



CHARTER

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Society Officers

President - Tim Hunt M.B.E
Vice-president - Kathy Tunsley
Executive Secretary - Susan Dugdale
Treasurer - Charles Platt
Recording Secretary - Jackie
McGrail

Executive Committee

George S. Ames
Jan Carrigan
Robert A. Groom (Past president)
Geoffrey Hall
Peter Howard-Johnson
Eileen Morley
Geoff Mullis (Past president)
Simon Sherrington
Paul Stanislas O.B.E.
Roger Tunsley

President's Letter

On May 30th, the British Charitable Society held its 2002 Annual Meeting at the Union Club. There were 33 people in attendance and we enjoyed refreshments and an excellent spread of cheeses, cold cuts and salads, prepared by the Union Club, before the meeting started. In fact, it was a little hard to assemble the membership for the meeting in competition with the attraction of the food, drink and conversation.

The first order of business was to introduce the officers and members of the Executive Committee present, to identify the particular contributions that they brought to our work and deliberations, and to thank them for their fine efforts. We also thanked Alastair Drummond and Simon Eccles, especially, for their contributions as their term is completed and they are not standing for re-election.

Treasurer Charles Platt gave his report, including the audited statements for the past calendar year. This is summarized elsewhere in the Charter. This put the figures to a successful year in that we were, once again, able to find a substantial number of individual cases for relief and were not forced (by tax regulations) to donate to other charities. The market value of our investments was down, but investment performance was actually quite good considering the negative tone of the capital markets.

In my report, I recited the guidelines with which we currently operate, namely:-

To be considered for relief, applicants should be:

- British, holding a passport of the UK or its dependencies,
- A child or grandchild of a person described above,
- Resident in one of the six New England states.

I described some of the newer types of cases we are helping, but emphasized that we still need to "keep up the pressure" to find new cases that fit our guidelines. For this purpose we have a brochure to distribute to Social Service agencies, etc. but individual referrals from Committee members are invaluable. As always, we ask the general membership to be on the look out for deserving cases and tell me or our Executive Secretary, Susan Dugdale, so that we can follow up.

Newsletter: Roger Tunsley, 12 Rhodes Avenue, Sharon MA 02067
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In many ways, this has been an exciting year for the Society. We have started a push for new members, particularly younger people. I am especially struck by the influx of younger folk into the fields of high tech and bio tech (for which Cambridge promises to be the world capital). Britons and others sympathetic to our work are coming into this area and we should endeavour to capture some of their energy. An assignment! Every member should find one more.

Another new effort was to provide a few social occasions. The first was a thoroughly enjoyable fish-and-chip supper in Gloucester, organized by Eileen Morley, cou-

pled with many British items of all sorts auctioned with great good humour by Kate Hall.

Finally, our success in giving out aid has outstripped our cash income and, with no capital gains recently, we need to balance the books and we will be asking the membership to be charitable, some time well before the end of the year.

Elections of officers and Committee were held and we welcomed as new members of the Committee, George Ames and Peter Howard-Johnson. It has not always been easy to find members willing to serve on the Committee and I would very much encourage

expressions of interest from anyone who might like to. Or, if you would like to put someone else's name forward, who might be too shy to do it themselves, don't hesitate. We would really welcome some new faces. The Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month downtown Boston, September through June.

A special guest at this year's meeting was Chris Wright, a staff writer for the Boston Phoenix. He described himself as nervous, but the piece he wrote and delivered was universally acclaimed and he has given us permission to reproduce it in the Charter. We hope to see and hear some more of him.

Treasurer's Report - Highlights

- Investment income - \$18,378
- Other income - \$3,054
- Total - \$21,432
- Relief to individuals - \$44,003 (vs \$39,606 in 2000)
- Market value of assets at 12/31/01 - \$757,447
- Total return from assets - (8.8%).

If you adjust for the fact that we paid out 5.2% of the beginning value of the assets, the account was only down 3.6% for the year. The S&P 500 was down about 12%, so a balanced account like ours would, in theory, have been down about 6%.

