

# Meeting Notes

March 14, 2026



Reported by Carla Kaessinger Coupe  
Amanuensis and general dogsbody

For our “swing into spring” meeting, The Red Circle met at J. Hollinger’s Waterman’s Chophouse in Silver Spring. While there was still a nip in the air, the atmosphere at the restaurant was warm and welcoming. Early arrivals enjoyed catching up with other Red Circle members while imbibing drinks of our choice and checking out the books Denny Dobry brought for sale to benefit the Baker Street Irregulars Trust. At one o’clock, Peter Blau corralled everyone and we settled at our tables. Thanks to manager Nick and his excellent staff, our delicious lunches were quickly distributed and just as quickly devoured. Our table ran the gamut of main courses—glazed salmon, roasted chicken, Chophouse burger, and grilled cauliflower steak—and all were pronounced excellent. An image of the menu is at the right for your edification and amusement.

After the tables were cleared, Peter explained that we’d had such a delightful experience at Hollinger’s for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration that we wanted to return. He continued with a quick overview of the history of The Red Circle and a reminder that recordings of our speakers are available on our website and YouTube channel, thanks to our videographer Matt Hall and webmaster Alan Rettig.

## The Red Circle of Washington, D.C.

March 14, 2026

### STARTER

Chef’s Soup Of The Day

Little Gem Caesar Salad

Classic Caesar Dressing, Croutons, Grana Padano Parmesan

Lamb Meatballs

Moroccan Spices, Tomato Sauce, Tzatziki Sauce

### ENTREE

Honey Glazed Salmon Filet

Roasted Baby Bok Choy & Oyster Mushrooms, Carrot-Ginger Puree, Spicy Honey Garlic Glaze

Roasted Statler Chicken Breast

Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Roasted Seasonal Vegetables, Chicken Au Jus

Chophouse Burger

Aged Black Angus Beef Burger, Bacon, Cheddar, Lettuce, tomato, Onion, House Made Pickles, Chophouse Sauce, Brioche Bun, French Fries

Grilled Cauliflower “Steak”

Julienned Squash, Fennel, Peppers & Carrots, Sauteed Swiss Chard, Chimichurri

### DESSERT

Banoffee Pie

Bananas, Dulce De Leche, Whipped Cream, Chocolate Sauce, Graham Cracker Crust

Pots de Creme

Rich Chocolate Custard, Whipped Cream

Lemon Possett

Smooth Creamy Citrus Pudding



Our speaker was Matt Hall, a member of The Red Circle and several other scions and societies, as well as being Gasogene of Watson’s Tin Box, and who was recently investitured in the Baker Street Irregulars as “The Earl of Maynooth.” Originally from Australia, Matt has lived in the US for more than twenty years and works at the National Institutes of Health. His presentation, “Digging Into the Dancing Miners,” was a fascinating deep dive into the background of an unusual photograph.

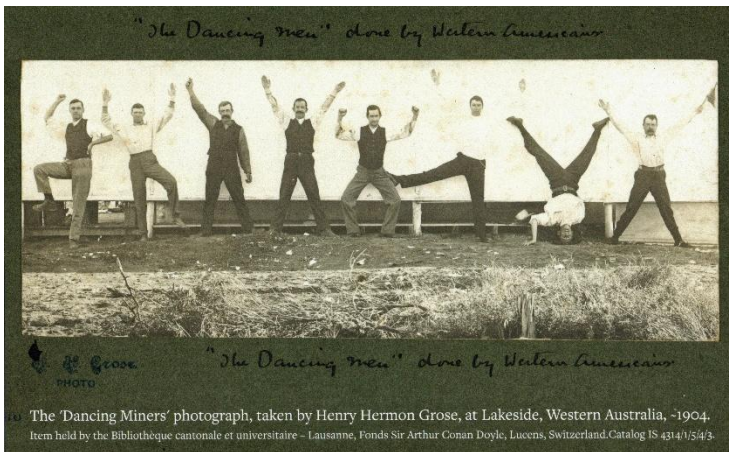
The August 1904 issue of the *Strand Magazine* included a photograph of Australian miners displaying a message in the Dancing Men cipher. Matt handed out postcards with the complete photo on one side, and closeups of the miners’ faces on the other. See the accompanying image. Originally sent to Arthur Conan Doyle, the photo was included in the magazine’s “Curiosities” section. However, it didn’t include the name they spelled out. Finally revealed as “Lakeside,” Matt tracked down the name to that of a mine in Kalgoorlie, in south-

western Australia. Founded in the 1890s, Lakeside existed in a harsh and remote location, some 370 miles from Perth.

On the trail of more information about this photo, Matt discovered the name of the photographer, H.H. Grose, who had a photography studio in Lakeside at the time. Coincidentally, while researching the original photo, Matt happened on a very similar one at the Sherlock Holmes Pub in London. Same miners, same Dancing Men positions, but the label stated: "The Dancing Men done by Western Americans." Not Australians. How dare they!

Tracking down the provenance of this photo took him from the Sherlock Holmes sitting room exhibit in New York in 1952, then to the 1957 catalogue of the Sherlock Holmes Pub, and finally to Adrian Conan Doyle's collection of memorabilia, now at the University of Lausanne, where the original resides. This shows the same erroneous label as the one at the Sherlock Holmes Pub, but in Conan Doyle's handwriting. Perhaps he forgot the original source when he labeled the photo.

But Matt is not done with his research. He continues to try to identify the men in the photo through local newspapers of the time and the local historical society. I have no doubt he'll succeed.



After several questions and a hearty round of applause for Matt, Peter regained the microphone and we stood upon the terrace in memory of two of our members: Cheryl Kravitz and Jacquelynn Bost Morris. They will be missed by us all.

The meeting concluded with announcements, a reminder that our next meeting will be in June, and the awarding of several door prizes. We look forward to our next meeting!