



The

# British Society

1816

Helping Britons in Need in New England

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### Society Officers

**President – Charles Platt**  
**Executive Secretary – Susan Dugdale**  
**Treasurer – Tim Hunt, MBE**  
**Recording Secretary – Margaret Hunter**

### Executive Committee

**Lewis Allen**  
**Stephen Clark**  
**Katherine Duffy**  
**Becky Liley**  
**Emma Wicks**

### Other

**Michael Dawson – Charter Editor**  
**Simon Sherrington - Webmaster**

# Charter

## Letter from the President



The C-G (l) and The President (r)

Some of you will have noticed there is a new look about the old British Charitable Society. We have a new name, for one thing –The British Society – and a new logo. The old website has been totally made over, and it has a new address: [www.thebritishsociety.org](http://www.thebritishsociety.org). Have a look at it. So what is all this about? Why the changes?

As past readers of this space will know, the recent economic downturn and lacklustre recovery has increased the call for our help. More cases to be addressed by fewer resources demand new thinking. And greater resources will enable us to identify and help the many more cases that e know to be out there but who have not yet found us.

What has not changed is what we do: provide short-term, critically-needed relief to Britons in need. How we do it has had to change. We are a venerable old organisation (almost 200 years old), and the world has been changing around us. You can't stand still in the middle of a fast-flowing river. Now we carry out our mission by raising funds through a variety of events that appeal to Anglophiles in the Boston area. Last year, we offered a greater variety of events for members than ever before, and this year promises to be even better. Stay tuned (or check out the new website) for more details.

The Executive Committee has changed too, with some long-serving members returning to the UK for family or business reasons. New people with new ideas have been voted into the Committee to take their places. As we hoped they would they brought new ideas. The Committee has now been realigned along areas of functional responsibility: a group whose goal is to expand the membership, another for fundraising and so on.

Amidst all this change, we don't want to lose track of the input of our loyal, current members. Please send us your ideas! What are we doing now that you would like us to do differently, or maybe not do at all? What new thing should we try that would improve our ability to carry out our mission?

When you have scratched your heads for a bit, please write up your best ideas and send them by email or snail mail to me. I promise to keep your correspondence confidential. My email address is: CCJP@Fiduciary-Trust.com, and my mailing address is 175 Federal Street, Boston MA 02110.



**Susan Dugdale, Executive Vice-President**

## Case Histories

**Mrs. H** contacted us in July 2011. She is a divorced mother of 3 grown children. She was born in Birmingham England and although she's lived in CT for 20 years, she still holds a British passport. After her acrimonious divorce from her husband she learned that he had been using her Social Security number to set up his account with the electric company for his new apartment. He subsequently left his current girlfriend and the state of CT and Mrs. H became responsible for his outstanding bills. The power company just assumed she had two homes. Although Mrs. H works, her wages were nowhere near enough to cover these new debts and despite the fact that she'd organized a pay down program to clear them eventually, the extra expense had taken its toll on her

other responsibilities. In the usual order of robbing Peter to pay Paul she had fallen behind with her rent, her gas bills and her communication bills. She came to us when a shut off of her own electricity supply was imminent.

The Society paid for 2 months rent, for her gas account to be brought up to date, and for her AT&T bill.

**Mr. J.:** And sometimes even a little help can go a long way. Mr. J is a 60 year old Englishman who has lived in the US quite successfully for over 30 years. At one point in the '90s and early 2000s he owned his own Insurance Company in CT. The recession has taken its toll and Mr. J hasn't had a regular job since 2008. By the time he contacted the Society in July he and his wife had pretty much exhausted savings and were relying on help from friends and family, which had also practically dried up. The good news was that he had a job offer to start at the end of July. The bad news was that their oil tank was empty and no local company would supply them without previous debts being cleared. This was obviously something that Mr. J was in no position to do at the time.

The Society had a conversation with one of the local companies and paid by personal credit card for a delivery, which the Society then reimbursed. They still have a mountain of debts, but Mr. J has been working now for 2 months and is gradually getting back on his feet.