Home & Away: Becoming an English American

by Chris Wright, Boston Phoenix

A few weeks after I arrived in America, back in the early '80s, I found myself sitting in stop-start traffic on Huntingdon Avenue, stewing in my own juices. It was one of those torrid July days we don't really get in England, the kind that make steam shoot out of your ears, that make your eyeballs swell. On the car radio, and for some reason I remember this very well, they were playing "Fire and Ice" by Pat Benatar, a popular female rock singer at the time. I remember thinking, "This song is rubbish."

But a lot was rubbish back then. I was 18. I was at that age.

I think the reason I remember so many specifics from that moment is because of what happened a moment later: a young black man darted into the stalled traffic, skidded his backside across the hood of the car in front of ours, and disappeared into the Northeastern University campus. A few seconds after that, a sweat-drenched police officer, his gun drawn, came tearing through the traffic in pursuit. "Wow!" I thought. Or maybe "Blimey!" In any case, I was dazzled: this was the America I had always imagined. The America of Starsky & Hutch and The Dukes of Hazard. The America of guns and cars.

Even though I was never to see anything quite like it again in America, the incident remains one of this country's defining moments for me. "Leave 'em

cryin' for more," wailed Benatar as cop and culprit performed their little action sequence before us. "I've seen you burn 'em before."

I also remember, at around the same time, seeing a Buick parked in Central Square. I was mesmerized by it. The way its hood stretched out for what seemed like an acre. The way it muscled its way into one's line of vision. The car was cherry red, and it shone in the afternoon sun like a promise. I remember, too, standing in a Baskin Robbins in Harvard Square a few days later, gazing at the 32 flavors of ice cream on offer: blueberry, boisenberry, bubblegum.

Everything at the time - even such banalities as Twinkie bars and the 7-11s they came from - seemed fraught with archetypal significance for me. The skyscrapers. The cut-off Levis. The Stars & Stripes. The guns and cars. The girls. The money. The baseball. The cities. Chicago, Seattle, Detroit, Miami, Las Vegas, LA, New York.

The first time I visited New York City, I literally went weak at the knees. Seeing the Empire State Building, that quintessential icon of Americana, was like spotting someone famous - Clint Eastwood or Jane Fonda. In fact, New York in general felt very cinematic to me. The hordes of yellow cabs. The steam rising from the manhole covers. The constantly-shifting Cubism of the skyline.

The sky-blotting, self-obliterating scale of the whole thing. I stood at the foot of the Twin Towers, the wind whipping around the plaza, and looked up and got what seemed to be a glimpse at infinity.

Not that Boston didn't have plenty to offer. I worked for a furniture removals company at the time, and I'd meet all sorts of colorful, or off-color, characters. There was the gangly alcoholic who managed to work twice as hard as everyone else despite being drunk at 9 O'clock in the morning. There was the athletic Californian who confessed to me, after three days of working together, that I was his best friend in Boston, and who never once cracked a smile. There was the Vietnam Vet who would tell us tales of bullets whizzing by his ears as he crept off to the local bordello, the chain-smoking egotist who cried when his finger got smooshed by a refrigerator, the diabetic muscleman who was famous for making songs up on the spot. And then there were the customers, many of whom were crazier than my co-workers.

And yet, as thrilled as I was with all this, I wasn't completely at ease.

Even though I had grown up in London - a large, bustling, smoke-clogged city - everything here seemed so much bigger, so much faster, so much wilder. I felt swallowed up by it all. I felt lost and left out. The very things that had made me feel at home in England

made me feel alienated here. My accent. My attitude. My dress sense. On my green card it said I was an alien. And, for all the fitting-in I did over those first few months, I may as well have been one.

There were times, though, when I got into the spirit of my desolation.

One sunny day, wandering around Boston listening to some gothic dirge on my ever-present Walkman, I stopped off at the Gardens, plonked myself down on a bench, and gazed wistfully into the waters of Swan Pond. There's a sense of existential weightiness, I think, that we lose when we leave our teenage years. At the time, there in that park, the entire city of Boston served only as a backdrop to my profound melancholy. The music blaring in my headphones provided a perfect soundtrack for this solemn scene: "Sad and lonely, leave me alone, I'm sleeping less every night. As the days become heavier and weightier and weightier in the cold light."

