

THE BEACON SOCIETY

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

9:00 PM, Thursday, December 29, 2022

The Meeting was called to order at 9:07 EST by Derrick Belanger, as Head-Light Carla Coupe was indisposed.

2021 General Meeting Minutes:

The Secretary (Percy Phelps), Deborah Clark, noted that the minutes from the 2021 General Meeting had been posted to the website and were available to the public. These minutes were accepted as posted.

FULL COMMITTEE REPORTS ARE APPENDED TO THESE MINUTES

2022 Treasurers Report:

Dick Kitts, Bursar, reported that it had been an exciting year. The year started with a high of \$55,906.51. There were \$7,577.92 in donations. Many thanks go to the thirty people who gave multiple times. There were eleven Jan Stauber Grants given to libraries, theatres and schools this year totaling \$7,994.96. There were eight Joel R. Senter prizes given totaling \$1800, plus \$287 for plaques. Two Beacon Awards were given to Steve Mason in 2021 and Anna Behrens in 2022 totaling \$565. That includes \$221 plus a one-year subscription to *The Baker Street Journal* and *The Serpentine Muse* for each. Web maintenance was brought up to date from 2020-2023 at a cost of \$416. Beacon brochures, BSI packet info and Joel R. Senter fliers cost \$519. Junior Sherlockian Society stickers, web hosting and domain costs totaled \$515. Library Display mailing costs totaled \$161. Total expenses for 2022 were \$12,394.33, leaving a balance of \$51,275.10. The Treasurer's Report was approved unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Grants Committee – Cindy Brown, Chair, reported that the Committee approved all of the eleven Jan Stauber Grant applications received, and awarded \$7500 to libraries, Read with Me programs, Middle School, High School and Deaf/Blind programs as well as a Christmas House program. Reports of the grant summaries are on the web. The program has expanded a lot and the creativity has expanded immensely. The deadline of May 1st has been lifted. The project to get books into Juvenile Detention Centers is ongoing. Finding the right person to contact has been difficult. If anyone has contacts, please let Cindy know. Adult Centers would be happy to have Sherlock Holmes books but that is not how the grant is written. The recipients must be kids. Cindy expressed her thanks to the Committee for all their work.

Awards Committee – Francine Kitts stood in for Chair Dan Andriacco and reported that the R. Joel Senter, Sr. Memorial Essay Contest for 4th-12th grade students has been publicized and 9 entries have been accepted to date. There were 12 last year. Cash prizes for the first, second, and third place high school winners have been increased. The deadline for applications to the essay contest is March 1st. Steve Mason has been promoting this on the website. Brochures and fliers have also gone out to teachers.

Of the two strong candidates for the **Susan Z Diamond Beacon Award** the Committee has chosen Anna Behrens as the 2022 recipient. Anna will receive a Certificate, a check for \$221 and a year's subscription to *The Baker Street Journal* and *The Serpentine Muse*. Francine highlighted Anna's accomplishments. She is passionate about getting middle school and high school students involved. She organized a WEEK of Sherlockian activities in Keene, NH with the local library. She had students reading stories, using various media, dressing up and acting out the *Red Headed League*. She used a variety of learning modes to introduce her student to Sherlock Holmes. Derrick thanked the Committee again for all their work.

Communications Committee – Steve Mason, Chair, reported that their two objectives this year were getting the word out about the Society's activities via the Beacon Society Website, especially announcements about deadlines and dates for the Jan Stauber Grants and the R. Joel Senter, Sr. Memorial Essay Contest, and about nominations for the Susan Z. Diamond Award. Multiple emails throughout the year provide information about these programs to each member of the Beacon Society, as well as to scions and societies, educational associations, children's museums, and library associations across the U.S. They reach over 800 people. They are posted on the Facebook page and website as well. The website gets about 100 hits a month and is regularly updated with puzzles and other information. This year the website is featuring a comprehensive look at the Sherlock Holmes stories. Steve has gotten permission from many Sherlockians to include their supplementary information for each story and has converted it all to pdf files.

The winners of the R. Joel Senter, Sr. Memorial Essay Contest have their essays compiled into a booklet, which is sent to the participants and is also available on our website. Fifty people took the Fortescue Scholarship's basic Sherlockian examination last year. *Sherlock's Spotlight* continues to provide interesting content for elementary aged Sherlockians four times a year thanks to the efforts of many people, including Shannon Carlisle, Beth Gallego, and Rich Krisciunas. Next year, Margie Deck will be writing some articles on Arthur Conan Doyle. The *Spotlight* is always looking for articles so if you would like to submit one, contact Steve.

