Generic Radio Workshop www.genericradio.com offers free downloads of a wide variety of old-time radio scripts: twelve from the Rathbone, Con-Conway, and Gielgud series www.genericradio.com/series/sherlockholmes, another from the Mercury Theater broadcast of Orson Welles' version of the William Gillette play www.genericradio.com/show/8VCGXSKAOS, one from the Jack Benny Show series with a 12-minute version of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" www.genericradio.com/show/7STBVAZP4E1, and one from the Suspense series broadcast of "The Lost Special" www.tinyurl.com/b9ds75d4.

Jul 24 #2 Jennie Paton has reported Jigidi (a free on-line community for jigsaw puzzle lovers), as well as a free on-line 80-piece jigsaw puzzle <www.tinyurl.com/mvwzzh7b> that shows the Sherlock Holmes Pub in London. You can search the web-site for [sherlock] and [moriarty] and [conan doyle] to find more on-line jigsaws. It's nice that you don't need to worry about losing pieces. And yes indeed, some purists do insist that jigsaws are not puzzles.

Sorry about that: the URL for the "immersive experience with Arthur Conan, Mina "Margery" Crandon, Harry and Bess Houdini, and Howard Thurston", due at the Spirits' Speakeasy in New York, Sept. 19-Nov. 3, should have been <www.thespiritsspeakeasy.com>. Brian Silliman will perform as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and tickets are now on sale.

An emoji, according to Wikipedia, is a pictogram (or logogram or ideogram or smiley) embedded in text and used in electronic messages and web-pages. There's now a wide variety of emoji, including some for admirers of Holmes and Watson, noted by Jennie Paton <www.tinyurl.com/2h5jn2ku>.

There was a tour of the grounds of "the world's most famous school" at the Country Life web-site (June 29) <www.tinyurl.com/59m2h6x2>. That's Eton, mentioned twice in the Canon (three times, if you count an Eton jacket). There's also an interesting article explaining "How to Win at Rock, Paper, Scissors" <www.tinyurl.com/58rfz4x6>.

Conan Doyle was one of many researchers who used the historic Reading Room at the British Library <www.tinyurl.com/5n6mf8xs>. The Reading Room has been preserved and now is a feature of the British Museum, and open to the public for visits and tours <www.tinyurl.com/yc72np45>.

This year the Morgan Library & Museum in New York is celebrating its 100th anniversary as a public institution, and Samantha Wolov has noted a short video by Fran Liebowitz <www.tinyurl.com/ycjhdjxy> shows some of the wonders of the Morgan, which include the manuscript of "The Picture of Dorian Gray" (written by Oscar Wilde after that fateful dinner in 1889, when the editor of Lippincott's asked both Wilde and Conan Doyle to write stories for the magazine).

The East Haddam Stage Company <www.ehsco.org> continues to honor William Gillette in performances at Gillette Castle, and is performing his play "All the Comforts of Home" on weekends through Aug. 11. The four-act comedy was first produced in 1890 and published in 1897, and you can read it on-line at <www.tinyurl.com/3wed7m4j>.

There seems to be no end to the saga of the Lyndhurst Park Hotel (Feb 24 #2). The Milton Advertiser & Lymington Times has reported (July 5) that the developer has submitted a plan to demolish the entire hotel, including the facade designed by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle <www.tinyurl.com/5aaf4jcw>; the developer claims that the building has been so long neglected that it is no longer safe to work in or near it. The rebuild would reinstate the elements of Conan Doyle's design, according to the developer, and the public had until the end of July to comment on the plan.

Jul 24 #3 "This game can be played only once. To solve the riddles, you will have to write on, fold, and cut the game materials." The game is *Exit: The Game: The Disappearance of Sherlock Holmes*, created for Kosmos by Inke and Markus Brand (Thames & Kosmos, \$17.95), and it offers a rare opportunity to annoy all fanatic collectors who believe that a "mint" copy is the best thing to have in one's collection (once you have played the game, it is no longer in mint condition) <www.tinyurl.com/mr4c3839>. A true fanatic, of course, will need to avoid opening the game's plastic wrapper.

A query about the "A Tip of the Deerstalker" awards that were presented by Mike Whelan to deserving members of the Baker Street Irregulars at annual dinners in 2014, 2015, and 2017; I wonder about awards in other years, and would welcome information about those awards <blau7103@comcast.net>.

Jennie Paton has reported video <www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjeDMxAqe34> from a 1970 episode of "The Flip Wilson Show" with Flip as Hemlock Jones, Johnny Brown as Dr. Dotson, and Connie Stevens as Prof. Doriarty.

Sherry Thomas' *A Ruse of Shadows* (New York: Berkley/Penguin Random House, 2024; 331 pp., \$18.00) is the eighth title in her "Lady Sherlock" series, which stars Charlotte Holmes, who does her detecting while pretending to be the sister of the non-existent Sherlock Holmes (with Mrs. Watson as her friend and business partner); Charlotte is continuing to battle Moriarty and his henchmen, and also is under threat from Scotland Yard. There is mystery and romance, as well as dire peril, in the story, and the author's web-site is at <www.sherrythomas.com>.

