



CHARTER

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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
Micheal Dawson
Robert A. Groom OBE (Past president)
Peggy Hunter
Thomas Keown
Geoff Mullis (Past president)
Gavin Nathan
Paul Stanislas OBE

President's Letter

As we move into another new year, the British Charitable Society continues to get new calls for assistance and to help those to whom we have previously committed a small stipend. In all of this we were active in 2004 and, once again, paid out in relief more than our endowment generated in income. The Treasurer's figures are not yet final but we are also hopeful that they will show a small improvement in our endowment portfolio value thanks to a better return in the capital markets during the year. Also, we will, and have, got some improvement in our income as interest rates rise modestly. This does not mean that we can slacken our push for increased contributions. It is likely, for instance, that a new program in Massachusetts (the call 211 program) will lead to a further increase in genuine calls for help from British folk down on their luck.

During the last half of 2004, we did receive an outpouring of support and donations for the Max Preston Fund, to help this handicapped college freshman live independently and away from his family for the first time in his life. There are more details elsewhere in this issue.

Our initial efforts to obtain major corporate support for the Society were difficult and the early response was disappointing, despite some very hard work by a number of Executive Committee members. Corporations are not easy to tap into for a small, rather specialized, charity such as ours without a key personal contact. We do know that many firms do have organized giving programs and we will continue to search for the appropriate entrée into this environment.

Meanwhile, as a Society with a committed charitable membership, I can assure you that your donations are always appreciated and well used. Our overhead is minimal (unusual for many charities, especially the one's whose calls interrupt your dinner hour) and we are careful with our disbursements. Anyone considering their estate plan is especially asked to think about a bequest.

The monthly meetings of your Executive Committee have become lively and busy affairs. Our Executive Director, Susan Dugdale, has developed her office into what must sometimes seem like a full time job and she comes to meetings well prepared with accounts of telephone calls and visits with individuals often with heart-rending tales. Additional input and cases comes from Kathy Tunsley's work at the Consu-

Newsletter: Roger Tunsley, 12 Rhodes Avenue, Sharon MA 02067
Tel: (781) 784-7955 Email: rtunsley@comcast.net

late-General and other members often present cases that they have come across. Membership of the Committee has recently been stimulated by some younger members of the local British community and we are always open to others, especially those with a social service background. In what has become a bit of an annual custom, we even had a small celebration at the last meeting of the year with such delights as mince pies, sausage rolls and shortbread, with a little eggnog for good measure, all provided by various Committee members.

We look forward to 2005 as another year of helping those Brits who find themselves down on their luck. Our Annual General Meeting is set for Thursday, May 26th, again at the Union Club. I solicit your attendance and possible interest in becoming a member of our Executive Committee. I have identified a most interesting speaker (to be announced officially at a later date), so this should be enough time to put the date into your diaries before you can complain of another engagement!

Happy New Year.

Tim Hunt, President

An Anglo-Irish Event

by Michael Dawson

Last October 20th, we believe for the first time ever, there was a gathering of both the British Charitable Society and the Charitable Irish Society. The British Consul-General, John Rankin, graciously invited both societies to a reception at his residence on Beacon Hill. It was attended by the Irish Consul-General, Isolde Moylan; Tim Hunt, President of the British Charitable Society; Charles Daumbaugh, Vice-President of the Charitable Irish Society, (Michael Neagle, the President of the CIS, was out of town); and some 30 members of both societies.

This was both a social and a business event, aimed at improving the understanding of what each Society does, how they do it, and how we might help each in the future. It was also a chance to get to know our opposite numbers, because cases often overlap the two fields of operation. The Walsh Visa programme is a case in point. This is an employment training programme that enables young people from disadvantaged areas in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland to live and work in the United States for up to 36 months. Its name stems from the fact that Congressman James Walsh of New York sponsored the enabling legislation. It is currently suspended, awaiting extension of the law.

It was interesting to learn different aspects of the two Societies. For example, it was a surprise to the British to learn that the Charitable Irish Society was the older organisation by 79 years, having been founded in 1737. It was started by Irish immigrants to assist other immigrants in settling in and assimilating into a new city and a new country. The British Charitable Society was founded in 1816, shortly after the war of 1812, to help British residents when the British were not particularly popular hereabouts.

Currently we offer much the same kind of assistance. The Irish help more people, but their individual payments are smaller than ours. The BCS has an endowment whose income, plus donations, funds our expenditures, whereas the CIS depends on an annual fundraising event, the Silver Key awards reception, when awards are made to those who have "... help(ed) new immigrants to meet their potential ... "

Both consuls made short addresses during the evening, as did Tim Hunt and Charles Daumbaugh. Then Susan Dugdale, executive secretary of the British Charitable Society, presented a sample of the cases she had handled recently.