Fundraising Committee – Crystal Noll, outgoing Chairperson, thanked all who donated this year; it was really appreciated. She reported that \$7,697.92 was raised in 2022, despite still coming out of COVID. On a special note, Crystal wanted to thank any and everyone who spread the word about the Beacon Society and promoted grants, prizes or anything to bring attention to the group and "Keep Green the Memory of the Master." 221B Con has again voted the Beacon Society to be their official 2023 charity. Since 2018 when Denny Dobry asked her to take over the chairmanship of the Fundraising Committee, \$62,400 has been raised, new friends made, new initiatives started and others expanded. Last year, Crystal told Carla she would be stepping down, but she will be leaving the Committee in good hands. David McAllister has long been a supporter of the Beacon Society and served on the Fundraising Committee before Crystal took over and graciously agreed to stay on board when she took the helm. Crystal thanked the committee for all their work and support over the years and welcomed David McAllister as the in-coming Chairperson. David noted that it would be tough to fill Crystal's shoes, as he's still learning what needs to be done and making plans to do it. He thanked 221B Con again for their support this year. Derrick thanked Crystal and welcomed David. Denny Dobry also thanked Crystal for her service while he was Head-Light. Dick Kitts also thanked Crystal and added that she is too modest. She and her committee raised \$30,000 in three years.

Programming Committee – Chairperson Derrick Belanger bragged on Anna Behrens for her Sherlock Holmes Week in Keene, NH. The Library Display was prominent in the main activity room, so it got a lot of exposure. The 11th and 12th grade Joel R. Senter essay contest winners had their essays published in the Arthur Conan Doyle journal, *Steel True/Blade Straight*. The committee is working on a potential new fiction Beacon award for pastiche. Currently they are working on rules which they hope to have done by March or April. Once draft rules are done, they will be sent out for feedback. The ages for the contest will be the same as the Joel R. Senter Essay Contest. Steve Mason added that the proceeds from *Writing Holmes!* a book edited by Derrick and others “featuring all-new essays on how and why authors and researchers approach the writing of Sherlock Holmes stories and scholarship” will also go to the Beacon Society.

Junior Sherlockian Committee – Out-going Chair Shannon Carlisle recalled that Andy Solberg approached her in 2016 with the idea that a program for youth interested in Sherlock Holmes would be beneficial. Dr. Marino Alvarez continued to encourage her to do this and when Shannon’s husband said he would do the website, she agreed. On August 9th, 2017, the 221st day of the year, the Junior Sherlockian Society (JSS) was born. This year it celebrated its fifth birthday. The JSS invites online study and exploration of Sherlock Holmes character traits, deductive/ inductive thinking, through sharing and activities. Shannon has appreciated the opportunity to share Sherlock Holmes through the lens of an educator and knows that will be maintained by in-coming Chairperson Beth Gallego, who is a librarian working with kids and teens. Shannon says we are all young at heart and encourages us to check out the website and the essays on it.

To promote the JSS, stickers were ordered to add to the BSI and The Woman packets but due to production delays, that did not occur. Last year there was a bookmark promoting the Society (“Bee an Ambassador.”) The JSS website has had 8100 visits a month! This exceeds the 5000 visits the web host prefers. There were 556 followers.

Shannon says she is excited for Beth to take over. She has handed over the google drive with all the information on it, as well as the gmail account, FaceBook access...and the remaining wooden nickels and promotional items. Shannon’s husband is giving the website a facelift before transferring it to Beth. Beth thanked Shannon again for this opportunity. Derrick thanked Shannon for her service and welcomed Beth.

Old Business:

R. Joel Senter, Sr. Memorial Essay Contest – The awards for high school winners have been increased to: First Place- \$500; Second Place - \$400; Third Place - \$300.

Jan Stauber Grants Revision – The Board has been asked to increase the grant award to \$1000. The Board agreed to the increase. The Board also agreed to drop the deadline. Applications will be accepted throughout the year.

New Business:

This year 2023 is the 20th Anniversary of the Beacon Society. It was started in 2003. If anyone has ideas for ways to celebrate this event, let Derrick, Carla or Steve know.

We hope to have the Creative Writing Contest (Pastiche) ready for next year.

