



Charter

SPECIAL BALL ISSUE

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The newsletter of the British Charitable Society

December 2005

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President's Letter



The Big News from the British Charitable Society is the resurrection of the Ball, last celebrated in 1938. Much commentary and photos appear in this issue of the Charter.

The key thing about an event like this is that it does not happen by accident. The Ball Committee under chair, Diane Bailey-Boulet, used a great deal of physical muscle and mental perspiration to put it on and they deserve our hearty congratulations for the success achieved. Success it was because the objectives were realized. Mainly, we wanted to raise awareness of the Society and, maybe, we would make some money to offset the operating deficit. It was also great fun and, if you are reading this and weren't there, come next year. Same time, same place.

www.britcharity.org

Society Officers

President – Tim Hunt MBE
Vice-President – Kathy Tunsley, MBE
Executive Secretary – Susan Dugdale
Treasurer – Charles Platt
Recording Secretary – Jackie McGrail

Executive Committee

Guy Bennett
Diane Bailey-Boulet
Jan Carrigan
Michael Dawson, Editor
Robert A. Groom, OBE (Past President)
Peggy Hunter
Thomas Keown
Geoff Mullis (Past President)
Gavin Nathan
Bruce Lee Rogers

At the same time, we have not neglected the main work of the Society, which is the identification, consideration and assistance of those British subjects or their children whose cases have fallen through the national or state social security networks and often have no other place to turn to. As most of us sit around the table this Thanksgiving and enjoy a sumptuous feast, it is hard to imagine the pitiful tales we often hear. We are indeed blessed to have such an organization as the BCS to partly assuage our consciences.

As we have in years past, many members attended the Commonwealth Remembrance Day service at Old North in Boston on November 13th and enjoyed the preaching of a British priest who has just taken on the Episcopal chaplaincy at Harvard. It is always a good turn-out, but it seemed to me that the numbers were greater this year. As befits the remembrance of past service sacrifices, there was a sprinkling of veterans with an impressive row of medals. Poppies were on every lapel. A piper played following the two minute silence and we all sang God Save the Queen to round off the service. Afterwards, we were treated to a gracious reception in the neighbouring parish house, provided by the congregation of the church.

If you celebrate Christmas, I wish you a merry one. If you enjoy other rituals, may they be joyous. If we all chase away the dark of the Winter Solstice, the days will grow longer. May 2006 be Happy and Prosperous.

Enthusiastic Response Marks Revival of Society's First Ball Since 1938

by Diane Bailey-Boulet



Diane Bailey-Boulet

“Dressed to the nines” best describes the two-hundred and sixteen guests who filled the Harvard Club of Boston on the evening of 4 November for the British Charitable Society Ball. The glittering black tie event brought together

members and friends of the regional British community in support of the Society's mission in New England. Women in stunning gowns and men in tuxedos or kilts mingled in an elegant, light-hearted evening that was widely agreed to have been a wonderful time.

In honor of the occasion, Boston's Mayor Thomas Menino issued a proclamation declaring the date “British Charitable Society Day in Boston.” The Society intentionally chose Boston as the gathering place for the newly revived ball in honor of the city's central role as the historic and current launching point of our charitable work

The festivities included a dinner-dance with music by acclaimed Boston band *Kahootz*, complimentary scotch tasting courtesy of William Grant & Sons, and a silent auction full of items—many with a British origin or theme—generously donated by a range of individuals and businesses (please see donor list).

So why host a ball now? The Society's executive committee had been exploring ways to bring together the membership, encourage new friends, and increase giving in support of our mission. During a meeting last winter, committee member Michael Dawson presented photocopies of news clippings he had uncovered on a research visit to the Massachusetts Historical Society. The clippings showed that the Society hosted balls from 1911 to 1938 that were then much-heralded highlights of the city's “social season.” A Boston *Globe* article from 1938 described that year's ball: the festivities, held at the Copley Plaza Hotel, drew 1000 people for a night of pomp

and ceremony. As war loomed across the Atlantic, it must have been a bittersweet occasion. It was to be the Society's last ball—until this November.

Inspired by the history of the event, the executive committee assessed our capabilities, took a leap of faith, and voted to revive the Society's ball tradition to draw support for—and build awareness of—our modern day work. I stepped forward to serve as event chair and was thrilled—and hugely relieved—when Susan Dugdale, Guy Bennett, Michael Dawson, Paul Stanislas, Peggy Hunter, and Elizabeth Price stepped forward to serve on the ball committee with me.

