



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 2011

January 8, 2011: Roosevelt Hotel, New York City. Eighteen members were in attendance.

Percy Phelps (a.k.a. Susan Diamond) presented the 2010 meeting minutes which were approved by the group. She also reported that, as the only remaining original Board member, she has petitioned the Middlesex Massachusetts Superior Court to terminate the Society's Massachusetts incorporation as no officers now live in Massachusetts (a requirement for incorporation in that state). She has sent a follow-up letter to the Court as no reply was sent to her original petition and will continue to pursue the matter. She also stated that she wished to resign as secretary during the year and would be glad to work with her successor to ensure a smooth transition.

Bursar Carol Cavalluzzi reported a balance of \$4,248.74, a decrease of \$131.09 from the previous year. Major expenditures were grants, the Beacon Award, website fees, annual report filings with Massachusetts, and flyers for the birthday weekend. Donations and pin sales were the major sources of revenues. The bank account has been successfully transferred from Massachusetts to a New York branch of the same bank.

Head Light Joe Coppola presented a proposed budget of \$2,421. \$1,421 would go for grants and the Beacon Award, \$500 for fees associated with terminating the Massachusetts incorporation, and the remainder for website and other operating costs. The members approved the budget.

Communications Chair Marilynne McKay reported on website activity, press releases that have been prepared, and the inclusion of a Beacon Society flyer in all of the weekend dinner packets.

BeaconSociety.com now consists of 50 web pages (up from 36 in 2009) and 18 PDF files (up from 13), all of which provide information about the Beacons and Sherlock Holmes teaching resources to students, teachers, librarians, Sherlockians, and visitors. The next step will be adding a PayPal link to the website so credit card donations can be made electronically, as well as by check.

Program Chair Francine Kitts reported on the additions to the website including both a Resume for Sherlock Holmes and a play based on "The Red-Headed League." Both items were prepared by Marino C. Alvarez, a professor of education at Tennessee State University. The committee is also considering the feasibility of using an interactive PowerPoint CD that Professor Alvarez has developed as a teaching aid. Projects for this year include adding two quintessential Sherlockian poems to the site: "221B" by Vincent Starrett and "A Long Evening with Holmes" by Bill Schweickert, accompanied by a word searches created by Francine Kitts, which can be used as an exercise for students. Susan Diamond will provide an introduction to "221B," putting the poem in the appropriate historical context and adding information on sonnet structure as a teaching aid. The committee is also exploring adding the winning essays from the annual competition sponsored by Watson's Tin Box to the website.

Fund Raising Chair Pj Doyle reported that the society is now incorporated in Minnesota and has 501(c)(3) status with the IRS. She stressed that our next step was to establish appropriate goals and strategies for fund raising. Various possibilities were discussed by the group, with the main focus on soliciting scion society involvement and donations.

Andrew Solberg, chair of the Awards Task Group, announced that group received 33 proposals for Jan Stauber Grants, up from 6 the year before. Clearly the Communications Task Group's press releases are working. The Board had authorized grants for a maximum of \$750, and four grants were awarded, totaling \$717. The Committee received a report from Karen Paulson, last year's Stauber Grant recipient with lesson plans and student essays about Jan Stauber. Marilynne McKay designed bookplates that will be sent to teachers for the books purchased with grant funds. Andy announced that he is stepping down as Awards Chair, but will remain on the Committee. Elaine Coppola, who managed the Sub-Committee that reviewed and revised the Stauber Grant Program procedures and processes during the past year, will be the new Chair.

Andy then presented the 2011 Beacon Award to Peggy Perdue of the Toronto Metropolitan Library System in recognition of the programs for young people that she initiated and continues at the Toronto Public Library. Peggy subsequently joined the Awards Task Group and will spearhead the effort to expand the Stauber Grant program into Canada.

The new Awards Chair Elaine Coppola spoke briefly outlining her plans for continuing and expanding the Stauber Grant program.

Head Light Coppola expressed his gratitude to all of the officers and chairs for the work that they had done during the past year. He stated that he had achieved the goals he set when accepting the position three years ago: establishing an active grant program and an effective communications system to promote the society, as well as achieving 501(c)(3) status and launching fund raising activities. His

concerns for the future are expanding the membership to avoid “burn out” by the small group that is doing most of the work and considering trademark or copyright protection for the Society’s logo and other intellectual property. The Head Light concluded by announcing that he plans to step down during the year as soon as a successor can be identified and elected by the Society. He would work with the successor to ensure a smooth transition.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Z. Diamond, a.k.a. Percy Phelps (Secretary)