*Susan Dugdale*

## Obituary

### **Robert Groom, OBE**

Edited from a eulogy given by Geoff Hall at Bob's funeral.

It is an honour and privilege for me to pay tribute to my good friend Bob Groom, but of course it is touched by sadness at his departure. I think that the words which characterized Bob's life are Service, Honour and Loyalty.

Bob was born in England in 1919 and his childhood was clouded by the years of the depression. In 1939, his life, like so many others, was significantly changed by the



outbreak of the war in Europe. He immediately enlisted in the RNVR and for the next six years saw service at sea. He was a Sub-Lieutenant from 1940 to 1942 in the North Atlantic and later captain of HMS City of Norwich. In 1944 he was captain of HMS America at the allied landings at Normandy.

Being a modest chap, he did not speak very much about his war time experiences, but he did confide one significant experience to me, that he was posted to the ill-fated HMS Hood. Just prior to joining the ship, he was taken ill with, I believe, suspected appendicitis and was unable to join the crew. As we all know, the Hood was sunk with only 5 or 6 survivors from the crew of 1500.

Upon demobilization from the navy, Bob received his Master's Degree in Shipping, and it was there that he met his wife and started a happy marriage of over 60 years. Monica has been a devoted wife, especially during recent years, which have seen a decline in Bob's health and the tragic loss of young Robert last year. To Monica and family, it will be of some comfort at this present time of sadness to know that you and Bob are so highly regarded and respected.

In the 1950's, Bob and Monica came to the United States where Bob became VP, Ports of America, a shipping import/export company on the Boston waterfront. In those days, the Port of Boston was much busier than it is today. Labour relations were an important part of life, and it took Bob's strong hand, sense of right and wrong, and tact, to keep the operation going without disruption.

For many years, Bob was President of the British Charitable Society (now The British Society). For this service, he was awarded the OBE by HM the Queen. At that time I was Secretary of the Society. Bob wasn't always good at remembering names. Often he would say to me "What's the name of that chap over there". Occasionally, I would mischievously say that it was Bill Smith when, in fact, it was Joe Jones. Afterwards, he would give me a terrible rocket. The British Charitable is a fine example of Bob's service.

He was a long time member of the British Officers Club and also it's President during which time he oversaw the continuation of the Club during some difficult times. In those days, our quarters were in a lovely building on Marshall Street near the North End. As most of us worked in Boston, it was the practice to meet on Wednesday evenings for a drink, a chat, to relive old battles and generally put the world to rights. Fortunately, someone always came along to muck it up, which gave us the excuse to meet the next week to put it right again.

A couple of doors from our Mess was a restaurant, reputedly the meeting place for VIP's in the Mafia. I remember one night, at the conclusion of our evening, finding a host of black Cadillac's escorted by some fearsome looking men in black suits. It did not require much intelligence to know what was barely hidden under their breast pockets. Without hesitation, and summoning up his old naval voice, Bob sternly enquired of the drivers' "What the so-and-so is going on here, we're blocked in and want to get out". I was quivering in my boots and thought to myself "I'm right behind you Bob"..... literally and hiding! Bob held his ground and, sure enough, the cars moved, but it was an anxious moment for those of us of lesser nerve.

And so, Bob, you now set forth on your final voyage to "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns". I promise you, Bob, that when we meet again and you ask me "Who is that chap in the corner", I will truthfully answer "That is St. Peter".

God bless you, Bob. You have set a noble example for all of us to follow. You will be sadly missed, but fondly remembered.

## **New Executive Committee Members**

The following members were elected to the Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting last June:

**Katherine Haney Duffy** was born and raised in Massachusetts. She is a graduate of Harvard College, '78. She lived in England from 1978 till late 2006, when she moved back to Boston.

She is currently working with several non-profit organizations, including:

- The Boston Athenaeum (Proprietor)
- Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Museum (advisory board)
- Peabody Essex Museum (Overseer)
- Appalachian Mountain Club (advisory board)

She is also a member of the Lawn Society at the University of Virginia and a supporter of their Library and Special Collections.

