

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs
San Francisco International Headquarters**

President
Communications Czar
Procurer of Venues
AgendaMeister
Archivist of Knowledge

Bill Diefenbach
Geoff Noakes
Lee Tyree
Ken Monk
Dale Fehringer

**Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, July 21, 2005**

The delayed quarterly dinner and business meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs was finally held on Thursday, July 21, at 7:30 pm at Caesar's Restaurant, corner of Bay and Powell Streets. A pre-perennial gathering for libations took place at 6:00 pm at the Red Jack Saloon, located two blocks east on Bay Street.

All Society officers and members were present.

Red Jack Saloon

The Red Jack Saloon is a watering hole, a place to go if you live alone. People in their 20s and 30s gather after work and have a couple of drinks before getting on with their evening plans. Excluding us, the average age was under 30. There were a few semi-hotties among them, and the PREZ seemed most adept at pointing them out.

The walls of the Red Jack Saloon are filled with oldie-time photos of local celebs, and above the bar is a framed note that says something about Dashiell

Hammett. There are no serving wenches, so patrons sidle up to the bar and chat with the bartender while he makes their drinks. It's part of the experience.

Stud: A virile and sexually active male.
-- *Wordreference.com* (definition #5)

Martinis are a redeeming attribute of the Red Jack Saloon -- not the quality, but the quantity. Martini glasses are filled completely to the rim, making them a good value, but also making it impossible to carry them to a table without spilling. Mr. Diefenbach demonstrated his willingness to perform menial tasks by schlepping drinks from the bar, and showed his ingenuity when he asked to have a little of his martini poured into a shot glass prior to transportation.

By 6:15 pm the place was packed, as the after work crowd wandered in. As the crowd grew, so did the noise, to the point we could hardly hear each other.

There was a general consensus that DHSOS meetings are superior when the bar is separate from the restaurant. We

paid up and walked down the street to Caesar's for dinner.

Caesar's Italian Restaurant

We convened at a round table, which the restaurant had purchased for the express purpose of hosting our renowned and distinguished organization. Our table was in the middle of the dining room, with empty tables all around us. Nicholas Cage was our waiter.

Caesar's advertises "If You Like Italian Food, Eat Where Italians Eat". Their slogan could just as well be "If You Like Tourist Food, Eat Where Tourists Eat," because Caesar's is very popular with San Francisco visitors.

Caesar's is also popular with the gray-haired crowd. Senior citizens from the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center recently had lunch at Caesar's, and they enjoyed the large portions, which meant they could take home doggie bags full of leftovers.

Caesar's turned out to be popular with the DHSOS, too. The place is not known for creativity, but its food is "consistent," and Dashiell would surely have dined there if it had been around. And Caesar's also met the "our wives wouldn't set foot in it" criteria.

Meals at Caesar's can be ordered a-la-carte, or there is a seven-course option "with all the tasty trimmings." The seven-course option was probably popular with the Telegraph Hill seniors, but Society members showed refrain and ordered more meager rations. Mr. Diefenbach and Mr. Noakes won acclaim for ordering cioppino, which had a thick tomato sauce and lots of

seafood. When Mr. Fehringer ordered gnocchi, Mr. Tyree asked him if he thought this was a Japanese restaurant.

Business Meeting

As advertised, the business meeting started at precisely 7:30 pm when Mr. Diefenbach buttered his bread. He moved that the society officially recognize a change of title and responsibilities for Mr. Monk, from Schlepper of Concotions to AgendaMeister. This was approved unanimously. Business cards will be changed, as will the Web site, but the group felt it was not necessary (nor possible) to have Dashiell's daughter resign Mr. Monk's book.

Schlepp: To drag or haul.

-- *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*

Some members expected a written agenda prior to the meeting, but the AgendaMeister was more cunning than that. He developed an agenda, ran it past the PREZ, then committed it to memory. There was some mild disgruntlement at this, but the group decided to proceed, using "trust and confidence" in the AgendaMeister. He proved his ability to work without a net by totally recalling the agenda from memory and adeptly guiding the discussion with precision and a delicate weaving of different topics.

Accolades, Extollations and Automobiles

Accolades were given to Mr. Diefenbach on a recent article about him in the *San Francisco Examiner*. Mr. Diefenbach was careful to give credit to his family, co-workers, and everyone else in his life, but there was no mention of the

DHSOS or its distinguished members anywhere in the article.

Mr. Noakes was extolled for having the foresight to secure hotmail addresses for members of the group, and society members expressed gratitude to him for sharing information about investment alternatives. No one has yet acted on the information, however, and it was suggested that perhaps they should "take the bull by the nipples," and make some decisions.

This being a group of virile, sexually active men, the subject of automobiles naturally arose. A discussion was held regarding young Mr. Diefenbach, who is having to decide this summer between driving a BMW vs the old Porsche, while at the same time eyeing his father's new Porsche.

