



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 2006

January 12, 2007, the Algonquin hotel, New York City. 22 members were in attendance.

Head Light Scott Monty announced the following:

1. The society has been licensed as a not-for-profit entity in Massachusetts and hopes to receive similar federal recognition soon.
2. The society web site is fully functional, and new materials are being added on a regular basis.
3. Details still need to be worked out concerning the Jan Stauber fund established by Al Gregory in memory of Jan, our first Beacon award winner. To date, \$50 has been donated to the fund. Al will match all donations and the fund will be used to provide grants to deserving teachers and schools.

Richard Olken, Bursar, reported that the Society has a balance in the treasury of \$3,602.93, an increase of \$486.10 from the prior year. Donations and sales of pins and bumper stickers were the sources of revenue. The only expenses for the year were website costs of slightly over \$100 and PayPal service fees. [Richard subsequently reported that the Society received an additional \$440 during the weekend from pin and sticker sales and a generous donation of \$250 from the Gaslight Gala (formerly the Baskerville Bash)].

Program chair Myrtle Robinson was unable to be in attendance so Scott read her report. Key points were:

1. Peter Burkhardt's study outline for 7th grade students has been linked to the Beacon website.
2. Several items are scheduled for placement on the website within the next year. These include a mystery writing contest, a college syllabus for Humanities 101, guidelines for working with 5th graders, and guidelines for working with libraries.
3. Additional projects are information on summer camp activities and a possible link to www.greathall.com which has pictures of literary characters including Sherlock Holmes.

4. Recommendations for the future are that the website be expanded to include a newsletter site for “small” contributions by individuals such as visits to schools and one-time events, inclusion of Myrtle’s e-mail on the website so she can receive programming suggestions directly, a sign-in list at the annual meeting with e-mail addresses (implemented this year), and a round-table discussion of the Executive Committee/Board to address challenges the society faces.

Andy Solberg, chair of the Awards Committee, announced that for the first time in the Society’s history there was a tie for the Beacon Award and the decision was to present awards to both winners. Peter Burkhardt was honored for his curriculum contributions mentioned above. Judith Howell received her award for her use of HOUN in her 12th grade honors classes. Approximately 75 students a year are introduced to HOUN through her imaginative assignments.

After the awards, the floor was open for general discussion. Two key issues surfaced. One was the feeling from a number of members that the Society should begin using the funds that have been raised to assist worthy teachers and organizations in promoting the use of the Canon in outreach activities. The Head Light pointed out that foundations typically disperse 5% of their funds each year which would be a relatively small amount. The counterpoint was that if people see funds being disbursed, they will be motivated to donate more. Certainly establishing the Stauber Fund on a firm footing would be one way to move toward this goal. The other repeated comment was that communications about the Society and its achievements need to be increased. Members are encouraged to share information about the Society with their local groups and to stimulate further involvement. Time limitations prohibited more in-depth discussion of either issue, but members are encouraged to share their views with the entire group through on-line communications.

Respectfully submitted

Susan Z Diamond, a.k.a. Percy Phelps

Secretary