Ms Duffy holds dual USA/British citizenship.



**Lewis S. Allen** is an entrepreneur and private investor. For the last 17 years he has also been a full-time volunteer management consultant for non-profit organizations in several countries. In most instances, his role, often in the capacity of Director or Council Member, has been to help develop improved governance and business practices. He has also focused upon the establishment of financial sustainability through enterprise development; fundraising through strategic partnerships and staging of events; the expansion of membership through better outreach and stewardship; and branding through image and Web site development.

Mr. Allen is a graduate of The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Following military service in the Army, Mr. Allen held several management positions in marketing of consumer products and then spent 14 years at Citicorp, where he participated in various domestic and international banking activities. In 1986 Mr. Allen founded, and was Chairman of the international investment banking business Brown Shipley and Stetson, with offices in New York and London.

Mr. Allen is also a trained ornamental horticulturist and has worked as such for The Royal Horticultural Society.

## **New Society Members**

Mr. Nicholas Anzalone  
Mr. Ben Lasserre  
Ms. Amanda Littlefield  
Ms. Hilary Sinclair

## **New Membership Categories and Benefits**

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The British Charitable Society welcomes new members who want to be part of our activities. There are different options for membership that entitle those who join the Society to the range of benefits listed below.

Please contact Emma Louise Wicks for a membership application form. Complete the form, have it signed by an existing member of the Society and mail it, with a cheque for the appropriate amount, to: **Emma Louise Wicks** 30 Garrison Street, #503 Boston MA 02216 617-595-7044 [emmalouisewicks@gmail.com](mailto:emmalouisewicks@gmail.com)

## New Membership Categories and Benefits

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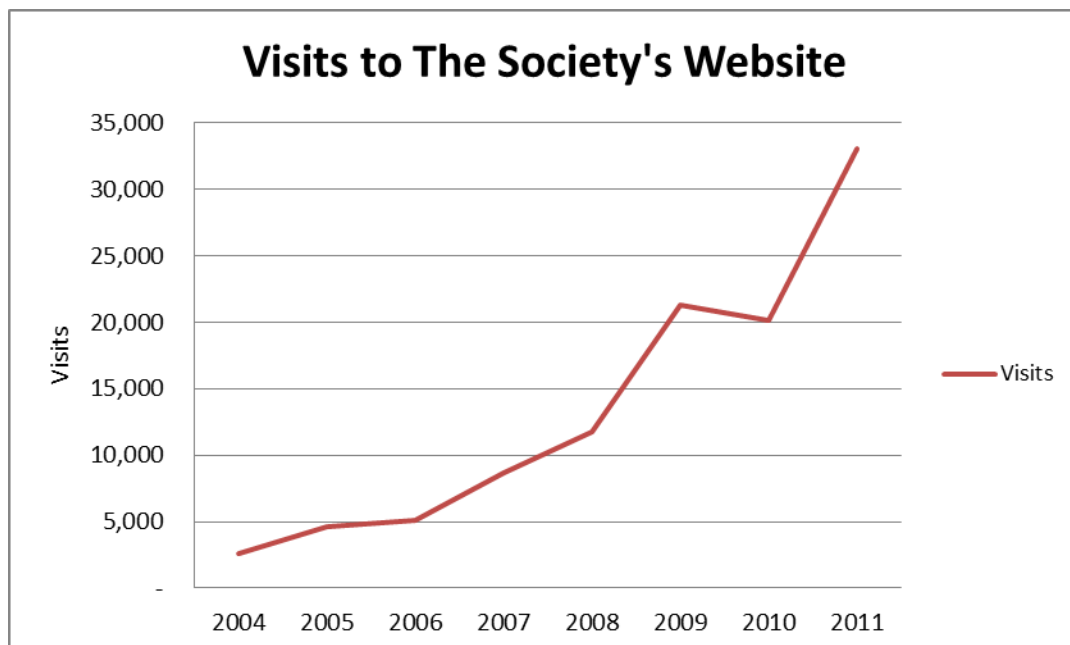
- **Friends: \$100 p.a.** Benefits include a handsome Membership Certificate, suitable for framing, discounted admission for two people to attend Society events, an invitation to a member only event plus our newsletter The Charter. We are currently discussing discounts for our members at a range of British-based retailers and organizations in the Boston area.
  - **Patron: \$400 p.a.** Benefits include two invitations to an event at the Consul General's Residence plus all benefits previously described.
  - **President's Circle: \$1,500 p.a.** Benefits include two invitations to a special dinner event hosted by the President, plus all previously described benefits.
  - **Benefactor: \$2500 initial gift, thereafter annual Friends dues.** Benefits include two invitations to a privileged event hosted by the Consul General plus all previously described benefits.
  - **Corporate: \$500 p.a.** Advertisement in the newsletter The Charter. Links to your website from the Society website and the opportunity to sponsor or co host events.
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**Please Note:** To download the forms on this page, you will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer. If you do not have this free application, go to the Adobe website [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) where you can download and install it.