Magnadur (a Finnish "fierce melodic death metal" band) has issued a music video for "Dog of Baskerville" from their third album ("Unholy Punisher") due in September. You're welcome to watch (and listen to) the music video at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBXzhTthLtI>.

Welcome news for those who've not yet seen Mark Gatiss' dramatization of "Lot No. 249" (which was broadcast last December BBC Two's annual series "A Ghost Story for Christmas") (Jan 24 #3): the story is one of six programs that have been acquired by American Public Television for syndication to public television stations for broadcast later this year. You're welcome, of course, to try to persuade your local PBS station to ask APT about "Ghost Stories".

Sorry about that: Baker Street Irregulars (Jun 24 #4) is a bar and grill on the Upper East Side in New York <www.irregularsnyc.com>, not the Upper West Side; east is east, and west is west, as someone once said.

There's more to be said about Nicholas Shakespeare's *Ian Fleming: The Complete Man* (Apr 24 #4): in addition to mentions of Fleming's friend Richard Hughes, who founded the Baskerville Chapter of the Baker Street Irregulars in Japan after World War II, there's a quote from Kingsly Amis, who ranked Fleming alongside the 'demi-giants' of an earlier age, Verne, Haggard, Conan Doyle; and a note that the verdict that most pleased Fleming was John Betjeman's comparison of Bond to an international Sherlock Holmes.

Jul 24 #4 Forbes magazine has offered "An Insider's Guide to The Langham, London" (July 14) <www.tinyurl.com/2p9v6t4f>; they don't have Conan Doyle and the Canon quite right, and there's no mention of the dinner in 1889 at which he was commissioned to write a story for Lippincott's magazine. The fault lies with the history at the hotel's web-site <www.tinyurl.com/ymckyx5u>, and in case you're thinking about staying at the hotel, an inexpensive room costs at least £600 a night.

"Sherlock Holmes: The Exhibition" (at the Farmington Museum in Farmington, N.M, through Sept. 9 (Jun 24 #6) now has an on-line presence that you can visit at <www.tinyurl.com/ms7tesbv>.

Variety has reported (July 2) <www.tinyurl.com/5n7apekr> that the AI firm ElevenLabs has license agreements with the estates of Judy Garland, James Dean, Burt Reynolds, and Laurence Olivier to use their legendary voices to read books, articles and other material to mobile users of its new Reader App. ElevenLabs envisions using AI for projects that might include Judy Garland reading *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and Laurence Oliver narrating a Sherlock Holmes story, and already offers Judy Garland reading (briefly) from L. Frank Baum's book <www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zo5-rhYO1Nk>.

Kinky Friedman died on June 26. He was a satirist, raconteur, songwriter, singer, unsuccessful political candidate, and author, who once told a reporter, "with a name like Kinky, you should be famous, or else it's a social embarrassment." His *Spanking Watson* (1999) was nicely Sherlockian, and his *Greenwich Killing Time* (1986) and *The Love Song of J. Edgar Hoover* (1996) had amusing Sherlockian allusions.

"A Brief History of Ghosts and Spirit Photography" is an 16-minute video tour of some of the treasures at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London <www.tinyurl.com/3twukxfj>, with brief mentions of Charles Altamont Doyle and his son (at 2:20-03:10 and 10:00).

Laurie R. King' new novel about Mary Russell's uncle Jake (Mar 24 #6) has a (probably) final title: *Knave of Diamonds*; there's a brief video at her Facebook page <www.facebook.com/reel/816124467162116>. And there will be a new edition of *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* from Midworld Press, with illustrations by Grace Aldrich; you can see some of her artwork at her website <www.gracealdrichillustration.com>, and previous Midworld titles at <www.midworldpress.com>.

Bill Seil has noted an interesting interactive map of the U.S. that shows almost 6,000 bookstores <www.iheartbookstores.com>, useful indeed for anyone wondering if there's a bookstore nearby.

When in Hull (in East Yorkshire): you can visit the Northern Academy for Performing Arts and see A. Garth Jones' mosaic "Triumph of Art over Ignorance" <www.thehullstory.com/allarticles/napa-column>. Sherlockians are indebted to Garth Jones for his striking designs for the decorated covers of the first British edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and the four volumes of the Souvenir Edition of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Jul 24 #5 "Sherlock had been balling out in London as this world-class PI before he burned out on the game (and his massive coke habit, and straight up faked falling off a waterfall to get out)" according to Andrew Battershill, in his *Pet, Pet, Slap* (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2024; 235 pp., \$18.95); it's an intriguing surrealist and absurdist novel, featuring Pete "Pillow Fist" Wilson, with Holmes as Wilson's roommate and in-house doping expert.

Coming up on PBS-TV: "Lucy Worsley's Holmes vs. Doyle" will air in three weekly one-hour episodes beginning on Dec. 8; this is the American title for BBC Two's "Killing Sherlock: Lucy Worsley on the Case of Conan Doyle" mini-series that aired in the U.K. at the end of last year (Dec 23 #7).

