

Sherlockians (and Holmesians) gathered in New York to celebrate the Great Detective's 172nd birthday during the (very) long weekend from Jan. 7 to 11, and reports on many of the goings-on will be 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; you can also hear Scott Monty and Burt Wolder discuss the festivities at their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcast at <www.bit.ly/ihose327>. Scott also reports on the weekend at <www.tinyurl.com/3tkf6dec>.

Locals and early arrivals enjoyed the ASH Wednesday dinner, and on Thursday morning the ACD Society's Doylean Awards Ceremony and a running of the 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 the multi-talented Rupert Holmes, who ended his presentation singing, to music he had composed for the occasion, Vincent Starrett's sonnet "221B". His lecture will be published in the Baker Street Journal later this year.

On Friday the William Gillette Memorial Luncheon featured a performance of Lee Shackelford's skit "An Honest Mistake" (with Lee Shackelford as Moriarty and Paul Singleton as Walter Paget). And Burt Wolder received this year's Susan Rice Mentorship Award (recognizing "commitment to mentoring Sherlockians as a means of keeping green the memory of Sherlock Holmes"),

The Irregulars and their guests gathered for drinks and dinner at the Yale Club, Bob Sharfman offered the traditional first toast to Ann Andriacco as "The Woman". The dinner agenda included the usual toasts, and rituals, and presentations by Mark Jones on the alternative life of Dr. Watson if he had not left the British Army, and by Andy Fusco on his identification of the real Baskerville Hall.

Fabienne Courouge was announced as the winner of the annual Morley-Montgomery Award (for the best contribution to the 2025 Baker Street Journal), for her article (in the summer issue) on "Edmond Locard, the Forensic Pioneer Inspired by Sherlock Holmes". You can subscribe to the BSJ (for four issues and the Christmas Annual) at <www.tinyurl.com/3vxncdhd>.

The BSI's Birthday Honours were awarded to Michael Barton ("Baron Von Herling"), Matt Hall ("The Earl of Maynooth"), Linda Hein ("The Hotel National"), Jen Kneeland ("The Haymarket Theatre"), Max Magee ("Cyril Morton"), Rich Krisciunas ("William Morris"), Ashley Mayo ("The Capital and Counties Bank"), Rusty Mason ("John Mason"), George Scheetz ("John Clayton"), Madeline Quinones ("Sir Joshua Reynolds"), PJ Sullivan ("The Ancient Cornish Language"), and Tom Ue ("London University"). And the BSI's prestigious Two-Shilling Award was bestowed on Evy Herzog and Denny Dobry.

The dinner ended with the announcement that the Baker Street Irregulars have a new Wiggins. Mike Kean, who has presided over the BSI since 2020, turned the gavel (yes, there is a gavel) over to Steve Doyle, who is only the seventh person to lead the BSI since it was found by Christopher Morley in 1934.

Jan 26 #2 Another Friday-evening event was the Gaslight Gala, at Annie Moore's, with cocktails, conversation, dinner, toasts, songs, and a skit. The Friday festivities ended with drinks and socializing in the lounge at the Yale Club, which has been the headquarters for the BSI's birthday celebration since 2010.

On Saturday morning Covent Garden West offered the traditional opportunity for dealers to help those who wanted to add to their collections, and the Saturday luncheon and reception included the Dr. John H. Watson Fund's auction, which attracted enthusiastic bidders and the raffle prize was Danna Mancini's splendid hand-crafted model of the Bruce-Partington submarine. And yours truly, who has presided over Dr. Watson's auction since 1990, passed the traditional blue jacket on to the new auctioneer, Scott Monty.

Finally, for those who lasted that long, the last event of the birthday festivities was the traditional Adventuresses' Brunch on Sunday. Now you can plan ahead: the next BSI Annual Dinner will be held on Jan. 15, 2027. There also will be a special BSI conference, open to all, in San Francisco on July 9-11, 2027; stay tuned for more information.

An added feature of the birthday festivities was a performance at the Coffee House Club of Hal Glatzer's "Sherlock Holmes and the Nefarious Baron", which you can see at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzfqLos594U>.

Irregular Chronicles of the Early 'Fifties, by Julie McKuras and Bill Mason (New York: Baker Street Irregulars, 2025; 360 pp., \$34.95), is a most-welcome (and long-awaited) addition to the BSI's Archival History Series. It's billed as the history of the BSI from 1951 to 1955, but it's far more than that, covering a wide range of Sherlockian activities in those years, in the U.S. and other countries. It's well-researched and well-written, and recommended to everyone who wants to know what our world was like all those years ago.

Also from the BSI Press: *Trenches: The War Service of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Robert Katz and Andrew Solberg (2025; 274 pp., \$27.95) is a trade-paperback reissue of the BSI Manuscript Series volume devoted to "His Last Bow" (Jan 18 #2), offering a facsimile of the fourteen surviving pages of the manuscript, an annotated transcript, and commentary on the manuscript, the story, and the world in which Holmes lived when he was involved in the case. Both books can be ordered at <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com>.