## The Website

In the first eight months of 2011 there were 22,670 visits to our website, versus 13,799 in the same period last year, a gain of 64.3%. If this increase is applied to the total for 2010, the total number of visits in 2011 will be 33,010 visits.

This high estimated total for 2011 must be taken with more than one grain of salt, however. Our website has been the subject of much re-design in the last months, and each time the webmaster or any of his associates goes to the website, a visit is recorded. So some of the 33,010 are our own; there is no way of separating them from the total.



## **Coming Event**

### **The War Memoir of Wallis Simpson**

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors takes great pleasure in announcing the first in the series of Society events for the 2011 – 2012 season to be held on 13 October. Your invitation and reply card are attached. Please open both documents in Word. Please respond promptly, in no case later than 7 October, as space is limited and we are certain that this event will be well attended.

The event will be held at the Chilton Club, 152 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston. The evening will begin with cocktails in the Library which will be followed by an interesting presentation by Katherine Auspitz about her new book, an historical novel, *The War Memoir of (HRH) Wallis, Duchess of Windsor*. Was it the greatest love story of the twentieth century or a bloodless coup?

This extraordinary tale rests upon little known historic details that make Wallis's role in the events entirely plausible. Kate is a meticulous historian and the twenty-six pages of footnotes ground the story firmly in published recollections of the major figures of the time.

Here are the details of the event:

**Cocktail reception and Lecture \$50.00 per person**  
**Reception, Lecture and Dinner \$125.00 per person**  
**Reception: 6:00pm; Presentation: 6:30pm; Dinner 7:15pm**

**You may register and pay by credit card on our Web site**  
**[www.TheBritishSociety.org/events/](http://www.TheBritishSociety.org/events/)**

We hope that you are able to join us as we look forward to seeing you.

## **Past Events**

### **The Ancestry of Catherine Middleton**

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April Christopher C. Child, Genealogist of the Newbury Street Press, introduced his book *The Ancestry of Catherine Middleton* at the Massachusetts Historical and Genealogical offices in Boston. It was written to honour the marriage of His Royal Highness Prince William of Wales, K. G. to Miss Catherine Middleton. The following are excerpts, with permission, from Gary Roberts's Foreword to this book.

**The Ancestry of Catherine Middleton**  
**by**

**William Addams Reitwiesner**

**(Excerpts from the Foreword by Gary Roberts)**

Some of the northern families in Miss Middleton's ancestry are treated in C. A. Lupton's *the Lupton Family in Leeds* (1965). Her earliest known ancestor in the patrilineal line was her great-great-great-great-grandfather, a cabinet maker. A great-great-great-grandmother Frances Elizabeth (Greenhow) Lupton was a niece of the writer Harriet Martineau. Via the Martineaux - French Huguenot refugees to Norwich at least three of whom were surgeons - Meadows and a Fairfax line of Clergymen, Kate Middleton has knightly and baronial ancestry, including descent from Henry

“Harry Hotspur” Percy, Lord Percy (of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part I*) and Lionel of Antwerp, second son of King Edward III, (who died in 1377).