As I sat there contemplating this thing I called my life, I attracted the attention of a squirrel. Cute little fella he was, too, bushy-tailed and perky. "You're my only friend," I said to the squirrel, who tilted his head in a sympathetic way. Determined to milk the moment for all it was worth, I ran over the road to a convenience store, grabbed a bag of heavily salted sunflower seeds, and returned to the bench, where my

squirrel, or one very much like him, waited in anticipation. I threw him a seed. He ate it. I threw him another. He ate that, too.

Soon, my squirrel had been joined by three or four others. Every now and then, he would make a chicka-chicka sound and unleash a brief but shockingly violent attack on one of the interlopers. Foolishly, perhaps, I kept throwing the salted sunflower seeds, and before long there were about twenty squirrels competing for them. The chicka-chicka noises gained in frequency and intensity. Before long, the animals were fighting furiously among themselves, sometimes ganging up two or three squirrels on one. For those who haven't seen it, a squirrel with the leg of another squirrel in its mouth loses a lot of its charm. I began to fear for my own safety.

No, this America business wasn't working out at all.

By now, the ruckus had attracted the attention of other people in the park, some of whom stopped to watch the spectacle unfold. Mortified by the attention, and unnerved by the sight of blood, I flung the entire bag of seeds into the midst of the roiling mass of froth and fur - an act which sparked what can only be described as a squirrel war. As I walked away from the carnage, I

heard sounds that one would expect to hear in the ninth circle of hell: shrieks and howls and sickly gurglings.

No, this America business wasn't working out at all.

Humiliation was a constant companion back then. When I arrived in the States, I had a shock of dyed-black spiky hair, and I was given to wearing the uniform of the punk rock movement: the tight black pants, the big black boots, the tatty t-shirts. This was before such fashions had made their mark here, and so people would ogle me on buses - slack jawed, eyebrows merging with their hairlines, tut-tutting to each other behind cupped hands. Sometimes they would stop me on the street and ask me what the hell I was thinking. I had more than one person inquire, with a deliberate lack of delicacy, about my sexual orientation.

On one occasion, I was jumped by a gang of teenage hoodlums. One of them aimed a karate kick at my head - and I remember thinking that this, too, seemed a very American thing to do. As I beat a hasty retreat down Mass Ave., cackles and hoots of derision rang in my ears. First the cop, then the squirrels, and then this - America, apparently, was as violent as everybody said. And so, to fortify myself, I would walk around mumbling the yobbish songs of Chelsea Football Club: "Carefree, whoever you may be, we are the famous CFC, and we don't give a

f**k whoever you may be, 'cause we are the famous CFC." The truth is, I wasn't carefree at all. I was scared.

After a while, even the pettiest things began to fill me with unease. I'd walk into supermarkets and confront Great Walls of breakfast cereal. I'd switch on the TV and have to grapple with what seemed like thousands of stations. Although the Americans and the English ostensibly shared a common language, I found myself having to say things like "yOW-ghurt" and "tomAYdoes" and "vEYdamins." When I needed to use a "pay phone," I'd have to put the coin in before I made my call, and that coin was this piddly little thing they called a dime. People would put lobsters in front of me and expect me to rip them apart with my bare hands. The whole America thing began to wear on me. Those bloody great cars thundering about on the wrong side of the road. The loneliness. The horrible beer. And the job I'd been doing - lugging furniture for the moving company - that began to wear on me too.

After a summer of this, I decided to go home.

As I look back on this period now, I can see that I was already carrying a little bit of America with me. Back in England, I went to a football match and, much to the amusement of those around me, reacted to one particularly close miss with: "Hot diggedy dawg!" But it went deeper than this.

