



July 2007

PRESIDENT'S REMARK

It's been a while since our last edition of *Charitably Speaking*, but we're going to try to get this newsletter going again on a more regular basis. As before, we will summarize recent MCMA "news" for the benefit of members who may not have been able to attend recent meetings. But we'll also use it to give some attention to the activities of our committees, and the members who serve on them, as well as to some of the organizations to which MCMA provides assistance. And we'll certainly include articles that remind us of the rich history of MCMA and its membership. I hope you will find these newsletters both interesting and informative.

Marty Joyce

RECENT HAPPENINGS

Our Annual Meeting was held this year at The Adams Inn in Quincy. Elections were held, Chairmen or spokesmen from our various Committees reported on the Year 2006, and recommendations for appropriations were acted upon.

In late January MCMA held its Triennial Celebration at the Omni Parker House in Boston. As you know, this event is held to recognize the transfer of the presidency of MCMA, and it went extremely well. Following the cocktail hour and an excellent dinner, the tradition of "passing the snuffbox" of our first president, Paul Revere, was observed, as it was handed down from Past Presidents Erling A. Hanson Jr., Almon H. Bridges Jr., Raymond J. Purdy and Lester S. MacLaughlin to outgoing President William L. Jutila and to incoming President Martin F. Joyce. Past President Jutila then took a few moments to reflect on the past three years and to express his appreciation for the help and support he had received during his tenure in office, and President Joyce acknowledged that he was honored to follow in the footsteps of those who have preceded him in office, and would do his best to meet our expectations of him. Music was provided throughout the evening by Sharon Zee, who performed several Broadway show numbers in addition to providing a variety of dance music. From the comments received afterward, it was clear that the evening was enjoyed by all, and credit clearly must be given to the function committee who worked hard to make it happen. Headed by Richard O'Meara, the committee included Peter Borghesani, Anthony Scalse, Richard Adams, Bill Jutila, Peter Lemonias, Phil Fuller, Carl Wold, and Ray Purdy. From all of us, Thank You!

Our April Quarterly Meeting was held at Spinelli's in Lynnfield, and we were pleased to have as our guest speaker Mr. Jeffery Black Hodgdon, Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts, who gave an informative and entertaining talk about masonry in the past and how it is involved with society today, mostly through its charitable acts.

THE ELIOT SCHOOL

As you may know, we began several years ago to incorporate into our Annual Report a brief description of each grant distributed by MCMA for the year. The purpose was twofold. First, we wanted to more fully explain to members how our grant money was being put to use. Secondly, we wanted to better identify the “grantees”; since most of these organizations are not widely known, and many will not survive over time, we wanted to preserve for future generations of MCMA members a clear description of the work being done by this generation. As the idea for these write-ups originated in our History Committee, that committee “won” the job of writing them, and we are very appreciative of their efforts and results to date. *Charitably Speaking*, however, gives us a forum to selectively go into more depth and detail, and we will do so in this issue by focusing in on The Eliot School in Jamaica Plain, a frequent recipient of MCMA support.



The Eliot School offers quality education to both day and evening school students in a variety of fine and applied arts. Courses range from cabinetmaking, upholstery, furniture finishing and gilding, to art, photography, stained glass and many others. The evening school in particular challenges students to learn and develop new skills that will help improve their employment opportunities. **It is the fourth oldest school in the country.** Founded in 1676 to provide an education for area children of both the Puritans and the Indians, it’s original support came from 38 Jamaica Plain (or Pond Plain) inhabitants whose donations were payable in money or corn. Initially situated on the site of what is now the Soldiers’ Monument, it has relocated several times over the years (though it has always remained in Jamaica Plain), and moved to its current location on Eliot Street in 1832.

Between 1831 and 1874, the school went through numerous transformations, particularly as the notion evolved that education was the responsibility of the public through local government. In the 1870s it began its “manual training” era, and gradually introduced classes such as mechanical drawing, painting, sewing, cooking and woodworking. By the late 1880s, stenography and typewriting had been added as well. Today, the school offers courses and workshops in its many disciplines for both adults and kids, and it continues its long history of providing and enhancing skills in craftsmanship for amateurs and professionals alike. For example, the conservation departments of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and Harvard University’s Fogg Art Museum send interns to take the school’s course in gilding.