First prize for the title of the book most likely to make readers of this newsletter wonder why I'm reviewing it surely goes to *Regulation & Imagination: Perspectives on Highway Robbery* (Washington: Green Bag Press, 2025; 179 pp., \$50.00). That's the cover title; the title page reveals that the perspectives are legal, historical, and literary, and that the book features the autograph manuscript of Conan Doyle's "One Crowded Hour". You will find a facsimile and annotated transcription of the manuscript, and articles about the manuscript, the story, the world in which it was written, and much more. Recommended, and you're welcome to order the book at <www.greenbag.org>.

Jan 26 #3 *The Jewel in the Canon: Sherlockian Reflections on India*, edited by Markus Geisser and Jayantika Ganguly (London: Sherlock Holmes Society of London, 2025; 82 pp., £20.00), is a full-color celebration of the Society's pilgrimage to India last year, with songs, essays, and scholarly articles from authors worldwide.

Also from the Society: H el ene Vrot's *A Study in Styles: Wardrobe Guidance for 1895* (2025; 70 pp., £17.00) is a detailed guide, from unmentionables to outerwear, and to proper behavior, for participants in the Society's costumed outings, and for anyone who wants to know (and see) how people were dressed in (and near) that magic year. Both of the books (and much more) are available from the Society <www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk>.

On the Shoulders of Giants: Great Sherlockians Remembered, was edited by Peter Eckrich and Rob Nunn (Indianapolis: Gasogene Books, 2025; 201 pp., \$26.95) and lives up to its subtitle: there are essays about 21 American Sherlockians, many of them well known and some not so famous, but all of them deserve to be remembered for their contributions to our Grand Game. Gasogene's web-site's at <www.wessexpress.com>.

It's long out of print, but Ron Miller's *Mystery!: A Celebration: Stalking Public Television's Greatest Sleuths* (1996) is readily available from online dealers, and a grand reminder of how much fun the long-running series has been since it started in 1980. There's a chapter on Granada's "Sherlock Holmes" (of course), discussion of Edward Gorey and how his artwork was animated, an introduction by P. D. James, and much more.

Add the ACD Society to the list of Sherlockian (and in this case Doylean) societies that make recordings of their meetings readily available on the Internet; just go to <www.youtube.com> and search for [acd society]. Five Miles from Anywhere also posts its meeting to YouTube.

The Literary Agents also make recordings of their Zoom meetings available; go to <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqbeblJ-7kQ>> to see their meeting during the birthday festivities this month. The ACD Society's live meeting is at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SORQ3ojewdM>>.

The Mrs. Hudson Mysteries: Three Short Plays, by Richard Moon (2024; 114 pp., \$11.00 at Amazon), offers scripts for amusing one-act plays in which it's Mrs. Hudson who solves mysteries. You can read the scripts on-line at <www.peformableplays.com/theplays> (you should search for Richard Moon as the playwright); there's also a radio version of "Sherlock Holmes and the Search for Silver Blaze". Moon's plays can be licensed from Lazy Bee Scripts at <www.lazybeescripts.com>.

Jacquelynn Morris ("The Lion's Mane") died on Jan. 15. She was the founder of the Scintillation of Scions (held annually in Maryland), a member of many Sherlockian societies, and a contributor to our literature. There's a grand interview with Jacquelynn at Rob Nunn's "Interesting Though Elementary" blog <www.tinyurl.com/3rbtj78z>, and another at the "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcast <www.tinyurl.com/mtb4nrkh>.

Jan 26 #4 Richard D. Altick's *Victorian Studies in Scarlet* (1970) focuses on fact rather than fiction, but it's well worth reading, if only for the footnote (on p.64) that mentions a copy of the record of the trial of the murderer William Corder, on display in the Moyse's Hall Museum in Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk, bound in his skin, making Corder 'one of the select company of murderers who were hanged, drawn, and quartered.'

If you didn't hear Neil Brand's 90-minute dramatization of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (with Mark Gatiss as Holmes and Sanjeev Bhaskar as Watson) on BBC Radio 3 in 2023, it's conveniently available at YouTube, at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLrw8qr39J8>.

"Sherlock Holmes: Cracking the Case" (the new exhibition at the Pointe-à-Callière in Montréal) (Nov 25 #4) is similar to, but not the same as, the long-running touring "International Sherlock Holmes Exhibition" created by the Exhibits Development Group. It has had some good publicity, including a story (with video) in the Montréal City News <www.tinyurl.com/3wtpnt8n>. The exhibition's web-site is at <www.tinyurl.com/ph6xjsva>.

Marcus Gilbert died on Jan. 11. He began acting on stage in Britain, and went on to a long career in films and television; his credits included Anton Von Felseck in "Sherlock Holmes and the Masks of Death" (1984). There is more about him at a fan-site <www.facebook.com/MarcusGilbertFansite>.