Woof! Jennie Paton reports that Honour Sherlock is a greyhound racing in Nottingham <www.tinyurl.com/2t4afj28>.

Harry Houdini visited Cincinnati in 1925, with a check for \$5,000 offered to the medium Laura Pruden (who had thoroughly impressed Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) if she could prove that she wasn't faking; you can read all about it in a July 15 article in Cincinnati Magazine <www.tinyurl.com/3edtzbrw>.

It's time to report on something Guy Ritchie is doing while everyone waits for a third film in the Robert Downey Jr. "Sherlock Holmes" franchise (all that's needed for this is a script, and actors, and lots of money). What he is doing is preparing to direct an eight-episode "Young Sherlock" series for Amazon Prime Video, inspired by the "Young Sherlock Holmes" novels written by Andy Lane. Hero Fiennes Tiffin has been cast as Holmes, with Natascha McElhone and Colin Firth signed on in leading roles.

It's not unlikely that the success of Millie Bobby Brown's "Enola Holmes" films persuaded Amazon that the new young-adult series will be similarly popular with viewers. Andy Lane's "Doctor Who" novel *All-Consuming Fire* (Jul 94 #4) had The Doctor meeting Sherlock Holmes, and the later "Young Sherlock Holmes" novels were well-received.

Some grand news for admirers of Peter Cushing's performances as Sherlock Holmes: the Sherlock Holmes Society of London has announced the discovery of an audio recording of the long-lost BBC-1 television broadcast of "The Second Stain" (1968) <www.tinyurl.com/35fam34b>. The recording has been restored and will premiere at event in London and Birmingham in September. One hopes, needless to say, that it will be more widely available eventually.

Admirers of Mycroft Holmes will certainly enjoy Tauhid Bondia's "Crabgrass" comic strip (July 19) <www.gocomics.com/crabgrass/2024/07/19>, kindly reported by Bill Seil.

Les Klinger has kindly reported "Orlock Holmes: Night Detective" (a grand 37-second animation <www.youtube.com/watch?v=uk2Yx9izr3s> created in 2022 to honor the 100th anniversary of the release of the classic silent film "Nosferatu". Credit goes to Albin Grau and Nick Hilligoss for character design, and Nick Hilligoss for animation.

Jul 24 #6 When in Montana: you may want to visit the Montana Valley Book Store in Alberton (which is about 30 miles northwest of Missoula on US 90, near the border with Idaho). A report on NBC Montana, kindly at hand from Bill Seil <www.tinyurl.com/58d54yym>, explains that the store offers a chance to browse 100,000 used books. The store has a web-site at <www.montanavalleybookstore.com>, but (alas) there's no way to search for books on-line (as was the case with the late and lamented wonderful Acres of Books in Long Beach).

On July 18 Forum Auctions in London offered a copy of the first volume of The Strand Magazine, bound in the publisher's decorated blue cloth, with a decorated tan dust jacket <www.tinyurl.com/4meas4b7>. Estimated at £2,500-£3,500; it sold for £1,500.

Reported: *Holmes in the Heartland*, edited by Joe Eckrich and Rob Nunn; an anthology of presentations at the 2018 and 2023 conferences of the Parallel Case of St. Louis <www.tinyurl.com/5dtw3wdy>.

Theatrics: Kate Hamill's "Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson--Apt. 2B" is running at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre in San Diego, Calif., through Aug. 25; web-site at <www.theoldglobe.org>; and at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse in Cape May, N.J., through Aug. 25 <www.capemaystage.org>.

"Sherlock the Musical" (by Stefan van de Grff and Denning Burton) will be performed at the Building Block School for the Arts in Columbia, Tenn., on Aug. 2-4 <www.buildingblockarts.com>.

George Psarras' new "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Greek Interpreter" will be performed as a reading at the City Lights Theater in San Jose, Calif., on Aug. 4 <www.cltc.org>.

Tyler Scott Null's (also) new play "Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Missing Mystery" will be performed as a staged reading at LaVal's Subterranean Theater in Berkeley, Calif., on Aug. 27 <www.aeofberkeley.org>.

Darryl Bojanowski's musical "The Case of the Counterfeit Napoleon" will be produced at the Palace Theatre in Duncan, Okla., Sept. 12-15; web-site at <www.duncanlittletheatre.com>.

Christopher M. Walsh's "Miss Holmes" is due at the First United Methodist Church in Elmhurst, Ill., Sept. 20-Oct. 6 <www.greenmantheatre.org>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" is scheduled at the Carrollwood Players Theatre in Tampa, Fla., Oct. 18-Nov. 3 <www.carrollwoodplayers.org>; at the Austin Playhouse in Austin, Tex., Nov. 22-Dec. 13 <www.austinplayhouse.com>; at the John Edson Anglin Performing Arts Center in Union, Mo., Mar. 1-4, 2025 <www.ecctheatre.com>; and the Lone Tree Arts Center in Lone Tree, Colo., Apr. 3-13 <www.lonetreeartscenter.org>.

Mark Shanahan's "A Sherlock Carol" will be performed at the Capital Repertory Theatre in Albany, N.Y., Nov. 22-Dec. 22 <www.attherep.org>;

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