

THE AMATEUR MENDICANT SOCIETY
OF DETROIT

Established 1946 — A scion of the Baker Street Irregulars



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“the message, and the place of origin”
— *‘The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax’*

My dear fellow Sherlockian,

You are cordially invited to join the Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit as we celebrate our **80th anniversary**. We will hold a special dinner at **1:30 pm on Saturday, April 25, 2026 in Detroit**.

Details are below [and online with photos](#) – *read thoroughly*.

We have a separate [travel and visitors guide](#) with information about a schedule of informal events, things to do, where to stay and more – it is [available only on our website](#) (👉 link).

Please feel free to share this with any Sherlockian who might be interested (they needn't live in Michigan).

Where It All Began

On a clear and cool night of April 26, 1946, a dozen intrepid individuals gathered to celebrate the first meeting of the Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit. Unable to find a lower vault of a furniture warehouse, the group was fortunate to find the Stag Room in the lower level of [Cliff Bell's](#), luxuriously appointed in mahogany and brass.

While the Stag Room is no longer available, Cliff Bell's is still in operation, still appointed in mahogany and brass, and it retains its Art Deco charm from the 1930s. Thus, it seemed like the ideal place to celebrate our origins and some new beginnings on the last weekend in April.

Dinner

The details of the dinner are as follows:

Saturday, April 25, 2026

1:30 – 5: 00 p.m.

[Cliff Bell's](#), 2030 Park Ave., Detroit, MI 48226 ([directions](#))

We will host a dinner at 1:30 pm on the afternoon of Saturday, April 25 at [Cliff Bell's](#) on Park Avenue in Detroit.

Dinner will consist of a buffet that includes beef tips with mushrooms in a red wine demi glace, chicken marsala, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, bread, and dessert. A cash bar will be available.

Agenda

We will be revisiting our **historic toasts**, under the guidance of David MacGregor – who will be looking for volunteers to toast:

1. The Woman
2. Mrs. Hudson
3. Mycroft
4. The Second Most Dangerous Man in London
5. The Second Mrs. Watson
6. The Game Is Afoot

Our Commissionaire Chris Music will regale us with stories of the early days of the Mendicants, as he recounted in his fine book ***From the Lower Vault: Treasures from the Archives of the Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit 1946-1964*** (The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, 2015).

And in the spirit of history, we will have a fun **quiz – the original 10 entrance examination questions** to become a Mendicant.

We will have some special announcements (locked in the vault for now)

And we are pleased to bring back the **Beggar's Cup – the award for an outstanding paper given at our annual meeting.**

The Beggar's Cup

When the Society was in its formative stage, [Vincent Starrett](#), who even in the 1940s was widely considered to be the dean of Sherlockians, encouraged *Detroit News* drama critic and AMS founder Russell McLauchlin to consider who would be admitted. Starrett suggested:

"only the right people—i.e. such as are capable of contributing a bit of spurious scholarship...whether they ever do so or not."

We are inviting all attendees to consider presenting a paper to the assembled group.

The format is entirely up to the presenter and can be a topic of anything related to Sherlock Holmes or Arthur Conan Doyle – serious, spurious illustrious, hilarious, or anything, limited to 5 minutes (approximately **600-700 words**).

Please submit papers to us at amateurmendicantsociety@gmail.com no later than **March 31, 2026**. Under guidance by Rich Krisciunas, the Reading Committee will review all submissions and will determine three (3) for presentation at the meeting.

At the meeting, the best paper will be determined by popular acclamation, with a large Beggar's Cup (more akin to a bowl) going to the winner for a year; they will also be given a smaller cup as a permanent keepsake.

The Particulars

The cost of the dinner, including a keepsake, is **\$75**. To attend, please [click here to pay online](#) or send a check made out to: **Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit** and mail to the address below.

Checks to: AMATEUR MENDICANT SOCIETY OF DETROIT, c/o Brad Schwartz, 2244 Burcham Dr., East Lansing, MI 48823.

Mendicant Fund

We recognize that the cost of our anniversary event is higher than our typical rump meetings, but it is our sincere desire to have as many of you with us as possible.

To help those who might find this a hardship, the Executive Committee has established a **Mendicant Fund** (how appropriate) to help defray a portion of the cost. If you find yourself in need of the Fund, please email us at amateurmendicantsociety@gmail.com and let us know if we can help.

Parking

If you are driving into the city, we recommend the following options for parking:

- There is street parking available, and it is all handled by kiosks. The best way to handle this is to download the [Park Detroit app](#) and put in your vehicle information ahead of time. Instructions on their website walk you through exactly how it works. The cost is \$1 per hour.
- There are also a number of lots and garages nearby; [Spot Hero](#) can snag you a parking spot in advance so you don't have to worry about hunting for a place to park when you arrive. That link will take you to the geography and date for our event.

Related Events / Visitors Guide

To keep this communication from getting overly long, we ask that you to check out our [Visitors Guide](#) on our website, where you can find additional information about optional **informal events** from Friday through Sunday (**some of which need reservations – HINT**), **hotel information, parking and transportation, and other activities & resources.**

[Click here for Visitors Guide](#)

We look forward to welcoming you to the exciting, vibrant, and transformed city of Detroit on April 25.

Until then, the game's afoot!



Scott Monty, BSI
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