We faced three key concerns: Would anyone come? Would the effort bring in funds to support the Society's work? Would we be able to secure corporate support? We selected our venue and started our outreach and planning in the spring. We worked steadily throughout the summer, meeting regularly to report on progress, assign new tasks, prepare mailings (including hand addressing hundreds of invitations!), and grapple with the intricacies of hosting an event for which we had no recent model. By fall we were firmly on track. In addition to regular meetings, the committee logged hundreds of phone calls, donation requests letters, e-mail messages, and conversations with friends as we shaped our vision into reality.



**President Tim Hunt, MBE (l)
Consul-General John Rankin, (r)**

Throughout the many months, British Consul General Mr. John Rankin, Vice Consul Katy Tunsley, and the consular staff stood by us to offer

encouragement and practical advice. That support sustained us all. In early August we were delighted to achieve our goal of enlisting corporate sponsorship when Mr. Bob Smythe, President of Citizens Banks of Massachusetts, agreed to be our overall sponsor. We then worked throughout September and October to bolster ticket sales and prepare for the big day.



Harvard Hall

When the big day actually came, it was thrilling to see so many people pour into the Harvard Club clearly ready to enjoy themselves. The happy results of our months of planning had finally been realized. In the oak-paneled splendor of Harvard Hall I had the pleasure of launching the dinner by announcing the mayor's proclamation. BCS President Tim Hunt then offered grace, noting the reason for the gathering: to support our efforts assisting those British nationals in New England for whom the daily trial of making ends meet is—at least temporarily—a crushing ordeal.

The Harvard Club's chef prepared a delicious menu that included roasted vegetable strudel with lemon butter sauce, watercress and bibb salad, herb roasted Statler chicken breast, mushroom and pearl onion sauce, truffle mashed potatoes, roasted fennel and acorn squash. Dessert was layered tiramisu with berries.



**Bob Smythe
President
of Citizens Bank**

As the meal progressed, Executive Secretary Susan Dugdale welcomed Citizens Bank of Massachusetts President Bob Smythe, who in turn paid tribute to guest-of-honour Mr. John Rankin, Mr. Rankin, who has been a strong supporter of the Society since taking up his post in Boston in 2003, shared his gratitude for the Society's work. He described the vibrant and textured nature of the British community in the region. He then announced the presence of a special visitor: Ms. Celia Sandys, granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill; Ms. Sandys was in Boston as part

of a tour of the United States to meet with veteran's groups.

With the meal and ceremonial toasts completed, the dance floor came to life as guests enjoyed the music of *Kahootz*. The setting was festooned with candlelight. A portrait of Her Majesty the Queen added a gracious touch of pomp to the setting.

The event's silent auction was an event-within-an-event. A wide range of individuals and businesses responded generously to our requests for items, donating glorious getaways, professional services, specialty clothing, jewelry, collectibles, tickets to artistic performances, and more. This part of the evening played a vital role in making the overall event a fund raising success. (See the back page for a list of donors)

In all, the newly revised British Charitable Society Ball was a wonderful evening. For all the committee it was gratifying beyond words to see so many people having a happy time and responding with such enthusiasm to support the Society's work and mission. We had come a long way since casting our votes in favor of re-launching the event on a dark, cold night last winter. We had met our goals of bringing together our members and friends—and raising funds that will help us better serve those who come to us for help. Several guests expressed their sincere hope that we will do it again next year. Given such a positive response, how could we say no?

Because the ball was the first in a very long time, it was a maiden voyage for us. Because we intend to do it again, we would very much like to receive any comments you would like to make. What did we do right? What should we have done differently? How would you like to change the way the evening went? The best way to tell us your thoughts would to send them to the Ball Chair, Diane Bailey Boulet: 781-674-0498 or dbboulet@aol.com or 23 Ivan Street, Lexington, MA 02420-1437 Thank you!

Many photographs were taken at the ball and they can be seen on the Society's website: www.britcharity.org. They may also be purchased from there.

Armistice Day, Boston, 2005

Have you forgotten yet? . . .

Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack,
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and
shook you then

As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of
your men?

