



DINNER - JAN 20
MONTIFURI CLUB
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THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION

Box 883 Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal, Canada H4Z 1K2

MINUTES of the meeting of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION October 5, 2006

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on
Thursday, December 7th, at 6:30 p.m.at:
The Westmount Public Library
(Westmount Room)
4574 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec

The Quiz at the next meeting

**"The Adventure of the
Three Students"**
prepared by Carol Abramson

Minutes of the MEETING of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION held on Thursday, October 5th, 2006 at the Westmount Library (Westmount Room), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West, Westmount, Quebec.

Present: Carol Abramson, Rachel Alkallay, Jack Anderson, Maureen Anderson, Stanley Baker, David Dowse, David Kellett, Anita Miller, Elliott Newman, Shara Qureshi, Arlene Scher.

Regrets: Paul Billette, Patrick Campbell, Wilfrid deFreitas, Tom Holmes, Catherine Radford.

CALL TO ORDER:

In the absence of Sovereign Paul Billette the meeting was called to order by Acting Chairperson David Dowse.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS AND GENTLE TRANSACTION

(incorporating Show & Tell, Stand & Deliver, Cease & Desist, Odds & Bodkins):

1) **First Toast – To the Master**

By David Kellett

(Upon instructions from the Acting Chairperson, all toasts were limited to five words each. We are confident that this directive was issued with a motive other than that resulting from a failing faith in the intellectual acuity of our aging membership to gather and winnow more than five salient words on a field piled high with a gruesome plethora of torn and writhing adjectives of praise for the Master and His Minions. Rather, it represents an encouragement to make informed choices in a scenario where the dramatic unities are of finite proportion.)

David Kellett's five words were:

Masterful – Entrancing – Logical – Bored – Universal (which David explained was an Everyman quality.)

2) **Easily Dispatched**

As a co-founder of the Society and a past and long-serving Sovereign, David Dowse described his present title in our group as the "Tin Dispatch Box." This title refers to "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot" in which "there is a travel-worn and battered **tin dispatch-box** with my name, John H. Watson, M. D. ..."

The reason why David now refers to himself in this manner is that he has long viewed the oaken tables of the Westmount Library reading room as the fitting and sacred sandbox whereupon he deposits from time to time his collection of toys, memorabilia, gathered items, castoffs *retrovés* that have stuck to the innards of his Tin Box over the years. This evening he presented calendars, puzzles, puzzle books, menus, and a matchbook collection as well as other items.

This evening, he told us that in our room there is a word that is also the title of our quiz. Some of us were able to locate the quotation on the wall: "There's no frigate like a book to bear us leagues away." By subtracting the "f" from "frigate," we are left with "Rigate," which is close enough to "Reigate" and its phonetic homonym, "Ryegate," the key word in tonight's quiz story. Actually, various sources offer either the "Reigate" or "Ryegate" spellings. Fascinating. Since we cannot hold that there's nothing like a good slice of Rei, we will opt for the former spelling.

3) **The Play's the Thing**

Jack Anderson described a play Maureen and he saw at Concordia University. Entitled *Till We meet Again*, the play was set in a CBC radio studio in the early 1940s. It was on for a two-week engagement and conveyed not only WW II era nostalgia and a convincing flavor of the times.

David Kellett suggested we go see the play *en masse*.

4) **Let Them Eat Gateau**

Maureen Anderson recommended that we have a bake sale to support "Dans la rue," a benevolent organization that assists homeless people. The locations of Victoria Hall and Greene Avenue were discussed.

5) **Out Brief Candle**

We are sad to report the death of another fellow Sherlockian and pretty amazing gentleman. Robert Spencer "Bob" Schultz III of South Burlington, passed on September 7, 2006 at the home of his daughter and son-in-law in Ripton, VT. An active member of the Goose Club of the Alpha Inn in his latter years, Bob was also active in various cultural, social, and athletic organizations in the North Country. Among many notable positions, Bob served on the New York Council of Economic Advisors under Governor Hugh Carey. He also taught briefly at

Fordham University. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have met Bob at once were amazed at his brilliant intellect and unceasingly inquiring mind. Despite his years, Bob exhibited the mental energy of a young man. We first met Bob at two joint Bimetallic-Goose Club week-ends in Vermont several years ago, and later when he joined his club members at our own gala weekend in Montreal in the summer of 2004 where he was hosted at the home of Raj and Paul Billette. We are indebted to his daughter Barbara (Barry) King of Ripton for informing us of his passing and filling us in on the details of his amazing life. We join with the family in honoring the memory of Bob Schultz III and wishing that they be spared further sorrow.

6) **A Rose Baker by Any Other Name**

Stanley Baker's namesake was in the obituaries about a week before our meeting. For obvious reasons, Stanley was less upset about it than those of us who saw the notice.

7) **Old Coke is Better than No Coke At All**

David Kellett showed us two ancient soft drink bottle cap removers. He also showed us a small silver box with a jade top. He said there was something wrong with the box and asked us to find out what was wrong. Various opinions were floated around the table, all of them reflecting the boundless abilities of our members to think where no man or woman has thought before. David assured us the problem with the box was that the top was too heavy for the box, so that when the top was hinged up and back, it would cause the small box, or case, to tilt back off the horizontal plane. We marveled at this information, and got on to the next exciting Item of Business and Gentle Transaction.