I did window cleaning for a while, a job which entailed a lot of bar-

tering with clients: "You charge how much for a window?" A couple of years earlier, I would probably have reacted to this question with "Er, er, er" - now I was almost lordly in my responses: "Yes, madam, two-pounds-fifty per window is our standard rate. But I'm sure if you take a look in the Yellow Pages you'll find someone willing to work for less." More often than not, people were so taken aback that this bucket-bearing yobbo could muster such imperiousness, they'd pay up without another word. Before long, I'd raised my rates to three-pounds per window, with extra charges for difficult or dangerous ladder work.

After a summer of this, I decided to go home.

For a while, I was brimming with chutzpah. After all, I'd arrived back in England as a sort of Heathcliff figure. I had a few thousand bucks in my pocket. I was a man of the world, a man of experience. My time in America had afforded me an air of intrepidity completely lacking in my peers, many of whom considered Bognor Regis to be an exotic locale. I would fritter cash at my local pub and regale my friends with tales of guns and cars and bubblegum ice cream. I would constantly say things like, "Well, so and so's are bigger in America" and "In America, they have incredible such and such." I'd even learned how to talk to girls without passing out from sheer terror.

After a while, however, the money started to dry up, the stories started to grow stale, and it became increasingly clear that people were sick to death with hearing the A-word. My fledgling window cleaning career never really took off. With no permanent place to live, I would hitchhike around the country, staying with friends and family, picking up the odd laboring job here and there, struggling to get by. Without really knowing how it happened, I was the same old under-achieving lug I'd always been. Indeed, a year after my return to England, it was like I'd never left. One day, standing in line at the Dole office, where I would go through the bi-weekly humiliation of signing up for my government handout, I looked around at the flat-eyed men and the wailing kids and the tattoo-fisted teenage boys and I said to myself, "No more."

I was lucky. I had what most members of England's welfare class could only dream of: a way out. I would escape my situation by escaping England. Even so, I told myself that I would only stay in America for as long as it took to save enough money to come home and make something of myself. Maybe start up my own moving company in London. Or have another crack at the window cleaning game. That was the plan. At Heathrow Airport, as I boarded the plane that would take me back to Boston, I began to sob uncontrollably. Perhaps I knew something I didn't know.

I'm not sure I can put my finger on what, exactly, made me stay in

America. Certainly, there are things about the country I love. I love the sense of space we have here. I love the geographical diversity, the wide choice America offers in terms of places to live. I have visited Seattle and New Orleans and San Francisco and loved them all. I've been to the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls, the Rockies and Cape Cod, the Everglades and the great wilderness of Northern Maine. Those vast arrays of cereal that had so unnerved me on my first visit now seem like a symbol of the country itself. I understand now that mind-boggling diversity is built into America. Today, instead of excess, I see possibility.

Even so, through all these years, I have doggedly held on to my English identity. An acquaintance of mine once asked me a question: if England and America went to war, he said, which side would I be on? "Let me put it this way," I replied. "If there were a war between our two countries, I would kill you in a heartbeat." I was joking, of course. Sort of. The point is, my true loyalties always remained with my native land. I may live in America, I told myself, but I am very much an Englishman.

And being an Englishman in America had definite perks. People - okay, women - would approach me and say things like, "I just love the accent" In the romantic arena, my accent was the equivalent of an all-access pass. And yet it was what my accent didn't say about me that had a much more profound and lasting effect. When I spoke to

Americans, the way I spoke no longer served to pinpoint my social status. I was English now, not working class. It's hard to overstate the relief this brought me. For the first time in my life, I no longer felt encumbered by the English class system - or, more pertinently, my place at the bottom of it.

This, in turn, gave me confidence. It's something of a cliché to say so, but I really did feel as though I could make anything of myself in America. At the age of 28, having spent my entire adult life as a laborer, I enrolled in university - UMass, Boston - and I loved every minute of it. While my classmates grumbled about papers due and exams looming, I would walk through the campus's stark modernist buildings suppressing giggles of delight. That the world could accommodate this. That I could spend my days deconstructing Hamlet or pondering the problems of perception. I would walk around saying things like, "Yes, but how do we know the table's really there?" I began to write poetry. I served as an editor at the school arts journal. I graduated with honors and within weeks landed a job at the Boston Phoenix - where I work today.