Do you remember the stretcher cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads, those ashen-gray
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and
gay?

Have you forgotten yet? . . .

Look up, and swear by the green of the Spring that you'll never forget!

Siegfried Sassoon, 1886-1967



The Cenotaph in Whitehall

Armistice Day, since 1954 called Veterans Day in the United States, here honours those who have died in all wars, but in the British mind it is still, and will ever be, primarily associated with the horrors of the Great War of 1914-1918. The reason for this is partly the fact of the enormous number

of casualties. For Britain alone there were 723,000 military deaths, out of a population of 48 million, plus another 198,000 from the Empire, for a total of 921,000. A whole generation was lost in the war to end all wars, when the bugles called them from sad shores. In the Second World War there were “only” 272,000 UK military deaths, plus a further 93,500 civilian deaths. Empire or Commonwealth deaths amounted to 133,800 for a total of 499,300. The big difference between the two wars, apart from the total numbers, was, of course, the large number of civilian casualties in the Second World War.

But it was not only the number of casualties which made the Great War so hideously memorable, but the hellish conditions under which so many died in the trenches. Furthermore there was a growing feeling of

disillusionment as the aura of patriotic romanticism in the beginning – “Now God be thanked who has matched us with this hour . . .” – gave way to a growing feeling that the management of the war was being bungled. It began to be suspected that men were not suffering and dying in a glorious cause, but perhaps in no cause at all. “The pity of war . . .” as Wilfred Owen wrote; he himself was killed in its very last week.

The trauma of those four years are forever etched on the British psyche, and in Boston we remember them at a special service at Christ Church – “Old North” – on the Sunday closest to November the 11th. The two-minute silence is observed, just as it is in England, bringing up memories of a foggy London day, with the Queen laying a wreath at the Cenotaph, and ourselves, when in uniform, always remembering to salute it whenever we walked by.



The Queen Laying a Wreath at the Poppy Field of Remembrance Outside the West Door of Westminster Abbey (From the BBC Website)

Old North is a particularly appropriate church in which to observe Armistice Day. It was planned in 1722 when it became clear that King’s Chapel, built in 1686 and then the only Anglican Church in Boston was too small for its growing congregation. The first service at Old North was held in December of 1723. The church was built on top of Copps Hill, near the waterfront where captains and merchants were settling. The building is a New England interpretation of a Wren church, its huge clear windows and white walls resulting in a church filled with light. Its eight bells were cast in Gloucestershire for old North, and installed in 1745. The same bells are rung today by the band that also rings the eight at the Church of the Advent on Beacon Hill, the only other ring in Boston.

Apart from its beauty the church is known for being where the sexton hung the two lanterns signifying to Paul Revere that British troops were on their way by land to destroy the Colonial cache of arms in Lexington. (The sexton was also a bell-ringer, so had keys to the tower). The bust of George Washington, made when he had retired, is believed to be a true likeness.



Old North

The church has other British associations besides having been a Church of England parish until 1776. It was there in 1976 that the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh came to a service marking the bicentennial of the United States, the Duke reading the "Let us now praise famous men . . ." passage from Ecclesiasticus.



**Harry Wellsman
on Pipes**

The remembrance this year began, as always, with a two-minute silence, followed by a piper playing the traditional *Flowers of the Forest*. The service was Morning Prayer with a sermon by The Reverend Benjamin King, a Cambridge man, who has been the Curate at the Church of the Advent for the last five years, but is now the Episcopal Chaplain at Harvard. He spoke of having recently visited the Old North Bridge in Lexington and being greatly moved by the grave of the British soldiers, with its compassionate epitaph.

Someone had left some poppies there and Fr. King felt that the only possible reaction to being in that place was to remain silent. He meditated on the blood red colour of the poppies remembering death, and the hope they represented for the future now that peace had been declared.



**The Reverend
Benjamin King**

Similarly Christians know that it was only through His suffering and death that Christ brought hope to suffering humanity

After the Dismissal there was a more robust singing of *God Save the Queen* than we often hear at home. There seems to be something about singing the national anthem overseas which gives it more significance, and which tends to cause neuro-muscular problems in the upper lip.

The delightful traditional buffet reception was held in the Parish House after the service, jointly provided by the British Officers Club and Old North parishioners. Our gratitude for the enormous generosity and graciousness of Old North in making this event possible year after year is beyond words.

