



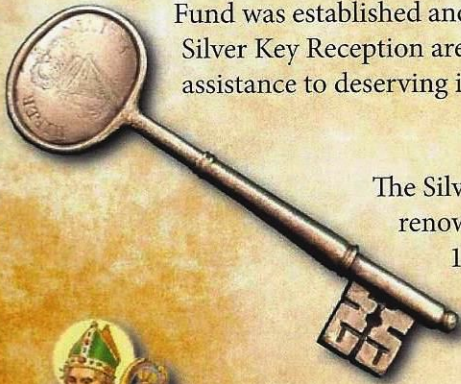
The Charitable Irish Society

Established 1737

The oldest Irish society in the Americas

WHO WE ARE:

The Charitable Irish Society of Boston, founded in 1737 by twenty-six men of Ulster birth and ancestry, is the oldest Irish organization in the Americas. From 1760 the Society was unique in its inclusive membership of Catholics and Protestants. Since its founding, the Society's core mission has been to provide aid and assistance to newly arrived Irish immigrants to the Boston area as they face the multiple challenges of adjusting to and assimilating into a new city and country. During the Great Irish Famine, Society members took leading roles in sending food and money via the USS Jamestown. In response to the high Irish immigration in the early 20th century, the Society placed an agent at the Boston waterfront to assist newly arrived immigrants to find suitable housing and employment. When the 1990s witnessed another surge in Irish immigration to Boston, the Society responded quickly, organizing workshops to assist immigrants to access health care, education, housing and legal services. In 1997 the Silver Key Fund was established and the proceeds from the annual Silver Key Reception are dedicated exclusively to providing assistance to deserving immigrants.



The Silver Key was designed for the Society by renowned Boston silversmith Jacob Hurd in 1738. This priceless artifact is currently on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and is on display with a collection of Hurd's work.



The first known celebration of Saint Patrick's Day in America occurred upon the founding of the Charitable Irish Society of Boston on March 17, 1737



American Colonies declare independence from Britain

1730

1737

1776

Over the centuries, the Society has also played a significant role in preserving strong political, economic and cultural bonds between its members and their ancestral land. Members have included many distinguished Bostonians, including President John F. Kennedy, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Mayors Hugh O'Brien and Patrick A. Collins, John F. Fitzgerald and James Michael Curley. Other prominent members included architect Charles D. Maginnis, Cardinal William O'Connell, Governor Francis Sargent, philanthropists Andrew Carney, Henry Shattuck and Henry Lee, and journalist and poet John Boyle O'Reilly. Today our membership includes prominent men and women of all faiths from Boston's business, legal, educational and cultural sectors who generously contribute their time, talent and resources in support of the Society's mission.

The archives of the Society are housed in two distinguished collections at the Massachusetts Historical Society (covering the years 1737-1920) and at the Burns Library at Boston College (1920 - present). Both collections are available to researchers.



Irish International Immigrant Center staff and multicultural graduates from a citizenship preparation course.



George Washington
Elected 1st
President of the
United States



The
Society is
incorporated



1789



1809

1830

WHAT WE DO:

Following its motto of *“With Good Will Doing Service”* the Society carries on its proud tradition of helping all deserving immigrants with small but critical financial grants through its Silver Key Fund.

The Society has partnered with various local agencies and organizations who recommend individual immigrants and their families to us for crucial and timely financial assistance. Thus, the Society provides a virtual safety net for those whose needs are of an emergency nature and cannot be fulfilled by other resources. Assistance is also provided to many who are unable to pay the required application filing fees for immigration benefits. Our partners include:

- The Irish Pastoral Centre
- The Irish International Immigrant Center
- The Consul General of Ireland in Boston
- The British Consul General in Boston
- Catholic Charities of Boston – Refugee and Immigration Services



Painting by E. D. Walker

In 1847, the USS Jamestown under the command of Captain Robert Bennet Forbes leaves Charlestown laden with famine relief supplies and destined for ‘Queenstown’ (Cobh), Co. Cork. The supplies onboard were partially funded by the Society.