Spousal Health, Trip Reports and Member Sightings

During the spousal health section of the meeting, Mr. Tyree reported that Mrs. Tyree recently had an eye procedure for narrow-angle glaucoma. The procedure went well, and Mrs. Tyree is recovering nicely. She is to have the same procedure on her other eye within the next two months. Asked whether she had a patch on her eye or had to be in a dark room, Mr. Tyree said, "No, the only restriction was no sex for an hour, 'cause she couldn't see me coming!"

Mr. Monk and Mr. Fehringer gave trip reports on their time in New York. Highlights included great meals (including dinner with babes), wonderful sights, and interesting plays (including a brief male nudity scene). Mr. Noakes reported on his trip to Munich, Amsterdam, and Paris. The Noakes

loved the food, the sights, and celebrating Katharine's "best birthday ever" at the Eiffel Tower.

Mr. Tyree reported that he and Mrs. Tyree were on TV "five times" during a recent Giants baseball game. It seems the game was progressing slowly and the announcers were looking for things to fill time. A cameraman found Mrs. Tyree asleep with her head on Mr. Tyree's shoulder, and the announcers seized on that as an indication of how the game (and season, for that matter) were going. So they kept coming back to the Tyrees -- commenting on Mr. Tyree's "enormous" earphones, his baseball acumen (remaining seated during a towering out-of-the park fly ball because 'he knew it was foul'), etc.

This led to a discussion of the SF Giants and how their dismal season will jive with an upcoming substantial hike in ticket prices. Mr. Diefenbach suggested the solution might be for the Giants to hire cheerleaders, like the 49ers "Gold-diggers." Mr. Noakes reported on the Dodgers similar poor showing, and reminded the group that the "L" in "LA" stands for "leading the Giants."

Group Gatherings

There was a report on the Group's 4th of July outing, including a mysterious incident at the swimming pool involving two DHSOS member's wives. It was agreed that if an incident like that could happen at a public place like a swimming pool, it should be wild on the houseboat on Lake Shasta this August.

The group's annual pilgrimage to Drakesbad was a source of discussion and excitement. Members are looking forward to their time off and time

together in August. Departure time, securing the boat, procuring alcoholic beverages, and sleeping arrangements were the hot topics with this group.

Clothing Upgrade

There was quite a discussion of clothing (rare for this group of virile, sexually-active males), which was brought on by Mr. Diefenbach's braggadocio. He claimed his wardrobe had recently been upgraded, courtesy of his son Beck and wife Ruth. According to Mr. Diefenbach, he initially thought his new clothes were "beyond my norm," but after some arm-twisting he tried them on and the combination worked. He wore them to work, and received 15 compliments within the first hour, mostly from "young babes."

He scratched the back of his neck and began to dress. He put on a green-striped white shirt, a soft white collar, a green necktie, the grey suit he had worn that day, a loose tweed overcoat, and a dark grey hat".

-- Sam Spade's attire in *The Maltese Falcon*

That stirred the DHSOS! Mr. Monk, who said he does not "scruff at the response Bill got," asked for details. It turns out that Beck did most of the selecting, and Ruth did most of the paying. After some discussion, it was suggested that perhaps Beck would want to "prove his worth" as a society member by upgrading all DHSOS members.

There is no solid evidence that Beck wants to join this group, and even if he does it would be a tall order to upgrade these guys' clothing. When those

realities became apparent, the subject quickly died down.

Skirt Crisies

While on the subject of clothing, Mr. Diefenbach reported a trend that he fears could make women's skirts "endangered pieces of apparel." He has tested his theory through research studies and statistical analyses – by counting the percent of women wearing skirts as he walks between Montgomery Street and Powell Street.

Over the past 18 months, the percent has declined, from 16% in early 2004, to 12% mid-year 2004, then earlier this month it plummeted to 4%. Mr. Diefenbach feels this dramatic decline warrants a call to action, and he suggested that all manly DHSOS members return home, rummage through their spouses' closets, and discard all clothing items resembling slacks.

Percent of Women Wearing Skirts Montgomery to Powell Streets

July 2004	16%
January 2004	12%
July 2005	4%

Source: B. Diefenbach research

Identity Theft

Identity theft was discussed, and there was agreement that regularly checking your credit report is a relatively easy and inexpensive way to make sure no one is tinkering with your credit. Mr. Noakes has since sent information on this topic to all DHSOS members.

“Electronically Clueless”

Electronic gadgetry was discussed, and an informal survey taken. It turns out that only a small number of society members have used the newer electronic gadgets (e.g., I-Pod, color photo cell phones, blogs, etc.) Likewise with digital cameras, though some member’s children are up-to-date in this area. Mr. Monk summed up the discussion by describing the DHSOS as “clueless electronically.” Mr. Noakes expressed umbrage at this.

Meeting Adjourned

There being no more food or coffee (the waiter had long-since left), the meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm. Society members drifted homeward into San Francisco’s fog and summer breezes. It was another successful meeting and another great night out with friends.