Charlie Rose interviewed Sir Ian McKellen on PBS-TV in 2015 about his film "Mr. Holmes" and much more <www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCQb4dRPFhM>. Thanks to Jennie Paton for finding a recording.

Sorry about that: Hugh Bonneville has not narrated all of the short stories (Dec 25 #1); he has narrated 27 stories, each of them in two or three parts, available at (free) BBC Sound <www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0k9tzr0>, his own web-site <www.hughbonneville.com>, and other podcasts.

"Redox-Driven Mineral and Organic Associations in Jezero Crater, Mars" was published in Nature (Sept. 10, 2025 <www.tinyurl.com/2upyby8u> with news of discoveries by SHERLOC and WATSON on the Red Planet.

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).

The fall issue of *The Magic Door* (published by the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library) has Douglas Kerr's discussion of the various scripts and performances of Conan Doyle's play "The Fires of Fate", Clifford Goldfarb's history of the various rooms in which the Collection has been housed, and news from and about the Collection. Copies of the newsletter are available on request from Cliff Goldfarb at the Toronto Public Library (789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4W 2G8, Canada) <cgoldfarb221@gmail.com>.

Jan 26 #5 Simpson's in the Strand, which closed in 2020, is scheduled to reopen in February, now owned by the Jermey King Restaurants chain, and its web-site <www.jeremykingrestaurants.com/simpsons> is spectacular. Holmes and Watson dined at Simpson's (see "The Dying Detective" and "The Illustrious Client"), and so have many Sherlockians. There's much more about Simpson's at <www.simpsonsinthestrand.co.uk>.

Marian Diamond died on Jan. 5. She appeared on radio, screen, and television in Britain. and credits included Julia Stoner in Douglas Wilmer's "The Speckled Band" (1964), and Miss Mary Bradshaw in "The New Catacomb" (1967) in a BBC-2 series of Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian stories.

Watson mentions the glades of the New Forest in ("The Resident Patient"), but there's more to see in the neighborhood, according to a story in the Bournemouth Daily Echo (Oct. 12, 2025) <www.tinyurl.com/2kf2apzj>. Conan Doyle stayed at the Montagu Arms Hotel when he was researching "The White Company", and you still can stay at the hotel <www.montaguarmshotel.co.uk> when you visit Beaulieu Abbey (which is featured in the novel) and the All the All Saints' Church in Minstead (where Sir Arthur and his wife are buried).

The December issue of the newsletter of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota offers Michael V. Eckman's "100 Years Ago" article about Ronald A. Knox's *The Viaduct Murder*, John Bergquist's "50 Years Ago" report about Walter Klinefelter's *Sherlock Holmes in Portrait and Profile*, and news from and about the collections. A copy of the newsletter is available from Lisa Von Drasek (#15-G Elmer L. Andersen Library, Univ. of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455) <lvondras@umn.edu>.

The Holmes Hotel in Marylebone continues to celebrate Sherlock Holmes, and to receive good reviews <www.tinyurl.com/bfvpfpnj>.

The Burnley Express (Jan. 13) <www.tinyurl.com/stujkf4k> had an article on how Sherlock, Shakespeare, and the Shire are now on display at the world's oldest English-speaking museum. The Shire is Lancashire, and the museum's Stonyhurst College, where Conan Doyle once was a pupil. You can watch a short Stonyhurst video about Conan Doyle and Holmes and Moriarty at Facebook <www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1893808384550605>.

The "Immersive Fort Tokyo" theme park, which opened in 2024 (Mar 24 #3), offered a Sherlock Holmes murder mystery <www.immersivefort.com>, but it has encountered financial difficulties and is scheduled to close in February <www.tinyurl.com/39tahtks>.

There's news from the Andaman Islands, where Port Blair (mentioned twice in "The Sign of the Four") was officially renamed by the Indian government as Sri Vijaya Puram in 2024, to symbolize (the government said) "the victory achieved in our freedom struggle." Now, according to GEO ExPro (Oct. 21, 2025) <www.tinyurl.com/57x3jtvvt>, Oil India has reported a discovery of natural gas just to the east of the Andamans. There's more information about the discovery, and future prospects, in an article in the November issue of the AAPG Explorer <www.tinyurl.com/3vdt9nhx>.

Jan 26 #6 Some possibilities for presents next Christmas: Derrick Belanger's *Sherlock Holmes: Crimes for Christmas* (Manchester: Belanger Books, 2024; 248 pp., \$19.95) and *Sherlock Holmes: Holiday Whodunits* (2025; 200 pp., \$19.95) offer traditional pastiches presented in parts (so readers can try to solve the mysteries before everything's explained) plus reprints of two longer pastiches. The publisher was founded ten years ago, and its web-site <www.belangerbooks.com> offers a blog as well as details on many other Sherlockian books.

The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes have a new and colorful web-site, at <www.ashsherlockian.org>.