President Andrew Jackson addresses the Society (1833)



An Gorta Mór - Ireland's Great Famine



Charles S. Parnell, MP becomes Honorary Member of the Society (1889)

American Civil War

1830

1833

1845-1852

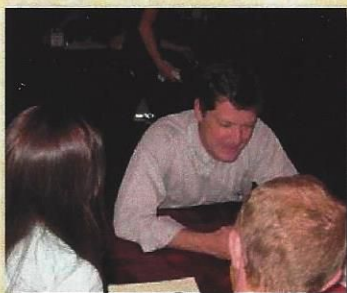
1861-1865

Whom we serve:

Although Irish immigrants have been the principal recipients of our grants over the centuries, in recent years the Charitable Irish Society has extended its reach to include other newly arrived immigrants to the Boston area whose needs and circumstances are similar to those of Irish origin. Consistent with the Irish traditions of hospitality and charity to all, the Society has provided assistance to individuals from Haiti, Jamaica, Southern Sudan and Uganda. We have also made grants to other organizations that serve on a daily basis the Boston immigrant community such as the Irish International Immigrant Center, the Irish Pastoral Center and Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration Service Project.



Statue of Liberty (1886)



Immigration lawyer, Chris Lavery, offers legal advice at a clinic hosted by the Irish Pastoral Centre.

Irish Proclamation of Independence and Easter Rising (1916)

Irish woman Annie Moore is the first person processed through Ellis Island (1892)



175th Anniversary— President William H. Taft addresses the Society (1912)



Calvin Coolidge addresses the Society (1920)



1886

1889

1892

1912

1916

1920

1930

Why YOU ARE needed:

Today the multiple challenges that face new immigrants when they arrive in Boston are essentially the same ones faced by the generations of Irish men and women who came here previously. They often need assistance to secure employment, housing, training as well as the reassurance that they are welcome to our city, commonwealth and country. We need your participation and financial support to ensure that our Silver Key program remains solvent and effective in providing the timely and crucial assistance that converts the challenges faced by immigrants into opportunities by which they can fulfill their American dream. We also need your participation in our various annual celebrations on St. Patrick's Day, our Memorial Day wreath-laying ceremony and at our President's Reception. These events help maintain the vibrant cultural bonds that link so many generations of Irish Americans to their ancestral home in Ireland.



200th Anniversary-
President Franklin
D. Roosevelt
addresses the
Society (1937)



John F.
Kennedy
addresses the
Society (1953)

Aer Lingus
offers first
transatlantic
flight (1958)

Society
celebrates
250th
Anniversary
(1987)

1930



1937



1953



1958

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Membership to The Charitable Irish Society is open to all. Annual dues are \$75, payable on March 17th each year.

The Charitable Irish Society hosts several fund-raising and social events every year - please join us:

- **Presidents Reception**
- **Saint Patrick's Day Dinner**
- **Memorial Day Wreath Laying & Luncheon**
- **Silver Key Awards Reception**

Details of all Charitable Irish Society events and how to become a member can be found online at:

CharitableIrishSociety.org

Email: President@CharitableIrishSociety.org

Phone: 617-330-1737



- Become a member
- Purchase event tickets
- Make a donation

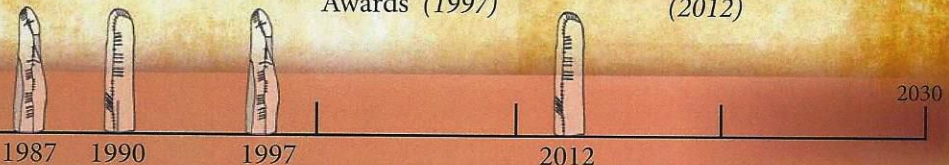
Charitable Irish Society President Paul J. McNamara presents President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, with an Honorary Membership on the occasion of the launch of the 2012 Irish Famine Commemoration in Faneuil Hall.



Dr. Catherine B. Shannon elected as the Society's first female president (1990)

Society hosts first Silver Key Awards (1997)

Society celebrates 275th Anniversary (2012)



“With Good Will Doing Service”

“I am delighted to congratulate and to thank the Charitable Irish Society (CIS) for its long and dedicated service to Irish immigrants and the wider immigrant community in Boston. The positive trajectory of the history of the CIS is a mirror of the history of the Irish in this great city and region. Over the course of its impressive history, the CIS has proven durable and adaptable always ready to respond to the changing pattern of the needs of those who call on its support.”

Breandán Ó Caollaí
Consul General of Ireland

“For the past fifteen years the Charitable Irish Society has been a ready and reliable resource for the IIIC to call upon to assist the emergency needs of many of the immigrant families we serve. We are grateful that the Society continues its proud tradition of serving today’s immigrant community.”

Ronnie Millar, Executive Director,
Irish International Immigrant Center

“We at the Irish Pastoral Centre place great value on our long-term partnership with the Charitable Irish Society. We appreciate serving as an emergency financial referral source when situations warrant more than social, immigration, and pastoral services to the most vulnerable Irish.”

Megan E. Carroll, Esq., Executive Director
Irish Pastoral Centre, RCAB, Inc.



CharitableIrishSociety.org