I am, at the very least, an honorary Bostonian.

In my six years at the Phoenix, I have discussed literature with Martin Amis. I have talked politics with Norman Mailer. I get paid to sit around writing down my thoughts. I've even won prizes

for my efforts, me - who left school at 16 with no qualifications and no hope, who became a familiar and, I'm sure, dispiriting sight at my local dole office, who was once called a bleep-bleeping idiot by a construction manager, who then fired me on the spot. Would I have risen to such heights in England? Of course, I'll never know the answer to this question. The point is, I made something of myself here, and for that I will always harbor a great affection for this country.

It's a much rarer thing these days for someone to point out my accent. I've learned the rhythms and idioms of American speech, if not the inflections. I mix the odd "Whoa, Nelly" in with my "Blim-eyes." I can even say GarAAAHge without tripping over my tongue. I can boo-hoo about the Red Sox along with the best of them. I can find my way from North Station to South Station without getting lost. I can recall past summers spent on the Cape, remember when cigarettes were \$2 a pack, and reminisce about the Dukakis years. I am, at the very least, an honorary Bostonian.

Despite all this, last year I started to toy with the idea of going back to England. In fact, I decided that's what I would do. I have contacts there now, prospects. The fear of sliding back into the old degrading lifestyle have dwindled. I miss my mother and my sister and my brother. I miss London. I miss the little things: the humor, the newspapers, and even the food. I was sure of it, the time had come for me to go home. And yet, when it came to making the

leap, I couldn't bring myself to go through with it. I was puzzled by this, and a little annoyed at myself.

To this day, I often feel like something of an outsider in this country. I am still, after all, a product of my upbringing. I still speak with an accent. I still like my bacon meaty. I still find Fawlty Towers funnier than Friends. In the upcoming World Cup, I will be cheering for England with as much enthusiasm as I always have. It doesn't matter how many years I stay here, how many memories I accumulate, how much cultural arcana I pick up - I am an

Englishman, always will be. So what could keep me from returning to the country I so obviously love and so sorely miss?

In the weeks following September 11, I began to understand. "How could they do this to us?" I would say. "What will we do now?" It felt strange to be talking like this, but also perfectly natural. As I saw the sorrow in my friends' eyes, I knew exactly how they felt because I felt the same way. The fact is, these aren't just my friends, they are my family. I could never think of Greg and Amy and Hank and Beth and Jeff as them. The terrorists, in a very

real way, had done those awful things to us. Perhaps you need something dramatic, even catastrophic, to lead you to these kinds of truths.

So now I understand. The reason I love this country with such depth is not because of the time I've spent here, the adventures and opportunities I've had here, the money I've made here, nor the hardships I've overcome here. The reason I love America is because so many of my loved ones are here. This, I know now, is why I couldn't bring myself to go home last year. The fact is, I'm already there.

Programming Peace in New England

by Thomas Keown, Irish Immigration Center

When former President Clinton visited Boston in October of last year, to receive the annual Solas award from the Irish Immigration Center, he delivered a speech addressing international peacemaking efforts around the world. What made his words resonate most loudly with all present was that his area of focus was the devastating impact a violently divided society has upon the young born into it.

He pointed out that this impact is seen nowhere more clearly than in the Middle East where over half the Palestinians killed to date were aged under 18 and 55% of Israeli deaths have been under 25. These are the bitterest of enemies but their one shared commodity is that they both believe with all the passion in their beings that their cause is the right one and that there is nothing more important than it. Their parents have told them so since infancy. They are adolescents fighting an adult's war.

When Northern Ireland, jumping a few degrees of latitude to the west, was created in 1921 it was against everyone's wishes. Irish nationalists wanted complete separation from Britain, Irish Unionists returning from WW1 wanted to preserve Ireland's place fully within the U.K. they had fought for. Partition was deemed to be the only answer and Northern Ireland was born.

Since that day there have been two nations living, not just within the confines of 6 small counties, but place after place, within the confines of one small town. A town where Catholic children attend one school and Protestant children another. Where Catholic teenagers play one sport and Protestants another. Where one group walks to the shops with green, white and gold paving stones underfoot and tri-colors fluttering overhead while another walks beneath the Union flag and above red, white and blue pavements.

