



# THE BEACON SOCIETY

*Supporting and recognizing exemplary educational experiences  
that introduce young people to the Sherlock Holmes stories*



*A Scion Society of the  
Baker Street Irregulars*

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2011

January 14, 2012: Roosevelt Hotel, New York City. 28 members were in attendance.

Head Light Susan Diamond called the meeting to order and asked all present to sign in. She first acknowledged her predecessor Joseph Coppola for his outstanding and tireless efforts on behalf of the Beacon Society. Laurie Fraser Manifold was also thanked for her beautiful artwork which was presented to Joe in recognition of his service.

The minutes of the 2011 annual meeting were unanimously approved without correction. The treasurer's report was given by Bursar Carol Cavaluzzi. She reported a balance of \$5,440.90 as of 12/30/2011. The proposed budget for 2012 was discussed and unanimously approved. Head Light Susan pointed out that for the first time the Society was able to make a full match with Al Gregory's \$1,000 contribution to the Jan Stauber Grant.

Marilynne McKay, Chair of the Communications Task Group and Beacon Webmaster, reported on the continued growth of the Society's website. She stated that our credit card/PayPal link had gone "live" in November 2011 and commented that Judith Freeman's Beacon Facebook page was giving the Society additional social media exposure. Marilynne announced that a press release had gone out on January 1, 2011 about the deadline for the third Jan Stauber Grant to ALA, NCTE, NEA, GrantSelect.com, the Beacon Society Yahoo group, and all active Sherlockian scion websites that could be identified. The 2012 notification was sent on January 1, 2012. New articles on the website in 2011 included a Foreword and Introduction to Bill Dorn's "Study Guide to Sherlock Holmes." The Clarkson Prize winner from the 2011 Watson's Tin Box competition was also placed on the website. With respect to the technical side of the website, Marilynne noted that the Beacon Society has so far used about 35% of its capacity. The domain name with GoDaddy.com is up for renewal this July. The Society does keep track of website visitation through Statcounter, with peaks occurring in January, February, and October. Marilynne

suggested that the Beacon Society announce the Beacon Award winner in the Birthday packet flyer, and that the Society consider establishing a Liaison Task Group to raise awareness of the Beacons' mission among scion societies.

Francine Kitts, Chair of the Programming Task Group, publically thanked the members of her committee. She stated that parental permission had been obtained for a one-year web publication of the 2010 and 2011 winning essays from the Tin Box Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest. Francine reported that Starrett's "221B" and Schweickert's "A Long Evening with Holmes" were added to the website, along with supporting educational materials.

The Fund Raising Committee report was given by Chair Pj Doyle with input by Judith Freeman. Pj asked that the membership take stock and assess organizational priorities. She emphasized four questions: Why? (for what purpose is money needed); Who? (what groups should be approached and who should be involved in the asking); What? (what is the message); How? (what vehicles are at our command). She also noted the importance of a personal thank you and a continuing relationship with donors.

Awards Task Group Chair Elaine Coppola announced that 7 applications were received for the 2011 Jan Stauber Grant (JSG). A total of \$914.67 was awarded to four winners. Elaine reminded the Society that the 2012 deadline is March 1. She also reported that a number of revisions in the JSG Policies and Procedures had been effected through the work of two subcommittees chaired by Sue Vizoskie. Next Elaine presented the 2012 Beacon Society Award to William S. Dorn in recognition of his teaching undergraduate courses on Sherlock Holmes, for his incorporating Sherlockian precepts in logic problems for his mathematics students for over twenty-five years, and for creating the "Study Guide to Sherlock Holmes." Mr. Dorn graciously accepted the award.

Head Light Susan Diamond thanked all the Committee Chairs for their reports and for all that their committees had accomplished. Susan recognized the fine work of her predecessor Joseph Coppola. She next turned to the question of future initiatives. Susan asked the Society to look to expand its fundraising efforts, including not only matching Al Gregory's contribution to the JAS Grant, but growing the grant pool. Expansion was again called for with respect to the educational content of the website. The Society was also asked to promote the grant program in order to get more applicants. The Head Light felt that consideration should be given to raising the amount of the grant to \$300 in 2013. Lastly, Head Light Susan Diamond called for more membership involvement.

The Head Light then asked if there was any new business. A discussion of how to reach young adults ensued. It was suggested that the Society work toward creating a young Sherlockian group. A virtual society with an adult mentor was also proposed. A question from the floor arose as to whether the New York Times was notified of the Beacon Society meeting. It was suggested that a press release be tried in the future. Bursar Carol Cavalluzzi distributed copies of tax-free certificates for those needing to make

purchases for the Society. A program for home-schooled students was discussed. Fund Raising Committee Chair Pj Doyle stated that she would like to be made aware of special meetings and conferences. The online Sherlockian Calendar was suggested as a resource. Susan Diamond updated the Society's membership about the Kindle publication "Sherlock Holmes: Tales from The Stranger's Room," noting that the authors have most generously donated all royalties to the Beacon Society. Upcoming meetings in Los Angeles and Chattanooga were announced.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Hunt aka Percy Phelps

Secretary