Bill Seil has noted a report in the Seattle Times about a new bookish bar in Seattle. The Ink Drinker is owned by Shelle Yusuf, who "wanted a space where I wouldn't feel like I stood out if I was reading alone at a bar." She was inspired by the Diogenes Club that she read about in the Sherlock Holmes stories she devoured at age 11. But it's not quite the same as the Diogenes Club although there are quiet reading hours (women are welcome at the restaurant) <www.theinkdrinker.com>.

Elon Musk's chatbot Grok has received a lot of publicity recently because it has been used to undress images of people. You can see what Grokipedia says about Sherlock Holmes <www.grokipedia.com/page/Sherlock_Holmes>, and see what Wikipedia says at <www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherlock_Holmes>. It also is interesting to see what Wikipedia says about Grokipedia, and what Grokipedia has to say about Wikipedia.

The Exhibits Development Group has announced that their "Sherlock Holmes: The Exhibition", now on display at the Point-à-Callière in Montréal through Mar. 8 (Jan 26 #4) will next tour in Europe. Stay tuned for details.

Frank Dunlop died on Jan. 4. He trained at the Old Vic School and started his own young people's theater in 1954, and had a long career in British theater, as the founding director of the Young Vic in 1969 and director of the Edinburgh international festival from 1983 to 1991. He also directed the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of Gilette's "Sherlock Holmes" in 1974.

"Venezuela: As the US Eyes the Guiana Shield's Minerals, Can a Peak in It Which Inspired Sci-Fi Remain Unscathed?" was the headline on a post to the Down To Earth web-site (Jan. 6) <www.tinyurl.com/yc2ukdvz> about Mount Roraima and "The Lost World".

Many Sherlockians enjoy books and stories written by Rex Stout, including what he had to say about Nero Wolfe (whom some Sherlockians believe inherited his father's detective prowess and his uncle's gargantuan physique). Ira Brad Matetsky is the Werowance of the Wolfe Pack, and Ross E. Davies is the editor of journal, *The Gazette*. To join the society, go to their web-site <www.nerowolfe.org>, where you can see video of Rex Stout on the Dick Cavett Show in 1969. In case you are wondering who that is sitting next to Rex Stout, it's Eartha Kitt.

Jan 26 #7 The Norwegian Explorers' Christmas Annual for 2025 celebrates "Sherlock Holmes in Motion" with 86 pages of pastiches, poems, essays, and a puzzle, edited by Ray Riethmeier and Phillip Bergem. \$15.00 postpaid (checks payable to the Norwegian Explorers can be sent to Phil at 3829 172nd Avenue NW, Andover, MN 55304-1820; or you can ask about PayPal <pgbergem@gmail.com>. And thanks to modern technology it's also available free as a PDF download <www.norwegianexplorers.org/publications.html>.

One of the interesting aspects of modern times are periodicals published only on-line, as is the case with Fabienne Courouge's La Gazette du 221B, which she started in Feb. 2018; current and past issues are available in French (and English) at <www.gazette221b.com>.

A set of six medals awarded to Capt. J. C. Watson during World War I will be at auction in London on Feb. 11 <www.tinyurl.com/mc95pm52>. He was a lawyer both before and after the war, and in July 1928, supported by Conan Doyle, Watson acted as counsel for Oscar Slater in his successful appeal against Slater's conviction for murder.

Rachel McAdams, who starred as Irene Adler in "Sherlock Holmes" (2009) and "Sherlock Holmes: Game of Shadows" (2011), was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Jan. 20. The star is at 6933 Hollywood Boulevard, and her acceptance speech is conveniently available on-line at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxZwQ3FP8TE>. Sorry; she didn't mention the films.

...but I digress: *The Musings of a Sherlockian Motormouth*, by Bob Sharfman (Manchester: Belanger Books, 2025; 198 pp. \$39.95), is a collection of his previously-published articles and personal essays, modestly described as "random thoughts on Canonical subjects," nicely combining scholarship and humor. The publisher's web-site is at <www.belangerbooks.com>. Bob was interviewed by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder at the "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcast <www.tinyurl.com/2rpexjbd>.

The Borthwick Institute for Archives at the University of York now has the archives of the late Terrance Dicks <www.tinyurl.com/7swrsftw>. He wrote a series of ten *The Baker Street Irregulars* books (1978-1987), and had a long association with the "Doctor Who" television series, novelizing "The Talons of Weng-Chiang". He also was script editor for Tom Baker's mini-series "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1982).

From 1992: Bruce Southworth (president of the Norwegian Explorers) talked with Mark McPherson about his one-man tour when he performed as Arthur Conan Doyle, and much more. The 29-minute interview is available on-line at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=PG_Haa2oUMM>.

Radio Times has reported (Jan.26) <www.tinyurl.com/y4ktmshz> that Tom Baker will play Sherlock Holmes (with John Leeson as Watson) in "Sir Sherlock: The Red Letter Day" (an audio drama due from AUK Studios). There's a trailer at <www.tinyurl.com/mpva35rs>. The cast also includes Nicholas Rowe; Baker and Rowe have both played Holmes in the past; how often has it happened that two actors who have played Holmes then acted together?