Closing remarks:

Dick Kitts thanked Derrick for hosting for Carla, and sent a shout out to Head-Light Carla Coupe, noting that it is hard to coordinate everything the Beacon Society does and acknowledging that she does a great job. She's one of the best Head-Lights we've had.

Derrick once again thanked all of the Beacon Society supporters!

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 PM, EST.

These minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by Deborah Clark, Percy Phelps, Secretary

Dan Andriacco / Awards Committee Report – Dec. 29, 2022

We had two strong candidates for the 2022 Susan Z. Diamond Beacon Award, which went to Anna Behrens of Keene, New Hampshire.

Anna is passionate about getting students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels connected to the Sherlock Holmes stories. To do that, she created a Sherlock Holmes club in the middle-high school where she works, attracting both middle school and high school members. The students have fun learning about the traditional Sherlock Holmes stories as well as recent pop culture versions such as *BBC's Sherlock*. In one cool event, they dressed up and acted out *The Red Headed League*.

But her crowning achievement for 2022 was creating and running the Keene, NH Sherlock Holmes Week of activities aimed at kids and adults. Students created the plot for a Sherlock Holmes mystery, conducted experiments in a forensics lab, celebrated Dr. Watson's birthday, watched the film *Sherlock Gnomes*, participated in an interactive Sherlock Holmes readers' theatre, decoded secret messages, saw a mystery puppet show, and dressed up as Sherlockian characters.

One of our judges wrote: "What stood out to me from the nominator's form was the variety of learning modes and media that Anna utilizes to introduce new audiences to Sherlock Holmes. The impact of her ongoing advocacy of Sherlock Holmes in the middle school where she works, and the breadth of individuals and institutions of all backgrounds represented in Sherlock Holmes Week truly embodies the ethos that the Susan Z. Diamond Beacon Award seeks to recognize."

This year, Anna also joined the Beacon Society program committee, where she provided feedback on the Society's library display project and made suggestions for a potential fiction writing contest.

Thank you, Anna, and congratulations on this much-deserved award!

The Awards Committee in 2022 also presented cash prizes of \$300, \$200, and \$100 to first-, second-, and third-place winners of the annual R. Joel Senter, Sr. Essay Contest for students in the 4th through the 12th grades. We had 9 entries, compared to 12 the previous year. However, we have taken steps that we hope will increase the number of participants next year:

- We raised the top prize for 10th-12th grade students to \$500;
- Prepared a flyer that has been sent to hundreds of teachers through various means; and
- Reworded the rules to make them clearer.

But personal contact is always the best recommendation, so please spread the word!

The deadline for 2023 entries in the Senter Contest is February 1. Please see our website (<https://www.beaconsociety.com/joel-senter-essay-contest.html>) for all the details and instructions.

I want to thank committee members Debbie Clark, Francine Kitts, Peggy MacFarlane, and our newest member Tamar Zeffren.

That concludes the report of the Awards Committee.

Dan Andriacco
Awards Committee Chair

2022 Report of the Communications Committee and *BeaconSociety.com*

As always, the committee focused on two main objectives during 2022: getting the word out about the various activities of the Beacon Society, including the Jan Stauber Grant, the Joel Senter Essay Contest, the Fortescue Scholarship, the Sherlockian Spotlight Gazette for younger Sherlockians, and the Beacon Award, and the website, www.beaconsociety.com.

For the first objective, several separate e-mailings concerning the Society were distributed.

In the second week of February 2022, a mailing was sent out to announce the availability of the Jan Stauber Grants for the calendar year 2022 to over 750 entities.

The e-mailings were sent to:

- National and all state/province Library Associations in U.S. and Canada
- National and all state/province Education Associations in U.S. and Canada
- All active scion societies in U.S. and Canada
- Children museum and theaters throughout the U.S.
- Members of the Beacon Society

In the third week of September, a mailing was distributed asking for nominations for the annual Beacon Award.

Mailings were done electronically where email addresses were available.

In addition, the announcements were posted on our Facebook site, as well as our beaconsociety.com website.

The website continued to be explored and used by hundreds of Sherlockians each week. The Communication Committee continued to maintain the site, adding new information on a regular basis. The Facebook site is maintained by the Committee as another means to distribute meeting announcements, solicitations for submittals, and general information concerning the Society.

The Committee continued posting weekly a set of puzzles based on the Canonical stories for the entertainment and enjoyment of Beacon Society members.

The Committee's biggest achievement for the website this year was the development of "The Comprehensive Look at the Stories" webpage, which includes over 20 elements for each of the 60 stories of the Canon, which Sherlockians, young and seasoned, can use as a reference source.