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Most of Kate Middleton’s forebears beyond the twelfth generation are (for now) untraceable, but the range of ancestry which may be carried by future British Kings will now include most modern groups in the Anglo-American world, many early modern German Princes, and various nobles in most of the states of late mediæval Europe. Future royal marriages will also be of keen interest, and royalty studies in the later twenty-first century will require a knowledge of virtually all of western genealogy.

*Gary Boyd Roberts  
Boston, Massachusetts*

## Polo, Anyone?

*It takes a very good man to stand up to the rush of seven crazy ponies in the last quarters of a Cup game, when men are riding with their necks for sale, and the ponies are delirious.* Rudyard Kipling, *The Maltese Cat*.



**Female Polo Player, Tang Dynasty, early 8<sup>th</sup> century.** *Wikipedia*

There are accounts of sporting competitions between two teams on horse-back that go back to Persia two thousand years ago, when they were designed to train the King’s guard of cavalry. Each team amounted up to 100 a side, and the games were like miniature battles. As time passed it became a national sport played extensively by the nobility, with the Queen having her own league of woman players.

Polo spread from Persia (Iran) to Egypt and Turkey, and eventually to India where it was taken up by British officers during the Raj, and, by 1860, to England.

The founding father of polo in America is always thought to be Gordon Bennett, who established the Westchester Polo Club in 1876. Their first match was on May 13 of that year, but the first American game may have to be attributed to a club in Galveston who played a match on May the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 11 days before Bennett’s.

It has always been seen as a sport for the nobility, or at least for the very wealthy, partly because of its history, and partly because of the expense for each player of keeping several horses (still called “ponies”). Prince Charles is an avid player, as his collar bone can testify, and Prince William got in a chukka in California last July.<sup>1</sup>



**Prince William in Santa Barbara  
(See footnote for source of photo)**

<sup>1</sup>CARPENTARIA, CA - JULY 9: Prince William, Duke of Cambridge participates in The 2011 Foundation Polo Challenge to Benefit the American Friends of The Foundation of Prince William and Prince Harry and Polo Training Center of Santa Barbara Sponsored by Tiffany & Co. at Santa Barbara Polo & Racquet Club on July 9, 2011 in Carpentaria, California. (Photo by Albert L. Ortega/PictureGroup) via AP IMAGES

## And at Newport ...



**Emma Wicks** of the British Society's Executive Committee was in **Newport** on September the 3<sup>rd</sup> for a match between an English and an American team. She filed the following report:

**Sylvester Stallone** once said that, "Playing polo is like trying to play golf during an earthquake." With the recent weather that the North East has experienced, the members of the USA and England polo teams may well have been able to sympathise if the match had been scheduled any earlier than Labor Day weekend. Fortunately though, on Saturday 4, September, the sun shone brightly and with a light breeze the conditions were perfect for one of the premier and most historic matches of the polo season – USA versus England, its archrival, held at the beautiful location of Glen Farm in Newport.

Playing for England was Captain and Chairman of the Hurlingham Polo Association, Nicholas Colquhoun-Danvers, along with a number of England's best amateur players. Despite England's heroic efforts, America just looked too fast on the day and dominated the field for the majority of the match. England's

determination and stamina held throughout though despite America taking a final victory with a result of 11-8. (After handicaps added).

This year was the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Westchester Cup, a legendary polo contest that began in Newport in 1886 between the US and England. It was the first international sporting competition of its kind, predating the modern-day Olympics, and it has been contested 17 times over the course of the 125 years.

Members of the British Society and their guests were seated at tables in the Subscribers Enclosure, along with a number of members from BABCNE. The view was spectacular and the noise of the riders thundering from one end to the other made even the most unlikely equestrian-minded of us cheer in excitement at the skill and speed of the players. The drink flowed freely and new friends were made along with old acquaintances reunited.