Jan 26 #8 There was an interesting post about "Reviving Cognac" at the London Review of Books blog on Jan. 15 It seems that cognac sales have been in decline since 2022, particularly in the U.S. and China (the two biggest markets); Na Oyo A. Kwate suggested that "the cognac industry could fall back on an old marketing ploy: claiming it's medicine," continuing with a detailed account <www.tinyurl.com/458nm7tc> of the many mentions of brandy in the Canon.

Paul Miller (aka the Shingle of Southsea) offers a video on "The Creation of the Topstalker (Censored Version)", conveniently available at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pm4MchP-mXA>.

Theatrical news: Ken Ludwig's "Moriarty" is running at the Liberty Theatre in North Bend, Ore., through Feb. 8 <www.thelibertytheatre.org>. It also is scheduled at the Hale Centre Theatre in Sandy, Utah., Aug. 17-Nov.14; web-site at <www.hct.org>.

Jonathan Ross' new "Sherlock Holmes: Cupid's Revenge" will be produced at FHG Productions in Kingsport, Tenn., Feb. 6-15 <www.fhgproductions.org>.

Kate Hamill's "Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson-Apr. 2B" is scheduled at the Snowy Owl Theater in Leavenworth, Wash., Feb. 13-22 <www.wrogueassembly.org>.

Tim Marriott's one-man show "Watson: The Final Problem" continues on tour in Britain, fur next at the Old Joint Theatre in Birmingham, West Midlands <www.smokescreenprods.com>.

Brian Guehring's "Sherlock Holmes and the First Baker Street Irregular" is scheduled at the Dynamics Community Theater in Tallmadge, Ohio, Mar. 6-7 <www.dynamicshater.org>; and the Columbus Performing Arts Center in Columbus, Ohio, May 7-17 <www.tinyurl.com/2zasejn5>.

Ian McWethy's "Too Many Detectives at the Murder Mansion" will be produced at the First United Methodist Church in Pinellas Park, Fla., on Mar. 6-8 [Beyond the Wings Theater] <www.beyondthewingstheater.org>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" will be produced at the Pit & Balcony Theatre in Saginaw, Mich., Apr. 10-19 <www.pitandbalconytheatre.com>; and at the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey in Madison, N.J., July 11-Aug. 1 <www.shakespearenj.org>.

Mark Hayward's new "Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Baskervilles" is scheduled to tour Britain, May 9-Aug. 6, by the Pantaloons Theatre Company <www.thepantaloons.co.uk/holmes>.

Stewart Howson's "Sherlock Holmes and the Sting of the Scorpion" (combining "The Tiger of San Pedro" and "The Copper Beeches") will be produced at the Queen's Hall Arts Centre in Hexham, Northumb., on May 21; web-site at <www.queenshall.co.uk>.

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"Magic, Meaning, and Discovery in Handwritten Materials" was the title of a lecture by Glen Miranker, who talked about some of the treasures in his collection at the Grolier Club in New York on Jan. 20, and you can watch a recording of the lecture (without the technical problems encountered that evening) at www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeraQfpa_to and see some of the discoveries he has made in the manuscript of "The Sign of the Four".

When was Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887 published? Well, it was advertised as "Just ready" in the Illustrated London News (Nov. 26, 1887), and a page with the advertisement will be auctioned at William George in Bury on Mar. 12 www.tinyurl.com/yck4kkjb with an opening bid of £15.

There is still time to enter the competition for this year's Irene Adler Prize: a \$1,000 scholarship for a woman pursuing a degree in journalism, creative writing, or literature. Established in 2017 by Lucas Aykroyd, an award-winning writer and public speaker in Vancouver, B.C., it is named in honor of the heroine of "A Scandal in Bohemia". There's more information about the prize, and links to all the winning entries, at Lukas Aycroyd's web-site www.lucasaykroyd.com/scholarships.

"Barker and Llewellyn Novels by Will Thomas" www.tinyurl.com/35j8p3xx is a Facebook page for fans of Will's novels, recently described as "Sherlock adjacent." Cyrus Barker is a private enquiry agent (thought by many to be an homage to Holmes' rival in "The Retired Colourman"). The latest novel was *Season of Death* (Feb 24 #7), and the "Book Series in Order" web-site www.bookseriesinorder.com/will-thomas has a detailed discussion of the series.

You can pretend you're Michael Caine: a Sherlockian costume worn by Roger Kincaid in the film "Without a Clue" (1988) will be offered at Propstore on Mar. 27 www.tinyurl.com/bdfzkzfr, estimated at \$2,000-\$4,000.

There was a great of press coverage at the end of January about the discovery of a long-lost portrait of Robert Burns that is now on display in Edinburgh www.blackiehouse.org/the-lost-portrait. You'll find mention of Conan Doyle, and an article published in the International Psychic Gazette (Nov. 1926).

The Archives of Sherlock Holmes: Volume I, written and illustrated by Ben Congdon (Leander: Ben Congdon Fine Art, 2025; 157 pp., \$14.99), has three of the unrecorded cases, told in traditional style. You can see some of his artwork at his web-site www.bcongdon.com.