Two communities who love their home and who love their heritage. Just as Israeli and Palestinian and English and Brazilian and Moroccan love theirs. One need only look back to the jubilee celebrations earlier this year

to see the depth of affection felt towards the Queen on the streets of Unionist Ulster by a people who are intensely proud of their loyalty to the crown despite enduring 30 years of terrorism because of it. Northern Ireland hadn't seen such a party in living memory. Equally the love of Gaelic sports, the Irish language or Irish music bears testimony to the pride the nationalist community has of the rich culture it has exported around the world to the envy of many.

But what happens when you mix these two prides with an age old political struggle over land and sovereignty, a complex sense of religious attachment, a minority who are prepared to kill for a cause, and then pour the whole mixture into the pot of economic deprivation and allow it to boil? In addition to an ocean of confusion in your own mind, what you get is what you have seen in recent months on the news reports from towns up and down the Gaza strip and from North Belfast.

What you get is young people born into families where 3rd generation unemployment is the norm. Where education is not valued because the benefits of it have never been seen. Where the barren landscape of burnt out buildings and torched vehicles does not allow ambition to grow but hopelessness to fester. Where one community voluntarily segregates itself from the other, leading to ignorance and a lack of understanding followed swiftly by fear then hatred. Where a 15 year olds world consists of 4 streets and a corner shop. Where the purpose of life becomes to protect what you own, to guard your turf and to defend your people from 'the enemy' while they defend theirs from you.

It is for this reason that if one stands in the center of the Duncairn Gardens intersection in Belfast and looks left, the eye is met with a sea of Israeli flags mingled with Union Flags. And why the greeting you receive to your right is the waving in the breeze of Irish tricolors and Palestinian flags on alternate lampposts. These contrasting symbols may be physically separated by only about 20 yards, a dashed white line and a handful of weary motorists but also between them lies an unfathomable psychological chasm.

The residents on one side may never have spoken to those on the other. They may have thrown stones at them, or petrol bombs or even fired shots but have never exchanged words in conversation. A son on one side may have robbed a son on the other of his mother but never has he taken him on in a football match. They have never discovered that they drink the same beer and possess the same cuttingly sarcastic Northern Irish wit while drinking it.

This is why on the last Tuesday of June the Boston Globe could quote a 4-year old Catholic girl as saying, "I like the people who are ours. I don't like those ones because they are Orangemen. They're bad people". And why a 4-year Protestant girl in the same article could say, "Catholics are the same as masked men. They smash windows". Have these two young girls ever met each other or any of the people they speak about? Of course not. They merely reflect what they have been born into. They speak in this manner for exactly the same reason as they speak English and not Inuit. It is what they have heard around them since they left the womb.

And so how is this relevant to us here in New England? It is relevant because in 1998 Congressman James T. Walsh (R-NY) created the 'Irish Peace Training Program' (Walsh Visa Program) to build on the progress made with the Belfast Agreement of the same year. The program provides 3-year U.S work visas to 18-35 year olds from disadvantaged areas of Northern Ireland. The vision of Congress was that young unemployed people, from both communities who have grown up knowing nothing but 'the troubles', would have the opportunity to experience life outside of their country for a time. They would then return home with increased skills and an enhanced understanding of other cultures and thus be better equipped to contribute to what we all hope will be a peacetime economy.

Currently 116 program participants are living in Boston and working across 70 U.S. companies who have so far given their support to the initiative. With another 90 participants due to arrive over the next year the biggest challenge the program faces in these tough economic times is in identifying new companies who are willing to receive resumes from participants seeking employment.

Former Senator George Mitchell chaired the negotiations leading to the 1998 Peace agreement in Northern Ireland. One of his earliest observations was that the one thing uniting the bitterest of enemies in localities where violence is greatest is their shared lack of economic opportunity. While Northern Ireland can by no means claim a monopoly on the problem of unemployment sadly prevalent in many inner-city areas of the U.K, it is unique in that these problems are made all the more urgent there by the last 30 years of terrorism and by the threat of it continuing. It is this joblessness and hopelessness that sucks the young into the violence of their 'cause'.