A Case History The D Family.

We were first introduced to this family in June 2004, when they called to ask for our help. At the time they had been evicted from their house and were living in a Salvation Army shelter. The series of events which led to this low point in their lives is increasingly typical of the cases we now meet.



Susan Dugdale

Mrs. D hailed from Manchester, England and had arrived in Connecticut in 1998, met her husband to be, married, got a fairly well paid job and settled down in a single family home where they hoped to raise their two children. During her second pregnancy, Mrs. D contracted some sort of infection in her feet, which gradually became so bad that she could not walk. After the birth of her son, she struggled for some months, but eventually had to give up working. Meanwhile the medical bills began to mount; Mr. D lost his job as his attendance became erratic as he tried to balance looking after his wife and two small children. Within a year, they were seriously in debt and losing hope of being able to juggle their outstanding bills any longer. As often happens in these situations, they didn't seek any help from the state until they were in a crisis, by which time the state couldn't help them quickly enough. They were eventually evicted from their home in May 2004. By the time June came around they had

been living in the shelter for over a month, but through the good offices of the Salvation Army had the chance to move to an apartment with a low rental. By this time also, they were receiving some assistance from the state. Immediate occupancy was being hampered however by the fact that they had huge outstanding utility bills which needed to be cleared before they could start new contracts.

The BCS stepped in and paid a significant portion of the main Gas bill, which along with an amount from the Salvation Army cleared the debt and in so doing, also the obstacle to their moving.

The BCS continued to pay a small monthly stipend to the family until December 2004.

Earlier this year, the Executive Secretary made a routine follow up call to the family to see how they were getting along. Mrs. D's foot condition had worsened to the point where she was now wheelchair bound which meant that Mr. D had no chance of getting out to work as the children needed him to be home. The apartment they were living in was infested with cockroaches and their situation was generally miserable. In September the Executive Secretary visited the family and saw for herself the appalling conditions in which they were living. At that time Mrs. D had been admitted to hospital, as it appeared that there was a possibility that at least one foot might need amputation to relieve her pain. The bright light on the horizon was that they had the opportunity to move to the lower floor of a two family home in a better neighborhood.

After the visit the EC brought their case to the Executive Committee meeting and it was agreed that we should again help them, this time with the cost of removals when the date was agreed. At the beginning of November, the EC made another trip, this time to their new home. Due to the generosity of some members of the committee she was able to fill her car with boxes of clothes for the children, blankets and bed linens and even a TV and VCR!

Needless to say the D family were overwhelmed and the children thought Christmas had arrived early! The new apartment was bright and airy with the huge advantage of having a garden for the children to play in. Mrs. D had avoided surgery and is now on a course of drugs to fight the infection in her feet and

bones, but is still largely wheelchair bound. Just being in the new apartment has raised her spirits however and the family are now talking positively about 2006 being the year when health returns and so do jobs!

Without the generosity of the BCS this family would probably not have survived together. Their problems remain significant, but they are determined to work through them. As this is one of our ongoing cases, you are sure to be reading about them again in future issues of the Charter.

Susan Dugdale
Executive Secretary

The Boston Brits

Gavin Nathan is a member of the British Charitable Society's Executive Committee, and also President of Boston Brits which is a – well – let Gavin tell you about them.



Gavin Nathan

In 2002 I arrived in Boston, with my wife, Beth, after a spell in Singapore (I'm originally from Benfleet in Essex). During my job search I was interviewed by Gary, he had a strange accent, somewhat familiar though, so I thought I'd ask if he knew a good place to watch England playing a friendly that

night. He replied, "Why would a Welshman want to see England play football?"

My ear for accents had obviously been distorted after some years abroad. Anyway Gary was helpful in alerting me to a group of guys who met regularly on Thursday nights. We emailed and I turned up at the Harvard Gardens as planned, dead on 8pm. And I waited, and waited, propping up the bar sipping on my pint, and waited. A whole hour later I felt a tap on the shoulder, "You must be Gavin! You're the only one standing at the bar like 'billy no mates' nursing a pint". Every Thursday night after that I always turned up an hour after the time we arranged to meet, and I was always the first one to be there.