We continue to use the website as our primary source of information, backed up by our Facebook page.

The Communications Committee was able to support the Joel Senter Memorial Essay Contest by sending out a request for submittals during the third week of November to the email lists above.

In addition, we were able to compile the winning essays into a booklet that we published and sent to all essay winners for 2022 as well as the Essay Contest Committee. The booklet can be found on our website.

The Communications Committee continues to administer the Fortescue Scholarship. Over 50 Sherlockian students participated in the exam process this year, and 119 Sherlockians have completed all the required exams, reaching the level of ShD. In 2022, an optional Re-Certification exam was developed and administered for those wanting to continue the Fortescue experience.

In 2022, The Communications Committee issued 4 editions of the "Sherlock's Spotlight", a gazette for younger Sherlockians. The Program Committee is supporting the effort, which will be continued in 2023. The gazette, which is issued quarterly to over 700 recipients, contains Sherlockian articles, mysteries to solve, puzzles to unravel, and general information relevant to younger Sherlockians. The gazette is distributed to all scion societies, Beacon Society members, posted to our website and announced on our Facebook page.



Stephen Mason, ASH, BSI
Chair, Beacon Communications Committee -- The Beacon Webmaster
December 20, 2022

Beacon Society Financial Report 2022

12-31-21	Starting Balance	\$55,906.51
<u>Income</u>	Donations General Fund	7,577.92
	J. Senter Prize Fund	120.00
	Pin Sales	65.00
	 Total Income	 \$7,762.92
<u>Expense</u>	Jan Stauber Grant 2021	750.00
	Jan Stauber Grants 2022 (10)	7,244.96
	J. Senter Prizes (8)	1,800.00
	J. Senter Prize Plaques	287.00
	J. Senter Pkts & Postage	223.41
	Beacon Award '21 S.Mason	282.55
	Beacon Award '22 A. Behrens	282.95
	Beacon A. Postage & Frame	25.74
	BeaconWeb Maint. - '20-'23	416.00
	Beacon Brochures	217.13
	BSI Packets & Senter Flyers	301.83
	JSS Web Host & Domain	213.51
	JSS Stickers	48.58
	Library Display Expense	160.66
	Postage and Envelopes	118.40
	PayPal Fees	21.61
	 Total Expense	 <u>\$12,394.33</u>
12-28-22	Balance	\$51,275.10
	Outstanding JSGrants 2021 (1)	700.00
	Outstanding JSGrants 2022 (1)	450.00

R. Kitts, Bursar 12-28-22

2023 Beacon Society

Fundraising Committee Report

I feel I should start with another massive “Thank you” to everyone that donated this year. Coming out of COVID, a phrase I will use loosely, we have managed to raise \$7,697.92 in 2022.

I want to add a special note, to anyone that just helped spread the good word of the Beacon Society and promoted the different grants, prizes, etc. Anything you did to bring attention to the group and our quest to “Keep Green the Memory of the Master” is truly appreciated.

221B Con has voted once again for the Beacon Society to be the official charity of the 2023 con.

And now for my small trip down memory lane...

It seems like just yesterday I was giving my first Fundraising Committee Report.

When Denny Dobry asked me to take over the committee in 2018 I had no idea how far we would come. I’ll be honest, I also wasn’t 100% sure what I was agreeing to do.

Since then we have raised over \$62,400. Made new friends, lost some old ones, started new initiatives, and expanded others.

It was with a heavy heart that before last year’s general meeting I told Carla that I would be stepping down. But I know that I will be leaving the committee in good hands.

David McAllister has long been a supporter of the Beacon Society. He was on the Fundraising Committee before I took over and graciously agreed to stay aboard as I took the helm. He was a confidant and mentor... honestly, I couldn’t have done it without him.

I know everyone will support him as they did me and will continue to give to this great cause that is so close to all our hearts.

Thank you for everything and to my committee members over the years, Carla, Dave, Liza, Ashley and Heather. Here’s to another successful year.

Respectively submitted,



Crystal L. Noll

Outgoing Fundraising Committee Chair

Jan Stauber Grant Report-December 2022

For the year 2022, we had 11 grant applications, all of which were approved.

The applications totaled \$7,750.

The grantees included public libraries, children's libraries, a Read With Me program, intermediate school, high schools, a Christmas House project, and a school for the deaf and blind.