The Walsh Visa program was created to act as something of a release valve for the tensions and disillusionment of communities in despair. What is needed to continue its success in Boston is the ability to provide a wide range of jobs for these young people to apply for. If you, or any company you know of, would be willing to allow the program to list your job vacancies on its website and receive resumes from interested applicants then the Walsh Visa Program would dearly love to hear from you. You would be gaining access to a free recruiting tool and would be providing these young people with the much needed chance of a fresh start, since, as Theodore Roosevelt once said, "The best peace process I can imagine is a good job".

Contact Thomas Keown on (617) 542-1900 ext13 or tkeown@iicenter.org

Queen's Jubilee Garden Fete

by Susan Dugdale

As the grey clouds loomed overhead and the ground beneath became increasingly sodden, it was remarked upon more than once that this party to mark New England's celebration of the Queen's Jubilee was indeed 'typically British'!

However the weather of Old England didn't dampen the spirits of the 800 or so people from all corners of New England who attended. Greeted by the sight of an imposing Tower of London they were soon to discover all sorts of very English entertainments.

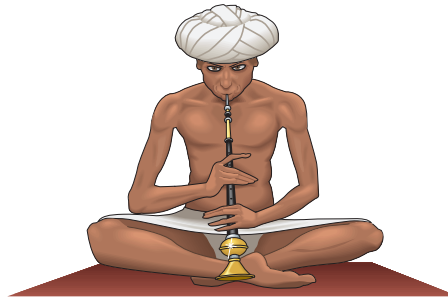
A red double decker bus was dispensing ice cream. Close by, Morris dancers and Scottish reelers were delighting the crowds. Many visited the British village and spent their money in the post office buying first day covers or English magazines. Some stocked up on British foods and souvenirs at the 'corner shop.' Most Brits and many of their American friends were astounded to be treated to an Indian take-away and indeed were further thrilled to find real English bangers being served and cooked by the British Consul General on the barbeque.

But as with all traditional garden fetes the tea tent provided not only a rest stop but the opportunity to remind oneself of the delights of a cream tea or cucumber sandwiches. All being enjoyed whilst watching the children dancing at the maypole or especially listening to the brass band, which, of all things proved to be the highlight of most visitors' afternoon.

Mums and Dads had the chance to try showing off long forgotten skills at the coconut shy or the hoopla and no child missed the regular shows of the Punch and Judy man or the chance to get their faces painted.

No-one seemed to mind the dull grey weather, but everyone revelled in the sun as it began to shine in force later in the afternoon. The noise from the tea tent rose, the music from the brass band seemed to reach all corners, the Morris dancers leapt even higher and the children seemed to find new games to play in the puddles rather than around them.

By the time 6 o'clock came around, the sun was dominating a cloudless sky, the crowds were leaving laden with their prizes and purchases and splendid memories of a true English garden fete authentically recreated in a garden in Massachusetts. "Pity we shall have to wait 10 years for the next one" was heard more than once! And indeed it was clear that so many people of British descent were delighted to have both the opportunity to celebrate the Royal occasion and to indulge in a little nostalgia. The letters received by the organisers afterwards lay testimony to what turned out to be a hugely successful event. Maybe 10 years is too long to wait.....



Curry Night

Monday September 16th, 2002

*Save this date! Join the British Charitable Society
at the Taste of India Restaurant in Milford for a
spicy evening of good Indian food and drink.*

*A full three course meal of buffet appetizers,
buffet main course, dessert and wine
for \$27 per person (Inc. Tip)*

We will be raffling two tickets to the UK kindly donated by Virgin Atlantic.

Send checks made payable to the British Charitable Society to:

*Kathy Tunsley
12 Rhodes Avenue
Sharon MA 02067*

For more information, call (781) 784 7955

When: 7:00 p.m. Monday Sept 16th 2002

*Where: Taste of India, 196 East Main Street, Quarry Square, Milford MA
(508) 634-9400*