The group consisted of about 10 Brits who had all been in Boston for some years. They called themselves the Beaver Club, which coincidentally stood for British Expats at Various Entertaining Rendezvous.

And so the tradition of meeting on Thursday nights continued, which has taken me to most of the bars in Boston over the years. Our first official party was Halloween, when about 40 people turned up in fancy dress.

After that I decided to organize the rabble and setup a website. The website took off instantly, as a mouthpiece for Brits in Boston to air their views of life in America and to organize social activities. We now have 4 annual events; the fancy dress Great British Halloween (GBH) party (now up to 125 people), School Disco, Christmas Curry and a soon to be announced black tie affair.

We threw a party for our 300th member recently, making him perform an initiation ceremony involving singing Rule Britannia while pretending to be on a space hopper, and then presented him with two years supply of Worcestershire Sauce (1 bottle).

So if you know any 'billy no mates', then tell them to Google "Boston Brits" and they'll instantly have 330 like-minded friends!

Cheers!

*Gavin Nathan
President, Boston Brits*

All newcomers to Boston who are not US citizens can also find useful basic guidance at:
www.welcometoboston.org

Our Members Write

Home Thoughts from Abroad

Max Preston writes from Marlborough, England

Seven months ago, on a decidedly crisp Sunday morning in April, my plane touched down at Heathrow Airport in London, heralding the start of the next chapter of my life. It was to be a difficult and often painful transition period, but one from

which I'm happy to say I have emerged relatively unscathed.

I must, before I go on, thank everybody at BCS for their generous support over the last few years; your fundraising efforts accumulated an astonishing amount, which has helped massively in deferring the costs brought about by my need for personal care. The remainder of these funds, some of which were not used up before my untimely departure from the University of New Hampshire, has been kindly allocated to me so that I will be able to pay for such essential needs as a handicapped-accessible vehicle and weekly grocery bills. (More on that in a moment.)

As many of you will know by now, my mother, Suzy was diagnosed with a brain tumor in August of 2004. Unfortunately, she did not respond well to treatment. In February, I took the decision to medically withdraw from UNH and return to the UK to live with my father in late April. One month later, on May 27th, my mother passed away in the early hours of the morning. I cannot, in all honesty, say that this came as anything of a shock. Indeed, most of my grieving had been done "preemptively," as it were, before I even left the States. I think this may explain why, emotionally, I have fared so well in subsequent months.

It is possible, as a British citizen, for me to collect various forms of disability benefit; however, this is somewhat more difficult than it sounds. Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is pretty much universally available to every physically disabled subject of the Crown, but only if one has been present in the country for six months or more. Until recently, this was not the case for me. Since almost every other available benefit (including one that would aid in buying a car) is contingent upon having DLA, I have been essentially forced to live on £44 (\$75) a week, plus whatever my father collects because of long-term unemployment, without transport, for the last six months. All of my paperwork could not be filed until the beginning of November, so it's fair to say that BCS's contribution to my upkeep has been utterly vital and much appreciated. Without it, I'd be sunk!

After six months of waiting and wrangling with the local council, which included the intervention of our local MP, Shadow Defense Secretary Michael Ancram, my father and I are scheduled to move into a two-bedroom bungalow by the year's end. Because

of budgetary constraints faced by the authorities, disability-related adaptations to the property likely won't be completed until April. This is unfortunate, as it has been recommended to me that I have major orthopedic surgery in March, and recovering amidst major renovations to my house sounds frankly about as appealing as a tour of a sewage-works!

As well as writing and "podcasting" (publishing my own online audio monologues) for an upcoming American new-media-related website, www.lostremote.com, I have a number of exciting career prospects ahead of me, potentially including jobs at my local BBC radio station, the Independent on Sunday newspaper, and possibly a television spin-off of my Anglo-centric online column, to be broadcast over a webcam on the Boston-based cable channel, New England Cable News (NECN). None of this is yet confirmed, but all are a distinct possibility, thanks to the connections I have built.

In February, I'll be restarting my educational career at the Open University. The OU provides a way for those with an interrupted or incomplete education to pursue accreditation as far up the scale as bachelor's degrees, all done from home alongside whatever other work obligations the student may have. This works well for me, as the logistics of moving and living on a campus having just secured all the necessary benefits, would be highly troublesome. Also, it will allow me to secure much needed work in my desired field of journalism, while still fulfilling all my educational requirements.