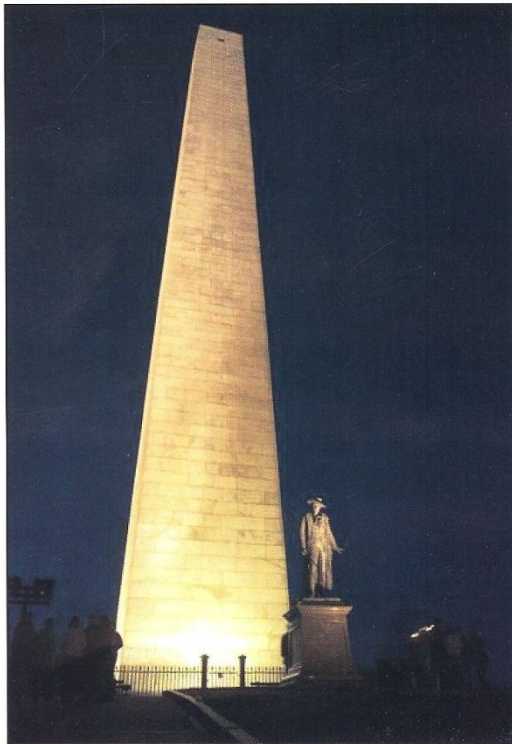


Although MCMA has provided some items (sewing machines, electric upholstery staplers, etc.) for use in other departments, our support for The Eliot School has concentrated on their woodworking department. In the past few years, that support has included two-10” table saws, a 12” jointer and mortising machine, a hollow-chisel mortising machine, a 16” scroll saw, right-angle jigs, a dust collector and numerous hand tools. Their needs and requests are conveyed to us by Charlie Sandler, the school’s Superintendent (and an outstanding person), who has been a fixture there for forty years. Representatives of our Planning Committee visit the school prior to approval of any grant, and they have been able to consistently validate that our support is both appreciated and well used. The Eliot School has long done its part in teaching and promoting the mechanical arts, and MCMA is very pleased to be able to support those efforts.

MCMA History

Amid much fanfare, the Bunker Hill Monument was recently re-dedicated following a two-year, \$3.7 million National Park Service rehabilitation project. While an elaborate exterior lighting system is possibly the most noticeable improvement, the project also included handicapped-accessible ramps, restoration of the Bunker Hill Lodge, and a new museum housed in a former branch of the Boston Public Library.

With this renewed attention to the Monument, it's perhaps timely to recall the roles played by an earlier generation of MCMA members, and by MCMA itself, in the Monument's original construction. The architect and superintendent, Solomon Willard, was a member of MCMA, as was engineer and master builder Gridley Bryant, whose further involvement included designing and constructing the country's first railway system (the Granite Railway) to transport the granite from the quarry in Quincy 2.5 miles to the Neponset River in East Milton for shipment to Charlestown. Also a member was general contractor James Sullivan Savage.



Although the cornerstone for the monument was laid (by General de Lafayette) in 1825, and most of the granite had been quarried by 1828, construction was halted in 1829 when funds ran out. It took a “monumental” effort by dedicated individuals and organizations to raise additional funds over the next 13 years before the capstone was finally placed in 1842. Construction was halted multiple times over that period as funds were depleted, but MCMA as an organization and MCMA members worked tirelessly throughout that period to keep this project going. In 1833, in fact, the Bunker Hill Monument Association actually assigned responsibility for both fund-raising and further construction to MCMA. (That organization showed its appreciation by naming MCMA's President to be First Vice-President of their organization in perpetuity.)

The Monument was dedicated on June 17, 1843, the 68th anniversary of the battle. President of the United States John Tyler was present, and the oration was delivered by Daniel Webster. Approximately 100 members of MCMA were in attendance, and held a prominent place in the festivities. That was a proud moment for MCMA, and it is one in which we can still take pride.