Rupert Holmes was the guest speaker at the Baker Street Irregulars' Thursday-evening lecture during the birthday festivities last month, and if you would like to see what he has been up to recently, he is credited for the adaptation of "Pirates! The Penzance Musical" (on Broadway from April to July last year). You can see a trailer (and listen to the original cast album) at www.tinyurl.com/mnphtwd5.

Feb 26 #2 Vincent Starrett, who contributed so much to the Sherlockian world, has three screen credits (as a writer), and one of them is of particular interest. His story "Recipe for Murder" (in Redbook magazine, Nov. 1934) was quickly published as a book, *The Great Hotel Murder* (1935), and just as quickly adapted into a film the same year. Ray Betzner's "Studies in Starrett" blog offers three chapters about this, including Starrett's bewildered comment on the film <www.tinyurl.com/35wcjr56> (click on "newer" at the end of the first and second chapters). Ray does not mention the references to Sherlock Holmes in the film, which is conveniently available at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=78lrDazqgNM>. The Sherlockian dialogue is in the screenplay, but not in Starrett's novel.

A bit more about Simpson's in the Strand (Jan 26 #5): Samuel Reiss' Grand Cigar Divan opened in 1828, and soon was recognized as the home of chess in England. John Simpson expanded the premises 1848, adding a restaurant and a new name: Simpson's Grand Divan Tavern. Simpson's had its own chess sets, and Don Izban has reported that the U.S. Chess Federation now offers a replica set called The Strand Series <www.tinyurl.com/yda727mt> for only \$699.00.

The first chatbot is not only older than this newsletter, but quite likely older than many, if not most, of its readers. ELIZA was released in 1966, and if you're interested in history you can read (or listen to) an interview with a modern chatbot at the Journal of the American Medical Association's web-site (Jan. 29) <www.tinyurl.com/yrrj2wpf>.

Dwight Garner's *Read Me: A Century of Classic American Book Advertisements* (New York: Ecco/HarperCollins, 2009) is an interesting (and entertaining) look at how publishers have advertised books, including "A WORD FROM DR. WATSON; COLLEAGUE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES" explaining why people ought to want to read the George H. Doran 1917 edition of *His Last Bow*. It's just Watson's preface to the book, but it is certainly an imaginative advertisement. And Dave Eggers' foreword to Garner's book is well worth the price of admission (plenty of copies available from on-line dealers).

Jennie Paton has reported "Die Liga der Rothaaringen" (with Erich Schellow and Paul Edwin Reich as Holmes and Watson), broadcast by ARD in Germany in 1967, at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXLcj7Vw6Po>. It's nice indeed that modern technology allows people to use "settings" to translate German subtitles into English.

Alexander Orlov has reported "The Hound of the Baskervilles" staged as a musical comedy in Russia <www.muzkom22.ru/spectacles/id/151699>. You can watch a bit of video at <www.ok.ru/video/7356718975659> and the finale at <www.vk.com/video-228360395_456314578>.

There's still considerable interest in Sherlock Holmes: the Deadline website reported (Feb. 13) <www.tinyurl.com/48akf6y3> that the second trailer for the "Young Sherlock" series scored a Prime Video record of 223 million views during the first week it was available on-line. The series, which is directed by Guy Ritchie and is based on the series of books by Andrew Lane, debuts on Prime Video on Mar. 4.

Feb 26 #3 The Beacon Society continues to publish its "quarterly gazette for younger Sherlockians everywhere," and the winter issue of Sherlock's Spotlight is available at their web-site (check the menu at the left) <www.beaconsociety.com>; the contents include material both by and for younger followers of the Great Detective, and the gazette is intended to provide younger Sherlockians with information and entertainment.

In the summer of 2021, the society published a nice collection of Charles M. Schulz's "Peanuts" comic strips with Sherlockian themes, still conveniently on-line in the Spotlight archive at the society's web-site.

The Brick Fanatics web-site reported (Feb. 9) <www.tinyurl.com/5ywwaw9e> that the LEGO Sherlock Holmes Book Nook (Aug 25 #3) will be retired in December.

"For Competition 3431, you were invited to submit a passage in which Sherlock Holmes solves one of the great mysteries of our time," according to James Walton in the Spectator (Jan. 10), and you can read the winning entries at the magazine's Australian web-site <www.tinyurl.com/mprafd2e>.

"The Birth of the Travel Guide" was a recent post at the web-site of the (British) National Archives <www.tinyurl.com/bdcjtwrh>. There's discussion of Bradshaw and Cook (both mentioned in the Canon) and much more.

My compliments to everyone who realized that the "invitation" you received from me this month was suspicious, because it certainly was. Someone managed to hack into my address book, created a fake Paperless Post message, and sent malware to all my e-mail contacts. It's the first successful attack of this sort since I started using e-mail for the newsletter in Oct. 1993; I've no idea how they got through my anti-virus defenses. Beware of anyone who says only "open this," and check before downloading anything.