Following the match, a special 'Sabrage' of Champagne Nicholas Feuillatte by wine expert Jeffrey Pogash was a highlight of the Trophy Presentation, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Westchester Cup, as well as Season 20 of the Newport International Polo Series. The saber was the weapon of choice of Napoleon's light cavalry, whose victories across all Europe gave them plenty of reason to celebrate. During these parties the cavalry would open the Champagne with their sabers. Napoleon is known to have said, "Champagne! In victory one deserves it; in defeat one needs it." On this occasion, USA deserved it and England needed it. Not that the English normally need an excuse to enjoy champagne of course!

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all and made a useful contribution to our Society's charitable work. With the British polo team competing in the Olympics next year, the interest and enthusiasm for polo will hopefully only increase. Let's hope for an even better match at Glen Farm next year.

*Emma Wicks*





## **REPATRIATION: From New to Old England**

**Guy Bennett, formerly a member of the Executive Committee, has recently returned to England. He filed this report about how his return felt after living for a decade in the US.**

*“We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don't let yourself be lulled into inaction.” [Bill Gates](#)*

If I had a dollar for every person who had asked me, “What is it like to be back in England?” I would be a rich man. Unfortunately the dollar would be less than when I arrived in the US. My family arrived in Massachusetts a few weeks before 9/11, nearly ten years ago, and there was almost perfect symmetry back in April, when the news channels ‘celebrated’ the removal of Osama Bin Laden. While the US undoubtedly changed overnight, how has the UK fared over the last 10 years? Who had heard of the iPod, iPhone, HD TV, Twitter, Facebook, Skype, Kate Middleton and Barack Obama back in 2001?

While I flew back with my wife to the UK in June with heavy heart, we were also excited by the prospect of reuniting the family on the same continent. Our three daughters had all voted with their feet and pursued their education in England, thankfully given the difference in cost!

When we left England in 2001, New Labour under Tony Blair was well into their process of transforming the UK.

One marked change has been the increase in population and, while the benefits of a multiracial society are manifest, it is nevertheless disturbing to disembark from ‘the red eye’ at a heaving Heathrow and find the staff at Customs had no one with English as their first language. A couple of weeks after arriving, when my knee swelled up badly, I consulted my GP, who referred me to A&E as the quickest way to see an orthopedic surgeon. St. George’s, Tooting, was a maelstrom on a Monday morning but devoid of white Anglo-Saxons among the patients.....apart from the dregs of British society, whose weekend sport was to get into fights.

Everyone is 10 years older! Most friends of my generation have started the ageing process in earnest. A good friend and I failed to make contact on a train despite sitting opposite each other (a) because he no longer had a hair on his head and (b) I now sport a more mature look (skin, hair, muscle tone, etc.) and he thought I was still in America. Many friends are now orphans and, more worryingly, personality flaws are more ingrained. Little Johnny has grown up: the small boy I could give piggybacks to and duff up in a rough-and-tumble is now 6’4” and towers over me ominously.

Thankfully, tattoos and piercings are rare but not unknown. While not a prude, I prefer not see the current generations’ underwear. ‘Demure’ is no longer in fashion as thongs and bra straps are displayed. Put them away! Men, on the other hand, look positively undressed without a tie and only senior executives or old farts use such accessories. So much for the old school tie. Other conventions such as black, polished shoes with dark suits have disappeared.

I have been down to support a godson – one of the little Johnny’s! - who is now a professional rugby player and buff beyond buff! He is playing in the London Irish versus London Welsh game, which would have been real derby way back when, when the Welsh dominated world rugby and boasted greats such as Gerald Davies, JPR Williams, John Dawes, Mervyn Davies and the Irish made up the numbers. How times have changed! The Irish are stronger at rugby than the Welsh. While my godson is 6’3” and well over 220 pounds as a fly-half, and represented England at Under 20, his team mates were multi-national but the Celtic fringe was exactly that, a minority. At least the Welsh included two players with the name Jones (‘Jones the butcher’ and ‘Jones the shepherd’??), their most conspicuous player was a bruiser called Epi Taione – ‘Jones the Tongan?’ The Irish could not offer one O’ or even a Mac.