On a final note, I would be remiss if I failed to pay tribute to the wonderful Dr. Eileen Morley, who sadly passed away over the summer. Eileen was one of the most friendly and enterprising people I have ever known, and it is certainly very hard to sum up her contribution to my life in just a few words. All I can say for now is that I hope I can continue to uphold the principles that both she and my mother held so dear – a true enthusiasm for life and a willingness to laugh in the face of adversity.

Max Preston
1 Rebbeck's Meadow
Lockeridge, Marlborough,
Wiltshire SN8 4DQ
ENGLAND

From John and Nena Padley

San Mateo, California

We are still members of the British Officers Club as Tim Hunt and many of your members are. We would like it if you mention in your next news that Nena and I have just celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary on the 5 Oct. and we had the usual greeting from the Queen.

We had the celebrative party in August to allow some of the guests who couldn't make it in Oct.

Daughter Sue is a teacher. She and Daughter Jean organised the family at the local Oyster Point YC.

I enclose photo of the family. The girls went to school in Marblehead when we lived there for 6 years in the 1960s.



I-r Jean, Nena, John and Susan Padley

From Michael Wynne-Willson An African Safari

Michael Wynne-Willson has reported from his recent trip to South Africa, Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) and Botswana (formerly Bechuanaland). He says that he has visited all seven continents in his 37 years of marriage, and has led small groups of friends three times round the world. He just got back from this latest trip last September.

Michael and his wife flew to Capetown via Sal in the Cape Verde Islands, a 17½ hour flight. Next time, he says, he would break the journey in Europe. They saw the Cape of Good Hope in a day of heavy rain – "well worth doing even so" – and visited the townships with a guide who called himself a former terrorist, but whom W-W found to be brilliant.

Perhaps the highlight of his trip was a rail journey on a wonderfully restored train which runs from

Capetown to Pretoria and beyond. It only carries 48 people in the height of luxury: a send-off by the owner with a team of hostesses, a trio of violinists and a red carpet, for example, and dressing for dinner.



Rovos Rail Engine
Photograph by Michael Wynne-Willson

They passed through South Africa's wine country and late one day they rolled into Magersfontein. This town was filled with history for W-W because his father had been there with his regiment in the Boer War.

They stopped at Kimberly and saw the diamond mine known as "the largest man-made hole in the world". Sadly, he said, the last diamond mine in the country was shortly to be closed, and even gold mining was diminishing, leaving these small mining towns deserted as their populations sought work in the cities. Finally, after "960 miles of sheer delight" they pulled into Pretoria and regretfully said Goodbye to this remarkable train, but not before posing with the antique and magnificent steam engine which hauled the train.

In the "Jacaranda City" of Pretoria the W-Ws stayed at Illyria House, where wood duck, golden pheasant and other exotic birds also made themselves at home. From there they drove to Johannesburg and flew to Livingstone in Nambia and the Victoria Falls. "The magnitude of these falls has to be seen, even when the water is sparse, as it was for us".

From Livingstone they flew in a small single-engine aircraft for a 90-minute flight to Vumbura Plains Lodge in Botswana. Altogether they visited three lodges in the Okavango Delta, seeing prides of lion, buffalo, and beautiful and exotic birds. The animals are so used to the Land Rovers that they paid no attention to them, but there was considerable

drama when they came upon a lioness trying unsuccessfully to bring down a buffalo. The guide commented that it usually took three lionesses to kill a buffalo, unless there is a lion at hand. (Terrible chauvinism rampant out there on the Dark Continent!).



Leopard in Botswana
Photograph by Michael Wynne-Willson

W-W summed up the experience as follows: "We had been treated warmly and kindly wherever we went, and our adventure was a magnificent experience and one for which we will, always, be more than grateful."

Coming Events From the Consulate-General's Website

EXHIBITION: Boston, Lincolnshire, Comes to Boston, Massachusetts Bay, 1630–1710

This special exhibition on the 375-year-old connections between Boston, Lincolnshire, and Boston, Massachusetts includes nearly 100 photographs of 17th century public buildings, churches, portraits, and homes in England and their Massachusetts counterparts; and facsimiles of 17th century maps, documents, and books. It features a full-size facsimile of the 1629 charter granted by King Charles I of England to the "Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England".