It was a pleasant and instructive occasion, and we hope to organise a similar one next year. Meanwhile members of the CIS will routinely be invited to our curry and fish and chips nights.

Curry Night Results in Three New Members

by Diane Bailey-Boulet



Waltham's New Mother India Restaurant was the gathering place for the BCS Curry Night, held November 16th. The evening included a buffet meal of tempting starters and a plentiful array of classic Indian dishes. The restaurant was filled with lively conversation as Society members and their guests sampled the many different offerings. The society gained three new members out of the evening, making this event a successful way to build support for our central work of aiding people in times of crisis.

Curry night has taken hold as a much-anticipated part of the Society's calendar of social and fund raising events. Expect more of these enjoyable evenings in future! Meanwhile, thanks to all who took part-and to the organizers, especially Charles Platt, who made restaurant arrangements. For those who could not attend, we hope you'll join us next time. It's a fun, informal evening supporting an important cause-and the food is delicious.

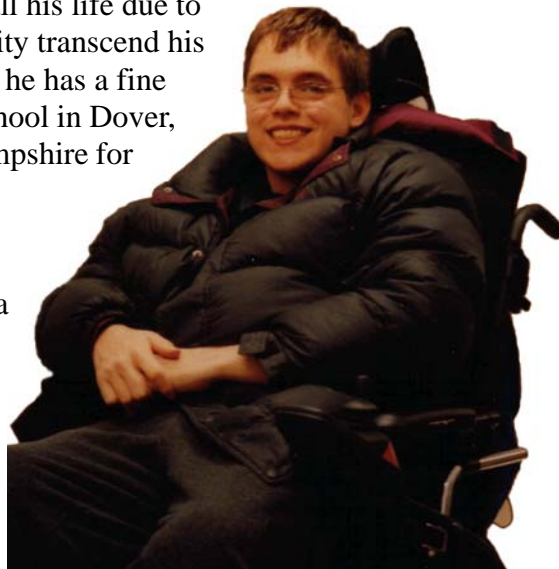
Max Preston Fund

by Tim Hunt

Last June we alerted the membership to the situation of Max Preston. We said: "For those who have not met him, Max has been wheel-chair bound all his life due to cerebral palsy. His intellectual brilliance and engaging personality transcend his physical limitations. His teachers and friends are all certain that he has a fine career ahead of him. A week ago, Max graduated from High School in Dover, New Hampshire and was accepted by the University of New Hampshire for entry next September."

However, we learnt that the Department of Social Services had rescinded a prior offer of funding of the \$15,000 for him to have a professional aide to help his step into independence, because he was a British citizen, not American. So, we "passed the hat" by letter and the Max Preston Fund has now raised \$17,000 - a wonderful response and enough for an aide for his freshman year.

Max has indeed made a mark at UNH and is thriving socially and academically. His new friends include members of the radio



media, in which Max is most interested and for which his personality is excellent. In fact, he is now a student aide at the UNH radio station. So, our early expectations for him seem well justified. He will need further help, however. Unfortunately, his mother, and sole care-giver in his life prior to UNH, has become quite ill and will not be able to fill the same active role in the future, introducing another level of stress.

We don't know how much more help will be available from members of the BCS, and are not specifically soliciting the membership at this point, though donations would not be turned away. (They should be made to the British Charitable Society, noting Max Preston Fund). We hope other means of support will turn up because the need is so obviously genuine and beneficial.

Meanwhile, we rejoice that the British Charitable Society has been able to make a real difference in Max's life this academic year.

Bars & Bibles

A chapter extracted from 'Historic Taverns of Boston' by Gavin Nathan (to be published shortly).



Indulgence and temperance of fermented beverages have been the yin and yang of Massachusetts society since the first settlers stepped off the boat. Taverns were a necessity to the early pilgrims but conflicted with John Winthrop's, and other Puritan's, ideals for moral health. An intimate relationship ensued for centuries between the religious and the non-religious types of 'meetinghouse' in New England. The relationship is so intertwined over time that John Winthrop's original meetinghouse in Charlestown ironically morphed into a tavern itself, known as the Three Cranes Tavern (original foundations can be seen today after being uncovered during Boston's Big Dig).

The Puritan's ordinary was always close to their church; in fact the positioning of taverns was a strategic decision for local government. In 1651 Boston authorities gave permission for John Vvall (of the Ship Tavern) to open an ordinary as long as he "keepe it near the new meeting house." Most taverns were already located near meetinghouses so that churchgoers chilled during long winter services, or overcome by the heat in summer, could seek refuge and refreshment close by. At noon rest a mug of flip would have no doubt been ideal for raising cheer amongst weary worshippers. Reports exist of people relaxing so much in taverns they became incapacitated for the afternoon service.

If you know of any stories of old Boston taverns please contact the author at oldtaverns@hotmail.com