"Will you do what your father did? No, I am going to work." Written by Conan Doyle on a piece of notepaper with the heading "Notes on Children", one of the items on display in the "Loops, Swoops, and Curliques: A Legacy of Handwritten History" exhibition at the Toronto Reference Library, running through May 10.

Alex Hutchinson's Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture at the Toronto Reference Library on "Conan Doyle's Lost World: Filling in the Blank Spaces on the Map" (May @5 #1) is now on-line <www.tinyurl.com/bzbf2eta>. The introduction begins at 19:45, and the lecture at 24:00.

News from Edinburgh: "The Sir Conan Doyle room was, of course, named after Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and features one king-size bedroom, a spacious living room with sofa bed and piano, dining table, marble bathroom, and historic Edinburgh city views," according to the Edinburgh Live web-site on Feb. 8 <www.tinyurl.com/s7z36dn3>, "In the low season, this room would set you back anywhere from £1,200 a night. In the busy season the price jumps up to anywhere from £2,500 a night." The hotel's The Caledonian, which is now a Hilton <www.tinyurl.com/4nr8t25m>.

Feb 26 #4 The Country Life web-site reported (Feb. 11) that the home of the late Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts, in rural Devon, is for sale for £2.75 million. The story includes an image of Watts' library, where he kept his collection of rare books. The collection, which was sold at auction at Christie's in London (Oct 23 #1) included a copy of the first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* signed by Conan Doyle and inscribed "I perambulated Dartmoor before I wrote this book." It sold for £214,200 [\$226,555] (including the buyer's premium), setting a record for a printed book from the Canon.

Jonathan Orr-Stav's *Sherlock Holmes and the Mistress of History* (Qualum, 2025; 83 pp., \$5.99) has Holmes and Watson traveling to Egypt and the Sinai in 1911, pursuing an ancient inscription. They encounter noted Egyptologists Flinders Petrie and Alan Gardiner, and at last find the inscription, which sheds light on the development of the world's first alphabet.

From the early 1900s: the Farnham Herald reported (Feb. 14) on the discovery of a book of photographs <www.tinyurl.com/4d87yvxf> with one showing Conan Doyle as a cricketer with the Hampshire Hogs. The web-site of the Hampshire Hogs Cricket Club <www.club.hampshirehogs.org.uk> doesn't mention Conan Doyle, or explain how the club, founded in 1887, got its name, but Hampshire pigs are important enough to warrant an entry at Wikipedia. The club's web-site does mention other cricket clubs such as the Somerset Stragglers, the Devon Dumplings, the Sussex Martletts, and the Wiltshire Queries.

"These idiots, in my opinion, have simply read too much Conan Doyle," said Russian television figure Vladimir Solovyov, commenting on forensic conclusions that Alexei Navalny was murdered with a South American dart-frog poison in a gulag prison two years ago. "This is like the Sherlock Holmes stories," Solovyov added.

Robert Duvall died on Feb. 15. He began his acting career in television in 1960 and made his last film in 2022. A consummate actor, he said that his favorite role was as the lawman-turned-cowboy Gus McCrae in the 1989 television series "Lonesome Dove", and he received high praise from Sherlockians for playing Watson as far more than a mere sidekick in "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution" (1976). Scott Monty has posted a very nice tribute to Duvall at <www.tinyurl.com/4s7jtwj3>.

"Step into the world of veterinary diagnostics with Detective Canis Holmes and Felina Watson. Through a series of intriguing clinical cases, uncover hidden parasites, silent hitchhikers, and unexpected indoor threats." On Mar. 3, in an online lecture <www.tinyurl.com/e5ct8fht>, kindly reported by Sonia Fetherston.

David Haig's new play "Magic" will have its world premiere in Chichester this spring, starring David Haig as Arthur Conan Doyle, Hadley Fraser as Harry Houdini, Jenna Augen as Bess Houdini, and Claire Price as Jean Conan Doyle) <www.cft.org.uk/events/magic>. John Bulleid is credited as the illusion designer, so audiences will get to see Houdini perform.

Feb 26 #5 There still are some who believe that it was Conan Doyle who helped Dorando Pietri across the finish line in the Marathon during the Olympic Games in London in 1908, because a photograph showed a man with a mustache and a straw boater who resembled Conan Doyle, with Dorando <www.tinyurl.com/2vmrknbf>. Cliff Goldfarb and Peter Lovesey were able to identify the man as Jack Andrew, an Olympics official (Dec 02 #6). A different photograph <www.tinyurl.com/ymkyeh4w> was offered at RR Auction this month, and it sold for \$346, to Cliff, who's happy to add it to his modest 1908 Marathon collection.

Reported: an excerpt from "The Maracot Deep" in Prema Arasu's *The Book of Sea Monsters: Leviathans of Literature* (Bloomsbury, 2025).

