

Meeting Notes

March 22, 2018



Lyndsay Faye

"Murder by Career: The Life of the Imaginary Assassin"

Reported by Carla Coupe

A blast of Winter swept through the Red Circle's congenial company and pleasant rooms at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda with the appearance of Baker Street Irregular "Kitty Winter," aka Lyndsay Faye. A Baker Street Babe, Adventuress of Sherlock Holmes, as well as BSI, Faye is best known among Sherlockians for her wonderful pastiches *Dust and Shadow* and *The Art of Detection*, as well as the Timothy Wilde series and her novel *Jane Steele*.

Faye regaled a rapt audience with scenes from her writing career, starting with the impetus for *Dust and Shadow*, her first novel. She "wrote the book I wanted to read but couldn't find," and this desire has informed all her writing choices. Training as an actor gave her insight into her characters' motivations, speech patterns and syntax, and physical actions.

To Faye, telling stories with memorable characters and accurate settings is very important. For example, her Timothy Wilde series is about the very first policemen in early 19th century New York City, and shows how many of the problems of the period



are still reflected in current society. Faye stressed that primary research is critical to an historical story, and recommends period newspapers as the best way to get a flavor of the culture and society of the time.

In *Jane Steele*, a re-telling of *Jane Eyre*, Faye wanted to explore what would happen if Jane Eyre accepted that she was evil, as everyone around her said. How would she be stronger, more able to make her way in a society that undervalued women and dismissed children? And would this ultimately make the central character a better person? Faye addresses these timeless questions in a captivating book.

We look forward to Faye's next book, *The Paragon Hotel*, available next January.

Alan Rettig provided the evening's grace note with a reprise of a delightful presentation he and Ann Stingle originally gave on March 27, 1992. Letters regarding the monkey business in "The Creeping Man" and a missing Primate of the Church led to groans and guffaws, although the dinner plates had already been cleared, so no bread roll missiles were launched.

Thanks go to Tom Fahres for overseeing sales of Red Circle lapel pins, and to Alan Rettig for his website wrangling. As always, the Hyatt staff took excellent care of us, and we look forward to the next meeting on June 22nd with Dan Andriacco.