Through December 2005

Boston Room
Boston Public Library
Copley Square
Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts

PLAY: Wendy Wasserstein's "The Sisters Rosensweig"

"The Sisters Rosensweig" is Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winner Wendy Wasserstein's warm and funny play set in London about one evening in the lives of three Jewish-American sisters and their British friends, playing at the Boston University Theatre. Through 4 December 2005

Huntington Theatre
Huntington Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

<http://www.huntingtontheatre.org>

CONCERT: The Tallis Scholars

The world's leading Renaissance choir, The Tallis Scholars, make their annual Boston Early Music Festival appearance. "To hear them perform live is one of the great live music experiences of our time." (Boston Globe)

Friday, 9 December 2005, 8.00 pm

Jesuit Urban Center
 775 Harrison Avenue
 Boston, Massachusetts
 Tickets: \$59, \$41, \$25
 Tel: 617 661 1812

www.bemf.org

CONCERT: An Acoustic Evening with Al Stewart

While British folk singer Al Stewart hit his stride with chart-topping hits "Year of the Cat" (1976) and "Time Passages" (1977), his intricately woven story songs are still delivered with an impassioned tenor and top-notch acoustic guitar. A scholar at heart, Al Stewart excels at weaving historical narratives in his songs. With performance credits that include London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, he has become a folk-rock legend.

Friday, 9 December 2005, 8.00 pm

The Center for Arts in Natick
 14 Summer Street
 Natick, Massachusetts
 Tickets: \$30 (member/student/senior discount) on line from [The Center for Arts in Natick](http://www.theartscenter.org) or by phone: 508.647.0097

MUSIC AND THEATRE: 35th Anniversary Christmas Revels

This year's Revels presents 17 performances with an English medieval theme. Features include "The Boar's Head Carol," "The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance," "The Shortest Day" plus Revels' signature piece, "Lord of the Dance." The Revels 80-member ensemble



includes world-renowned singers Michael Collver, Daniela Tomic, Revels favorite David Coffin, The Pinewoods Morris Men, The Cambridge Symphonic Brass

Ensemble, and The Revels Chorus of adults and children.

December 16-30, 2005

Sanders Theatre
 Harvard University
 Cambridge, Massachusetts
 Tickets: \$20-\$42 (adults); \$12-\$32 (children under 12) from Harvard box office (617.496.2222), 12.00 noon - 6.00 pm Tue-Sat.

For performance dates and times and for more information visit the **Revels** website

WGBH presents the third annual CONCERT: A Christmas Celtic Sojourn
With Brian O'Donovan (host of A Celtic Sojourn)

Top talent from around the Celtic World re-creates the magic of an old-world Christmas, in the third season of the live version of Brian O'Donovan's beloved WGBH Christmas special. Hear Irish supergroup Danú, the extraordinary Scottish guitarist Tony McManus, Celtic cellist Natalie Haas, and welcome back the exquisite *a cappella* harmonies of Navan. In addition, dancer Kieran Jordan will introduce her new four-piece dance troupe Nua-nós.

Friday, 16 December 2005, 8.00 pm

Saturday, 17 December 2005, 8.00 pm

Sunday, 18 December 2005, 3.00 pm

Cutler Majestic Theatre at Emerson College
 219 Tremont Street
 Boston, Massachusetts

Tickets are \$25-\$65. To purchase tickets contact the **Cutler Majestic Theatre** on line or through Telecharge (800/233-3123)

The Handel & Haydn Society present: CONCERT/PERFORMANCE: Christmas in Wales

Grant Llewellyn conducts festival chorus music and recites - with a Welshman's passion - Dylan Thomas's *A Child's Christmas in Wales*.

Sunday, 18 December 2005, 3.00 pm

Wednesday, 21 December 2005, 8.00 pm

Jordan Hall
 New England Conservatory

30 Gainsborough Street
 Boston, Massachusetts
 Tickets: \$33-\$63, available from **The Handel & Haydn Society** or by phone at 617.266.3605

ART EXHIBITION: The Worlds of Francis Wheatley

Francis Wheatley (1747-1801) is best known to visitors to the Yale Center for British Art for his group portraits, or "conversation pieces," which include the masterful and perplexing portrait of the Oliver and Ward families.

