



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 2014

January 10, 2015: Roosevelt Hotel, Park Suite, New York City

The 2015 meeting of the Beacon Society began with Head Light Susan Diamond offering congratulations to a number of Beacons who were having noteworthy BSI Weekends. Three members of the Beacon Society received investitures in the Baker Street Irregulars – Marino Alvarez “Hilton Soames,” Chrys Kegley “Rachel Howells,” and Bill Mason “White Mason.” Timothy Greer, winner of the 2014 Beacon Award, was recognized with the 2014 Morley-Montgomery Award for the best article in the Baker Street Journal during the year.

Business began with the 2014 Meeting Minutes being approved without correction by voice vote.

The 2015 Budget was presented and approved by voice vote. The budget includes items for outsourcing of website and the Stauber Grants total was increased to \$8,000 by the board.

Treasurer’s Report

Bursar Carol Cavalluzzi presented the Treasurer’s Report. The General Fund balance stands at \$5582.79. The Jan Stauber Grant Fund balance is \$10,710.39. Five items from the 2014 grants cycle are still awaiting disbursement and these disbursements are debited against the reported Stauber Grant balance. 221b Con chose the Beacon Society as their charity for 2014, and we received a donation of \$5900. We have been selected as the 221b Con charity again in 2015.

Marilynne McKay discussed the new pins that were available at 221b Con and required last minute changes because the fastener was not placed properly. She contacted the manufacturer and obtained a \$100 refund on the manufacturing cost. There are still approximately 100 pins available for \$10 per pin. A change for the booklets for 221b Con was proposed: instead of putting the booklets in the attendee bags to put in a coupon that attendees can redeem for the booklet if they want. We would print fewer

booklets (last year's cost was \$500 for 500 booklets). If we run out at the conference, we could print extras and post them later.

Communications Report

Marilynne McKay presented a succinct Communications report. She and Peggy Purdue have notified Scions about the opening of the Stauber Grant submission period. They also notified the Memphis local papers of Tim Greer's Beacon Award for 2014.

The upkeep of the BeaconSociety.com website will be outsourced going forward. There is a line item in the budget to pay for third-party maintenance and hosting of the site, including migration off of Lunarpages to a new server location managed by the third-party administrator.

Lastly, nominations are being sought for a new chair of the Communications Committee. Marilynne's tenure is ending and interested parties should contact Marilynne about duties as chair. Nominations may be made to the Yahoo group.

Grants Committee

Allan Devitt presented the Grants Committee report. The committee had a busy year, reviewing 25 Stauber Grant applications, a significant increase over previous years. He attributed this increase in applications to a streamlined application process, a larger total award budget of \$8000, and a larger per grant amount of \$500. He thanked the committee members – Carol Cavalluzzi, Terry Hunt, Chrys Kegley, Richard Kitts, Bill Mason, Betsy Rosenblatt, and Ben Vizoskie - for their work in reviewing the applications to determine Grant recipients. The committee awarded 18 grants this year for a total of just under \$7000. Reports from Grant recipients have been coming in, and Allan termed the results "gratifying."

Due to the increase in grants, the review process was examined to simplify it as well. Bill Mason chaired a subcommittee of Chrys Kegley, Richard Kitts, and Allan Devitt ex officio. The new review process will be assessed during this year's review process.

The grant application window is open and applications must be received by 1 May 2015. Allan asks that all members contact schools, libraries, and other appropriate venues to publicize the grant program.

Awards Committee

Marino Alvarez, chair of the Awards Committee, was distressed to announce that there were no nominations for the 2015 Beacon Award and thus the award is not being given this year.

He identified a possible cause as the short nomination window of 1 Oct- 1Nov. By unanimous decision of the committee and the board, the nomination period is now an open rolling submission with a closing date of 15 Nov for consideration for the award during the coming year. He thanked the committee of

Susan Diamond, Judith Freeman, Francine Kitts, Peggy Purdue, and Sue Vizoskie for their work in implementing this change.

Marino reminded the Society that Scions and previous Stauber Grant awardees are eligible for nomination. Marilynne McKay also suggested going through the previous minutes to identify find nominees for the Beacon Award for worthwhile contributions in the past.

Head Light Report

Head Light Susan Diamond presented regards from several Beacons who were unable to attend. Fundraising chair P. J. Doyle wanted the record breaking fundraising year thanks to 221b con and all our donors to be recognized. The donors list will be via the Yahoo group and web site. Donors who need a confirmation letter for tax purposes should contact Susan Diamond.

Peggy Perdue send regards as well and has new curriculum items to be posted to the website.

Bill Mason and Al Gregory continued their significant support of the Stauber Grants with this year marking the 4th year in a row that the Beacon Society has received the full \$1000 match from Al Gregory. The family of the late Joe Moran was acknowledged for designating the Beacon Society as a recipient for donations in his memory which resulted in a number of donations this year.

Bill Mason has indicated willingness to take up the mantle of Head Light. Susan highlighted his qualities as Sherlockian scholar, administrator, and commitment to the Beacon society mission. Susan voice nominated Bill to succeed as Head Light and received a number of seconds. Formal nomination and voting will occur through the Yahoo list. Other nominations for the office are welcomed.

Comments and Questions

Tim Greer discussed the opportunities to continue to run his Sherlock Holmes class and the possibility of publicizing the Stauber Grants program and Beacon Award through academic journals and professional meetings during the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Zordan, Percy Phelps