

Beacon Society 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2017 annual meeting of the Beacon Society began with a welcome from Head Light Bill Mason and a high-level review of the exciting year the Beacon Society had in 2016.

Congratulations were offered to Christopher Zordan on his investiture as “*Bunsen Burner*” and to Bill Mason for winning the Morley-Montgomery Award.

Business began with the 2016 Meeting Minutes, action on which were deferred due to Percy Phelps having left them at home. The minutes will be posted to the Beacon Society web site for review and comment. Nominations for Head Light and Percy Phelps are open as both Bill and Chris have reached the end of their terms in office.

Treasurer’s Report

The Treasurer’s Report was presented by Bursar Richard Kitts. The Treasury balance stands at \$23,585.60 as of Dec 31, 2016. There were \$7,725.00 of income from donations and Beacon Society Pin sales. The donors are listed in the Treasurer’s handout and were thanked for their continued support. Expenses in 2016 were \$4,444.94, broken down as \$555.90 for the 2015 and 2016 Beacon Awards, 2,902.69 for Jan Stauber Grants including a 2015 grant paid in 2016, and \$986.35 in administrative costs. There are three outstanding 2016 Stauber grants to be paid for a total of \$1,135, details of which will be addressed in the Grants Committee report. 221B Con has continued to support the Beacon Society as their charity and in 2016 we received a donation of \$3500 from them. Crystal Noll gave a brief presentation about 221B Con that happens in April in Atlanta, Georgia. They continue to support the mission of The Beacon Society because of a shared interest in promoting Sherlock Holmes. Lastly, details of the 2017 budget proposal were given and are pending Board action.

Grants Committee

Susan Diamond (Chair), Carol Cavalluzzi, Denny Dobry, Tim Greer, Terry Hunt, Chrys Kegley, Richard Kitts, Betsy Rosenblatt, Ben Vizoskie

Susan Diamond started the report, thanking the committee for their work during the course of the year. Reports from all the 2015 Grant recipients have been received by the committee. For 2016 there were 12 applications to the committee for consideration, of which 10 were approved for a total amount of approximately \$4,000. One grant was subsequently refused by the awardee due to materials no longer being available for purchase, however the awardee is reworking the application for future consideration. Reports from three of the 2016 Grant awardees have been received, others will be received in 2017 due to program actives for those grants continuing into 2017. The Grants Committee chair will be following up with those awardees.

A new feature of the review process in 2016 was to allow the submitter a one-time revision opportunity to address comments about their submission. Thanks to Denny Dobry for the suggestion and spearheading the effort to pilot this review change.

A suggestion for members to reach out to children’s theaters and community centers in their area to advertise the Grants program. Also suggested was to look at teacher’s union newsletters and other local level organizations.

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The grant application window is open and applications must be received by 1 May 2017 and the maximum award is again \$500. All members are asked to contact schools, libraries, and other appropriate venues to publicize the grant program. The forms and other information related to the Stauber Grant program are available on the website.

Awards Committee

Marino Alvarez (Chair), Shannon Carlisle, Francine Kitts, Peggy Purdue, Sue Vizoskie

This year's Beacon Award winner is Helen Cauley, a Ph.D. candidate in English at Georgia State University in Atlanta. Her dissertation centers on the influence of the Scottish Enlightenment in the Sherlock Holmes stories. She is a journalist and an active member of the Confederates of Wisteria Lodge since 1990. Her teaching has introduced the Canon to young people, she conducts monthly Sherlock Study Group sessions at a community library and as part of her dissertation has developed a research-based persuasive composition course around the Canon entitled "Curious Scholars." This course engages the students to develop skills of observation and deductive reasoning.

This year the Awards Committee recognized two Honorable Mentions with certificates due to their outstanding contributions and nominations.

Marino reminded the Society that Scions and previous Stauber Grant awardees are eligible for nomination. Nominations in 2016 will be retained for consideration in 2017 and asks all members to be thinking of possible nominees for the 2017 Beacon Award.

Communications Report

Steve Mason (Chair), Marilynne McKay, Crystal Noll, Peggy Purdue, Chris Zordan

Steve Mason started The Communications committee report detailing the three major mailings during the year; the first in January contacting all Scions and related groups, national and state library associations, and national and state education associations to get the word out about the Society, the Jan Stauber Grant program and other resources we have available. The second mailing in the summer to announce the 2016 Jan Stauber Grant awardees, and the third soliciting nominees for the Beacon Award. This year the January mailing to advertise the Society will also include children's' museums.

The website had an adventurous summer, having been hacked to present Japanese advertisements. Attempts at correcting the hack were unsuccessful and a new site was built by Rusty Mason and has moved to a new host, Weebly, which provides both better security and traffic analysis tools. Steve and Rusty Mason are paying the \$90 annual fee to Weebly as part of their donation to the Society.

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Junior Sherlockian Society Committee

Shannon Carlisle (Chair), Michael Brady, Conor Kimbro Matt Carlisle, and Marino Alvarez

The newest committee of the Beacon Society came into being in August, 2016. This is the realization of an idea from Andy Solberg and was developed by Shannon Carlisle in the mold of the National Parks Service Junior Ranger program. The two-fold goal was to introduce Holmes, and the study of him and his methods in an age-appropriate way and to recognize participants for doing so. Shannon Carlisle presented a handout with the program tasks and goals for the participants. The committee has obtained the website domain name Juniorsherlockian.com, and the .org and .net domains as well. The website will be going live in the second quarter of 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Christopher Zordan, *Percy Phelps*