The Tavistock Times Gazette reported (Feb. 20) <www.tinyurl.com/2rj4kfyZ> that 50-acre Swincombe Valley, near Princetown, will be protected under a plan by the Dartmoor Preservation Association. The nearby Fox Tor Mire, believed by many to have been the inspiration of the Grimpen Mire in "The Hound of the Baskervilles", is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Charles Harold St. John Hamilton was a prolific English writer whose specialty was long-running series of boys' public-school stories. His Sherlockian parodies (written under his pen-name Peter Todd from 1915 to 1961) featured Herlock Sholmes and Dr. Jotson, but Hamilton's best-known for his Billy Bunter series, which he wrote as Frank Richards, starring Billy Bunter at Greyfriars School. Roger Johnson has kindly noted that *Billy Bunter's First Case* (1953) is Sherlockian, and conveniently available on-line <www.tinyurl.com/5n7f7kbh>, as well as from used-book dealers.

Planning for the next Holmes in the Heartland conference (July 24-26) continues. For their after-dinner entertainment Max Magee (who presides over the James Phillimore Society for Sherlockian magicians) will conduct a seance during which Conan Doyle will answer questions. See their web-site <www.shorturl.at/B3onQ> for more information about the conference.

An interesting letter written by Conan Doyle during his 1894 lecture tour in the U.S., was offered at Goldberg Auctioneers on Feb. 25. Writing from his hotel in Detroit, likely to his tour manager J. B. Pond, Conan Doyle said that "I realize that the depression has by no means passed away and that the number of people who can be counted on is limited. Now as Chicago is the very heart of the depression, it seems to me a little doubtful whether the second lecture would be good policy. That is my feeling but you are the best judge." The "Panic of 1893" rates an entry at Wikipedia; Conan Doyle had lectured in Chicago on Oct. 12, and did lecture again on Oct. 26. The letter <www.tinyurl.com/mjuzpp2b>, estimated at \$900-\$1,500, sold for \$1,000 (plus 25% buyer's premium).

"My spearsman is foaming at the leash or straining at the pod, and since he is a Bantu and has worked for Conan Doyle, the deaths he inflicts are excruciatingly painful." F. Scott Fitzgerald, in a letter to Gilbert and Amanda Seldes, offered at Heritage Auctions on Feb. 26 with an opening bid of \$6,000 <www.tinyurl.com/2aa2tmmk>. Bidding didn't reach the reserve, and the letter's now available for \$9,375 (including the buyer's premium).

Feb 26 #6 "We can partly thank Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for popularizing the Winter Olympics' newest sport," according to an article in The Guardian (Feb. 19) <www.tinyurl.com/bdefesaz>. That newest sport is ski mountaineering (skimo), which is what Conan Doyle wrote about in 1894, when he made a "perilous 15-mile journey across the 8,000-foot high Maiefelder Furka Pass" that involved skiing and mountaineering. If that link doesn't work for you, try <www.tinyurl.com/3yv4593f>.

If you would like to see some or even all of the often weird and wonderful names people have chosen for Sherlockian societies, there's a list of almost a thousand societies available at the web-site of the Beacon Society <www.tinyurl.com/57phtfh7>; scroll down to "click here to view societies".

A copy of the first edition of *The Lost World*, inscribed in 1913 "From the Author's Mother" <www.tinyurl.com/msrhay6c>, was offered at Quire Auctions on Feb. 25, estimated at £200-£300, it sold for £150 (plus 17% buyer's premium).

221B Con (A Fan Con for All Things Sherlock Holmes), scheduled on Apr. 10-12 in Atlanta, Ga., has posted its schedule of panels (click on the title of the panel for a bit more information <www.221bcon.com/schedule>.

Some theatrical news: Peter Colley's "The Real Sherlock Holmes" is running at the Castor Little Theatre in Castor, Alb., through Mar. 8; web-site at <www.castorlittletheatre.com>.

"The Hound of the Baskervilles" (by Steven Canny and John Nicholson) is on at the Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, Va., through May 17; web-site at <www.americanshakespearecenter.com>.

The Livewire Theatre Company will perform their new version of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" at the Thirsk Racecourse in N. Yorks., Mar. 5-7; web-site at <www.tickettailor.com/events/livewiretheatrecompany/2053755>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" will be produced at the Brockville Arts Centre in Brockville, Ont., Mar. 6-7 <www.tinyurl.com/y4tjdu9j>, and at the Aldridge Theatre in Farnham, Surrey, Mar. 19-21 <www.tinyurl.com/5333rcs3>.

C. P. Stancich's "Sherlock Holmes and the Spinsters of Blackmead" will be produced at the Island Theater in Fleming Island, Fla., Mar. 20-29; web-site at <www.theislandtheater.com>.

Ken Ludwig's "Moriarty" has been scheduled at the Briston Opera House in Bristol, Ind., Apr. 10-19 <www.elkhartcivictheat5re.org>.

Christophe M. Walsh's "Miss Holmes" will be produced at the Mud Creek Barn Theater in Indianapolis, Ind., Apr. 17-25 <www.mudcreekplayers.org>.

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