8) **Second Toast – To Dr. Watson**

By Rachel Alkallay

Loyal – Jolly – Brave – Unwitting Casanova – Bumbling

- 9) **To Eat or to Dine – That Is the Question**
Once again, the discussion on where to hold the our annual banquet. Should we opt for the *québécois* ambience of *Le Vieux Port*, scene of most of our banquets, or step up in class and return to elegant, suave, continental lavishness of the Montefiore Club? A recent spanner in the works includes a possible dinner boat cruise option off the Old Port. We will be presented with menus and prices at our next meeting.
- 10) **Colin**
Rachel Alkallay announced that Colin Semel's unveiling could take place Sunday, October 22, at 11:00 a.m. We agreed on this time and place. In fact, a number of us were in attendance at the Back River Cemetary for the religious occasion which provided us with another opportunity to celebrate the life of Colin Semel, and to share our thoughts and feelings. Stanley Baker read the religious service in Hebrew on that beautiful, crisp morning. Several of us then drove a few blocks to a coffee shop for an hour of reminiscence. Undoubtedly, Colin will be remembered as the luminary of our annual meetings, with his spirited singing and his authentic Victorian costume. We will continue to miss him.
- 11) **Uneasy Lies the Head that Wears the Crown**
David Dowse called for a submission of names for officers of the society. This was prompted by the announcement by Paul Billette that after three years in office he would be stepping down as Sovereign. Since there were no immediate volunteers or suggestions for the various positions, we decided to pursue the matter at the next meeting. In order to assist members in deciding if they would like to fill a post or recommend someone to it, following is a list of the seven officers of the society and an interpretation of their roles according to our constitution:
- SOVEREIGN – President
SHILLING – Vice-President
FLORIN – Treasurer
HALF-SOVEREIGN – Secretary
SIXPENCE – Commissionaire
HALF-CROWN – Mrs. Hudson
LATE SOVEREIGN – the former Sovereign, and who may continue to be, EX OFFICIO, an Officer of the Society (Those of you who have been or are considering being Sovereigns, will be relieved to know that you do not actually have to die to be a Late Sovereign.)

Because the duties of Sovereign can involve a bit of time, it has been suggested that the position of a dual Sovereignty be created, to be shared by two members. This would lessen the load and it would also involve more of our membership, which is a good thing. Quite possibly, by our next meeting, various potential heads will have been consulted in this regard. What your lowly scribe wants to know is: if the Mrs. Hudson position were to be shared by two individuals, would this then be seen as two Quarter-Crown roles? Wot then, eh? And if the Half-Sovereign position were split, would the left hand necessarily know what the right hand was writing? And ...

12) **Third Toast – To Mrs. Hudson**

By Carol Abramson

Dedicated – Loyal – Proper – Long-Suffering – Patient

13) **Quiz - results**

“The Ryegate Puzzle” prepared by David Kellett.

Winners were:

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Prize</u>
1.	Carol Abramson	41	Tin of Walker’s Shortbread
2.	Rachel Alkallay	39	Tin of Walker’s Shortbread
3.	Jack Anderson	34	His and Her’s Walkers’ Shortbread

The next quiz will be based on “The Adventure of the Three Students,”
Prepared by Carol Abramson.

14) **Analyze This**

David Dowse read a detective story we had to solve.

15) **Fourth Toast – To Irene Adler**

By Jack Anderson

There – was – but – one – woman

16) **Fifth Toast – To the Society**

By David Dowse

Enduring – Dedicated – Fun-loving – Loyal Friends – Creative

17) **Collective Fiction**

David Kellett has been thinking about setting a Sherlock Holmes story in Victorian-era Montreal. He initiated this idea, and is doing research that he will bring to our next meeting. The idea is that all those interested will participate in this project.

Our dear friends, you would confer a great favour upon us by joining us at the next meeting of "THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION" which is being held on Thursday, December 7th, 2006, at 6:30 p.m.

For the latest society news or updates on our history, please go to www.bimetallicquestion.org

The Best Known Christmas Carol

In 1842 Charles Dickens visited Montreal performing in amateur theatricals with the locals. Now Charles Dickens is back performing his own solo show. Written the year after he left Montreal, *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* has become *the* Christmas story. One of the most loved works in the English language; Dickens adapted and performed a solo theatrical version of his famous story for many years. Now **you** can experience the laughter, tears and joy of the original on December 1st when *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, with JOHN D. HUSTON as Charles Dickens, comes to Montreal's Atwater Library Auditorium in Westmount.

Huston evokes the magic of Christmas Past with his hauntingly authentic performance, developed from Dickens's own annotated script. His performances have won John critical acclaim and full houses, even when performed in the height of summer! His remarkable renderings of the story's many characters have been described as "mesmerizing" and "powerful" by reviewers from Ottawa, Ontario to Kelowna, B.C. John has brought his performance everywhere, from CBC radio to the National Arts Centre 4th Stage, from schools to Victorian homes.

So this Christmas, why not join Scrooge, the Cratchits and of course, Mr. Dickens at the Atwater Library Auditorium on December 1st. You'll be haunted if you miss it!

Reviews for John D. Huston in *A Christmas Carol*

"*A Christmas Carol* à la Dickens." *The Globe and Mail*

"*A Christmas Carol* is powerful one-man theatre ... in the hands of a master storyteller." *The National Post*

"I loved this story and urge all to see it." *The Ottawa Sun*

"Absolutely fabulous ... brings the work to life, reproducing ... all of the characters" *CBC Radio Ottawa*

"Masterful ... an unusually fine performance" *CBC Radio Winnipeg*

"Making real people out of each of the 25 or so characters." *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*

***A Christmas Carol* plays at the Atwater Library Auditorium, 1200 Atwater Avenue in Westmount, December 1st at 8 pm. Please note the venue is not wheelchair accessible.**

**For tickets call 514-935-9581 or 514-935-7344. Tickets are \$15.00.
www.defreitasbooks.com/dickens.html**

