



# 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 THE ANNUAL MEETING 2008**

January 11, 2008, the Algonquin Hotel, New York City. Head Light Scott Monty chaired the meeting.

Richard Olken, Bursar, reported that the Society has a balance in the treasury of \$4,226.48, an increase of \$623.55 from the prior year. Donations and sales of bumper stickers were the primary sources of revenue. The only expenses for the year were website costs of slightly over \$125 and PayPal service fees.

Allan Devitt suggested that an appeal be made to scion societies for donations. Myrtle Robinson said it was critical that there be a plan for using the money. There was strong group agreement on both points. Special thanks go to The Curious Collectors of Baker Street, represented by Chrys Kegley, who donated \$300 to the society during the meeting.

Myrtle Robinson, Chair of the Program Task Group, reported the following items:

1. Information on conducting a Mystery Writing Contest has been placed on the website. This was a contribution by Nadine Naujoks, Events Coordinator of the Sherlock Holmes Festival in Tryon, NC.
2. A Humanities 101 College Syllabus by Dr. Tracy J. Revels, using Klinger's New Annotated Sherlock Holmes as the text has been placed on the website.
3. Guidelines for working with libraries has been promised by Andy Solberg.
4. Judith Howell, the 2007 Beacon Award co-winner, is working on a website presentation, drawing on her years of experience in working with 12th graders, using Sherlockian sources.
5. Regina Stinson has submitted a one-time activity account on working with 5-9 years olds which has been submitted for the website but has not yet appeared.
6. Karen Murdock contributed a body of work dealing with certain figures of speech. Myrtle is looking for assistance in developing teaching materials from this information.

Myrtle recommended that the website include an area for "small" contributions such as individual visits to schools which would let site visitors understand that there are many valuable efforts underway and that each of these contributions is a "beacon" to inspire others. She also recommended that the Board have more frequent discussions to improve communications and strengthen the society's role.

Allan Devitt introduced Janice Weiner, head of the Chicago scion The Scotland Yarders. Janice is a junior high school librarian who has been integrating the Canon into the classroom for several years. She described various programs that have been in place at her school. She was asked what support would be of value. While her school is fairly generous in funds, money for DVDs would be helpful as the current visual materials are VCR tapes.

Andy Solberg announced that Watson's Tin Box was the recipient of the 2008 Beacon Award for the scion's work in sponsoring an annual student essay writing contest.

Scott Monty stated that he was stepping down as Head Light and that the Board had unanimously ratified Joe Coppola as his replacement. Scott will now take over Burt Wolder's role as head of the Communications task group. Andy Solberg presented a wooden lighthouse plaque (which actually lights) made by Joe Coppola to Scott in recognition of his efforts over the past five years.

Joe spoke briefly to the group about his two primary goals for the society: 1) increasing the society's visibility in the scion world, thus stimulating more scion outreach activities as well as scion donations, and 2) getting new people (i.e., not just scion members and Sherlockians) involved in outreach activities and providing society funds through grants to encourage such activities.

Respectfully submitted

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