Through 31 December 2005

Yale Center for British Art
 1080 Chapel Street
 New Haven CT
<http://ycba.yale.edu>

ART EXHIBITION: Sensation and Sensibility - Viewing Gainsborough's Cottage Door

Taking as its focal point Thomas Gainsborough's great landscape painting *The Cottage Door* (1780), this exhibition brings together for the first time a group of paintings, prints, and drawings related to Gainsborough's larger theme of the cottage and cottage life. This exhibition has been organized by the Yale Center for British Art and The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, CA.

Through 31 December 2005

Yale Center for British Art
 1080 Chapel Street
 New Haven CT
<http://ycba.yale.edu>

CONCERT: The Rolling Stones

Friday, 13 January 2006, 7:30 pm

Sunday, 15 January 2006, 7:30 pm

TD Banknorth Garden
 Causeway Street
 Boston

Tickets are available online through [Ticketmaster](#); at the TD Banknorth Garden Box Office, all Ticketmaster outlets, or by calling (617) 931-2000.

PLAY: Tom Cream Antarctic Explorer

In this virtuoso solo performance the Sugan Theatre Company and Aidan Dooley tell the story of Tom Cream, the Irish born Antarctic explorer and only man to serve with Scott and Shackleton on three famous expeditions. The play won the 'Best Solo Performance Award' at the New York International Fringe Festival in 2003.

25 January – 11 February 2006

Plaza Theater, Boston Center for the Arts
 539 Tremont Street
 Boston MA
 T: 617 497 5134; E: info@sugan.org
www.sugan.org

CELEBRATION: 2006 Seacoast Burns Night

Featuring a traditional Burns celebration of song, poetry, toasts, address to the haggis, dancing, piping and more.

Saturday, 28 January 2006, 6.30 pm

Great Bay Gallery
 Somersworth, New Hampshire
 Tickets: \$40 (\$35 for reservations received by 30 December).

For more information see
www.standrewsocietynh.org or email
gooch5050@aol.com

CONCERT: The Black Watch with the Band of Welsh Guards

The Black Watch with the Band of Welsh Guards will perform live on the 30th of January 2006 at the Mechanics Hall in Worcester Massachusetts. Tickets cost \$36-39. To book tickets for this event please call Tel: 508 754 3231 or 508 752 0888

Monday, 30 January 2006, 8:00 pm

Mechanics Hall
 321 Main St.
 Worcester MA

E-mail: info@mechanicshall.org
www.mechanicshall.org/html/calendar.html

PLAY: Romeo & Juliet directed by János Szász

An ancient feud between rival families shatters Verona until, against the odds, two teenagers from opposing factions meet and fall in love. Hungarian director János Szász (*Desire Under the Elms, Uncle Vanya, Mother Courage*) returns to stage the best-known love story of all time.

4 February - 25 March 2006

Loeb Drama Center
 64 Brattle Street
 Cambridge, Massachusetts

Tickets: \$37-\$74. Purchase discount tickets **online** or call 617-547-8300 for regularly priced tickets

PLAY: Talking to Terrorists

The third play in the Sukan Theatre Company season, this controversial play by Robin Soans travels in to the mind of 'the terrorist.'

17 March – 8 April 2006

Plaza Theater, Boston Center for the Arts
539 Tremont Street
Boston MA
T: 617 497 5134; E: info@sugan.org
www.sugan.org

Informal Welsh speaking group

8.00 pm every Wednesday:
informal Welsh speaking group
meet in the Cambridge
Common Pub (Massachusetts
Ave). For more information

contact Dr. Eirug Davies, telephone:
617.492.9838; e-mail: Eirug@msn.com

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And the best of good wishes to you too!
(from the BBC Website)

CHRISTMAS

**The London shops on Christmas Eve
Are strung with silver bells and flowers
As hurrying clerks the City leave
To pigeon-haunted classic towers,
And marbled clouds go scudding by
The many-steepled London sky.**

**And girls in slacks remember Dad,
And oafish louts remember Mum,
And sleepless children's hearts are glad,
And Christmas-morning bells say "Come!"
Even to shining ones who dwell
Safe in the Dorchester Hotel.**

**And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?**

**And is it true? For If it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissue'd fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,**

**No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare –
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives to-day in Bread and Wine.**

*John Betjeman
(Excerpts)*

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