

Other Developments

There will be a linked series of talks and activities relating to the exhibition and Collection; these will be publicised at the City Museum as well as on the Collection website.

We are creating a Conan Doyle Collection Fiction Prize, which will be awarded to the winner of a new competition for creative writers. This is being developed in partnership with the University of Portsmouth Creative Writing department.

Work also moves forward on establishing a Charitable Trust to oversee and manage the Collection on behalf of Portsmouth City Council. We have identified a core of trustees, which includes the First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy and the Chair of OFSTED. Establishing the Trust is vital if we are to effectively raise funds to support the development of the Collection, and in particular to encourage sponsorship and donation (both from the UK and abroad).

The Collection website is in the process of being revised. It will shortly be online again, and will have the facility of regularly updating you all on the Collection, as well as featuring exciting items that have been catalogued. As before, the address for this is: www.conandoylecollection.co.uk

As always, feel free to e-mail us about any aspect of the Collection (or related issues):
lancelyngreencollection@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

We very much hope to see as many people as possible enjoying our new exhibition over the course of this summer and beyond, and participating in the development of this unique Collection: As our patron, Stephen Fry, says,

'The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection is one of the most extraordinary collections of its kind in the world. Please support its development in whichever way you can.'

Just a few of the thousands of books that are part of the Collection.



Welcome to the fourth newsletter for 'The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, Richard Lancelyn Green Bequest.' This edition is intended to offer an insight into how work on the Collection has progressed over the last twelve months, important developments in the process, as well as exciting news about the summer exhibition of the collection that will open shortly.

Progress Report

A great deal of progress has been made on the Collection since the last newsletter. This has included changes to the staff team responsible for its development, in addition to a range of landmarks and successes.

More Finds!

Several months ago Richard's family came across yet more material from his Collection, at the family home on the Wirral. Subsequently two members of staff from the Museums and Records Service travelled up to collect what turned out to be a large consignment of books and items, and this has now been reunited with the rest of the Collection. Unless someone finds any more, that should be it!

Staffing

In the autumn of 2006, Claire Looney, the Arts and Cultural Development Officer for Portsmouth City Council, became Project Manager for the Conan Doyle Collection. Her remit is to co-ordinate all aspects of work on the Collection, from press, publicity, and marketing, to exhibition development and financial support.

In April 2007, Claire was joined on the team by Sarah Speller, as Project Co-ordinator. Sarah had

previously been overseeing the cataloguing, but her wider remit will see her support Claire in ensuring that the Collection development plan is properly implemented, in addition to her work on the cataloguing process.

Within this new team structure, Dr Neil McCaw, from the University of Winchester, remains as overarching academic advisor, helping develop the exhibition and display of the Collection, as well as helping raising its scholarly and media profiles.

Katy Ball, from the Museums and Records Service, will become curator for the forthcoming exhibition of the Collection at the City Museum; she will be available to answer questions and highlight important aspects of the displays.

This core group is ably supported by a range of professionals across the Libraries, Museums and Records, and Arts services of Portsmouth City Council, as well as others with specific responsibility for the website, photography, and fundraising. There are now a huge number of people who are involved in supporting the Collection in different ways, and all these contributions are vitally important.

Landmarks

Last summer's introductory exhibition of items from the Collection, which was intended to run from 10th June 2006 to 24th September 2006, proved to be enormously popular. So much so that its run was extended until the end of October 2006, and it then spent several weeks at Portsmouth Central Library so that even more people could visit it. The exhibition drew in thousands of visitors, was well covered in the press (written, radio and television), and even won an award as one of the most popular cultural events of 2006 in the South of England.

As part of its success, the Collection was featured extensively in an edition of the BBC television programme 'Flog It!' It is hoped that the broad-based popularity of this show, both in the UK and abroad, will serve to widen the popular awareness of the Collection yet further.