This year in hopes of not having to turn a grantee away due to deadlines for grant submissions, we have lifted the May 1 deadline. We can now accept grant applications all year round.

The project to try to put Sherlockian books in juvenile detention centers is still a work in progress. We haven't given up; we just need to find the right person to talk to in the right facility.

In an effort to encourage more teachers, librarians, reading specialists, etc., who are trying to help young people learn to love reading, we have agreed to raise the grant amount to a maximum of \$1000 per year, per applicant.

**Junior Sherlockian Society's Report
for the Beacon Society's Annual Meeting**
submitted by Shannon Carlisle, Committee Chair
December 29, 2022

Committee Members- Alex Katz, Jen Kneeland, and Greg Ruby

The JSS Origin Story

In the Spring of 2016, Andy Solberg encouraged the Beacon Society to create a Sherlockian society similar to the Junior Forest Rangers program. Dr. Alvarez encouraged me to take on this task. He encouraged me to create an online experience similar to the one I provide my students in 221b Baker Street of Moore Elementary School, my classroom.

I said no, twice. Then, my husband offered to create the website if I provided the content. It took a year to develop. On August 9, 2017, (the 221st day of the year) the Junior Sherlockian Society website launched. This past August, the program celebrated its 5th birthday. The program continues to invite children and youth to complete Junior Sherlockian Training- an in-depth study of Sherlock Holmes's character traits, observational skills, capacity for critical thought, and inductive and deductive reasoning.

The Junior Sherlockian Society has been my passion project for the past 6 years. I've enjoyed the opportunity to create a site in which children and youth can explore the world of Sherlock Holmes, experience the Canon, and extend an understanding and appreciation of the great detective. Now it is time for me to step back and welcome new leadership. I am grateful that Beth Gallego has been asked and accepted to chair the program. I built the program through the lens of an educator. Now the program will be managed through the lens of a librarian. I'm thrilled!

Favorite Tasks

Explore the World of Sherlock Holmes- Laura Duncombe and Francine Kitts's essays of Sherlock Holmes

Extend an Understanding and Appreciation- Student interviews of Nancy Springer

(author of the Enola Holmes series) and Elizabeth Eulberg (author of the Shelby Holmes series)

Dr. Marino Alvarez's Redheaded League play

Derrick Belanger's essay "10 Rules for Writing a Sherlockian Pastiche"

Chris Schweizer's BLUE paperdolls

Promoting the Junior Sherlockian Society (JSS)

January 2022- The 2022 Baker Street Irregulars dinner packets included JSS

bookmarks. Dinner attendees were encouraged to "🐝 an ambassador 4 the JSS" and share the bookmarks with children and youth.

January 2024- The 2024 Baker Street Irregulars dinner packets could include JSS stickers. (Due to production delays, the stickers for the 2023 dinner packets arrived after the packets were packed.)

The Numbers

Currently, Juniorsherlockian.com is averaging 8,100 visits a month.

(Because of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, the Junior Sherlockian Society avoids the collection of children's names, ages, birthdays, and addresses. If collected, this data could pose significant liability issues for the Beacon Society. IP addresses are purged as users move throughout the website.)

Facebook posts connect and resource parents, educators, librarians, and Sherlockians as they support children and youth completing the 2-2-1-b tasks. JSS has 556 followers, an increase of 140 followers since last year.

2022 Expenses

Flywheel WordPress Hosting (1/19/22-1/18/23)	\$150.00
GoDaddy Domains- .org, .com, .net (8/9/22-8/8/23)	\$63.51
JSS Stickers for BSI Dinner packets (2023/2024)	<u>\$48.58</u>
	\$262.09

2022 Programming Committee Report

Chair Derrick Belanger bragged on Susan Z. Diamond Beacon Society award winner Anna Behrens for her Sherlock Holmes Week in Keene, NH. The Library Display was prominent in the main activity room, so it got a lot of exposure.

The 11th and 12th grade Joel R. Senter essay contest winners had their essays published in the Arthur Conan Doyle journal, *Steel True/Blade Straight*.

The committee is working on a potential new fiction Beacon award for pastiches. Currently they are working on rules which they hope to have done by March or April. Once draft rules are done, they will be sent out for feedback. The ages for the contest will be the same as the R. Joel Senter Essay Contest.

The proceeds from *Writing Holmes!*, a book edited by Derrick and others “featuring all-new essays on how and why authors and researchers approach the writing of Sherlock Holmes stories and scholarship” will also go to the Beacon Society.