At Stamford Bridge football ground, Chelsea still boasts its cockney wags but the crowd is now more cosmopolitan, with supporters of every colour and nationality replacing the skinheads and thugs of yore. My companion advises me the guy in the seat behind looks like a Russian hit man and speaks the language. I don't argue. At least three home players are English but how long will that last? "The Wimbledon effect," i.e. England hosts the sport but all the participants are foreign, seems to be migrating to other sports.

Foreigners are having an undue influence elsewhere. We flew into the furor of Murdoch's empire, which showed the erstwhile revered, established organs of police, press and politicians had lowered their ethical standards. Politicians have rarely been beacons of morality and were still recovering from the expenses scandal. Nevertheless, lawyers, investment bankers, estate agents were all lifted up the pecking order of most despised 'profession.'

Both police and politicians were given their chance to redeem themselves when a nasty underclass of disenfranchised youth decided to go 'shopping without paying' at the beginning of August. It speaks volumes when many perpetrators are wearing designer clothes and equipped with Blackberries. One male thug was even photographed exiting from Boots with women's hygiene products. How low can you go? However, technology in the form of CCTV and face recognition has shown its value. When Cameron hauled himself off the beach, the courts demonstrated a remarkable, un-English toughness.

This national disgrace occurred just as Olympic organizers were ramping up interest one year before London hosts the big event. Expectations are now so high among middle class children, with two exotic holidays a year, that tickets to Olympic events such as handball or beach volleyball are infra dig., when 85% are receiving no tickets at all.

Europe goes on holiday in August and all its leaders were caught on the beach when international equity markets elected to test the resolve of the Germans to bail out the Greeks, Italians, Spaniards, Irish and Portuguese. Picture the sight of Angela Merkel scurrying back in her bikini (one assumes she is not a naturist frau)! European politicians maintain their idealistic outlook, papering over the cracks. Why doesn't Greece just offer Crete and one million towels to the Germans to erase their debt? After all, the Germans expressed an interest 70 years ago.

While the rioters have altered the perspective, we hearken back to the honesty of American suburbia, where you can leave your car running in the Roche Brothers car park, the honour system works and petty crime such as bicycle theft is rare.

On the issue of police, older readers might recall the term, 'sleeping policeman.' I am not referring to the constabulary on the nights of the riots but to the traffic calming measures prevalent all over London. Driving around many streets is like riding a roller-coaster at 10mph, and then the jokers stick in bollards, which you have to swerve around. A significantly greater number of cars are on the road and congestion charges are further deterrents to driving. On the flip side, public transport appears to have improved and the so-called 'Boris bikes' are all over London.

Space is the biggest issue. Houses, roads, cars, (and) waistlines are notably smaller. Not only are houses markedly more compact but the prices are astronomic. Our house is less than half the scale of our American residence but a similar price. Size is not everything! And American trends such as wooden floors, decking and staging are now de rigeur around London.

One old British habit that we hold dear and, thankfully, has not lost its lustre is the Sunday roast. It is hard to beat a family meal with or without friends and a fine bottle of wine, followed by a stroll to walk it off. ...

Spending more time with old friends has been wonderful, and the concept of dinner parties has been a welcome revival for us. We enjoyed numerous social occasions in New England, but the common observation of Americans being guarded has been thrown into stark relief again. British humour is a conduit for so much. While British humour has become more crude and raw at one end of the spectrum, its subtlety

and insightfulness is a tremendous medium for social intercourse. The canvas is broad and open: politics, sex and social convention are discussed in depth rather more comfortably. Other 'global traveler' friends say it has taken 1-2 years to readjust to British life after long periods abroad.

As ever, there are many good things on both sides of the Atlantic. They are just different. What do we miss?

1. New England weather. Yes, we do, despite earthquakes and hurricanes.
2. Friends. Surprisingly!!
3. The outdoor life, and especially barbeques.
4. Fuel prices.
5. Corn on the cob.
6. Accessibility to cinemas
7. The Red Sox.
8. American teeth.
9. Packers in the supermarket.
10. Cultural diversity. Most of our mates here are British.

*Guy Bennett*