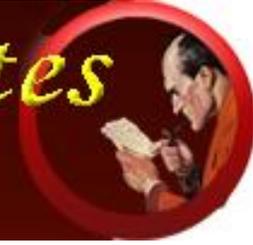


# Meeting Notes

October 1, 2022



Reported by Carla Kaessinger Coupe

The Red Circle's October 1 online meeting began with Alan Rettig reminding the sixty-plus attendees of online best practices before he handed the mic over to Peter Blau.

Peter, who recently celebrated a milestone birthday, returned from Disney World with an unexpected birthday present—a case of Covid. We're all relieved that he and Bev Wolov, who also came down with Covid, are recovering.



Peter introduced our speaker, Dan Stashower, who, in his words, “needs no introduction, but who will get one, anyway.” Dan is a celebrated author of many books, including *Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle*, and a member of the BSI. Peter then showed the trailer for Dan's latest book, *American Demon: Eliot Ness and the Hunt for America's Jack the Ripper*.

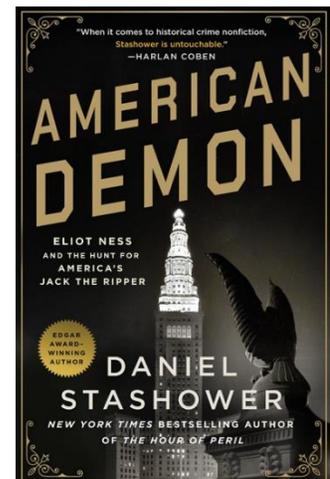
With his usual grace and humor, Dan took the virtual stage and immediately upended our preconceptions about Eliot Ness. The television and movie portrayals show the leader of the Untouchables, a man of integrity and bravery, the man who arrested Al Capone, but that was only one side of him.

Ness left Chicago by the age of thirty and moved to Cleveland to be the director of public safety. Always the reformer, his job was to clean up the police force and take down the mobsters.

And then the murders began.

These murders were particularly gruesome, with no discernable pattern to the victims chosen, save that they were often people who would not be missed for a while. Citizens of Cleveland were terrified, and with good reason.

Although Ness was not hired to catch the killer, he became involved in the case. His approachable persona and charm allowed him to use the news media to his advantage, not unlike



a character he admired: Sherlock Holmes. And with that tantalizing introduction, Dan finished his talk, and many attendees immediately ordered his book!

After the question-and-answer period and reminders of upcoming events, Peter announced that our next meeting will be Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, and will take place in person. We'll meet at Alfio's La Trattoria and our guest speaker will be Ashley Polasek, the Executive Director of The Ken Ludwig Company. Further details will be at the Red Circle website.

Then, sadly, we stood upon the terrace for Nick Utechin, renowned Sherlockian and editor of the *Sherlock Holmes Journal* for thirty years. Peter offered a toast in Nick's memory.

Irregular toasts were offered by Bonnie MacBird to coffee in the Canon, and Jeanmarie Zubia to the Bootmakers of Toronto's Jubilee@221B, celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the Arthur Conan Doyle collection at the Toronto Public Library.



The dreaded-but-still-anticipated quiz by Dana Richards came next. With Dana's usual twisted logic, the questions were about "ness on your tail". He provided 26 canonical quotes, each of which included a missing word that ended with "ness".

We did not cover ourselves in glory.

However, we celebrated our quiz winners!

First place went to Ann Marlowe, who scored her spot with 17 correct answers. M.K. Brennan bagged second place with 15. Third place went Bruce Cotter, with 13. Honorable mentions were awarded to Markéta Koči and J.C. Remont with 11 points each.

Our meeting wrapped up with Peter's reminder about our December meeting.