The Summer Exhibition

Following on from last summer's 'The Case of the Portsmouth Doctor: The Story of Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes, and their Greatest Collector,' a second, permanent, exhibition, will open at Portsmouth City Museum from **22nd June, 2007**. As before, the exhibition will be open 10am-5pm, 7 days a week, and there will be free access to all.

The chief difference between this exhibition and last year's is its scale and ambition. Whereas last year the intention was, for the first time, to open up a limited selection of Richard Lancelyn Green's collection to the general public, Conan Doyle/Sherlock Holmes experts and aficionados, and those with an interest in the social and cultural history of Portsmouth, this time around the scope is far greater.

Cataloguing

The project team and volunteers make steady progress in cataloguing the Collection. We always knew that this was an enormously challenging task, but as we've worked more closely with the Collection, and uncovered new material as we've gone along, the scale of the project has increased greatly. As such, the original aspiration to have a completed catalogue by the end of 2007 is unrealistic. Instead we have decided we will make a limited version of the catalogue available, which will focus on the Conan Doyle papers, the Sherlock Holmes dramatisations, and material relating to Victorian and Edwardian culture. This will be 'rolled out' as more material comes on-line. Ultimately, we intend to have a full, digitized version of the catalogue available to all, but obviously the speed at which this can happen is dependant on securing additional funding to help develop the Collection.

A new gallery has been specially refurbished to house the exhibition



The Collection's Patron, Stephen Fry, recording the narration for the new exhibition



'A Study in Sherlock: Uncovering the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection'

The new display will include many more objects and artefacts, many of which have so far been unseen by the public.

The material that has been chosen for display will combine with a more sophisticated audio-visual presentation. This will include:

- An exhibition narration by the Collection's patron, Stephen Fry
- Interactive readings of selected works of Arthur Conan Doyle
- Virtual display panels containing a range of material related to the Collection, Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle, and Richard Lancelyn Green
- A new Sherlock Holmes mystery, 'The Case of the Portsmouth Doctor,' written and performed specifically for the exhibition. The story sees Holmes, Dr Watson, and Irene Adler, on the trail of the mysteriously disappeared 'Portsmouth Doctor' of the title, who has gone missing from his boarding house in Southsea. The story sees the three of them visit Southsea, tracing clues about the extraordinary life of this illusive doctor, examining his lodgings and the New Theatre Royal in Portsmouth, among other locations, in an attempt to establish his whereabouts
- A range of interactive activities for younger visitors, including clue trails and the chance for them to create their own detective stories

This will all be situated in a newly-refurbished museum gallery, specifically designed for the purpose. This refurbishment has been a major task, and we owe a huge debt of gratitude to the technical and support staff who have been responsible for this – their work has been above and beyond the call of duty!

Staff across the Portsmouth City Council Culture Group, including the exhibition team from Portsmouth Museums and Records, Library, Arts

and Cultural Development workers, and members of the Tourism and Visitor Services team, have worked diligently over recent months to ensure that the 'A Study in Sherlock' exhibition does justice to the treasures of Richard's Collection. There is much for visitors of all ages to see and do – so much so that it is likely they will wish to make a return visit !

The exhibition aims:

- To display new material from the Collection to the people of Portsmouth, and to our many visitors from other parts of the country and from overseas
- To place the Collection within the context of the lives of Richard Lancelyn Green and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and to illustrate its importance in relation to the history of the cultural icon that is Sherlock Holmes
- To help visitors understand the important of the city of Portsmouth in relation to the development of Sherlock Holmes and the life of Arthur Conan Doyle more generally

The exhibition display is based around a series of elements, including:

- Arthur Conan Doyle's biography in the context of Victorian and Edwardian England
- Conan Doyle's relationship with Portsmouth
- The emergence and development of Sherlock Holmes
- Adaptations of Sherlock Holmes
- The Sherlock Holmes 'Industry'

The exhibition will establish Portsmouth as the home of this wonderful collection, and as a key centre for Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes studies in the UK and internationally.