

The Historic Bostons' Partnership was launched in Boston, England in November 1999, with the aim of building on our rich historical links with Boston, Massachusetts. Committees have been formed in both Bostons to encourage people-to-people links in the two communities: educational, cultural, religious, sporting, heritage, tourism and commercial.

The recent visit to our daughter city in Massachusetts was to launch officially the Partnership there and to establish formal links between several organisations. The party of fourteen, which included members of the Historic Bostons' Partnership and a Civic Party, was welcomed most warmly by the Massachusetts Chairman, Prof. Will Holton, whose committee had arranged a very busy schedule. The Mayor of old Boston, Councillor George Danby and Mayoress Mrs. Pearl Danby had been officially invited by Mayor Thomas Menino of new Boston to attend the formal launch at a reception in Parkman House on Beacon Hill and to sign, with him, a joint declaration sealing the Partnership. Civic and personal gifts were exchanged between the two mayors.

An early visit to the Massachusetts Archives resulted in important new information coming to light.

During the visit the Mayor and Mayoress were entertained at the five star Four Seasons Hotel, by courtesy of the General Manager Robin Brown, who is proud of his Lincolnshire roots, having lived in old Boston. Mel Staley of Boston College's Catering Department accompanied the party and is hoping to arrange placements for students at this top flight hotel.

An exhibit, celebrating the two Bostons was unveiled, which is now on display at the prestigious Boston Public Library in Copley Square and will eventually tour the many other libraries in the city.

During a memorable visit to the Boston Latin School, a formal link was established between the Latin School and the Boston Grammar and High Schools. The Latin School is the premier publicly funded school in Boston and the oldest extant school in America. It was founded in 1635 at the instigation of Rev. John Cotton and modelled on Boston Grammar School.

The Consul-General for Great Britain entertained the party at the Consulate, and expressed his support for the links. He explained his role in Massachusetts and the responsibilities undertaken by his staff.

A public meeting was held in the Rabb Lecture Hall of the Boston Public Library. The audience of over 250 welcomed the Boston party and Mayor Danby was presented with a City Council proclamation endorsing and supporting the Partnership. "Our Historical Legacy from Boston, England" opened with a slide show by Prof. Will Holton followed by three speakers, Prof. Jesper Rosenmeier of Tufts University and Miriam Butts, a lecturer at the Museum of Fine Arts and John Cammack, chairman of Boston (Lincs.) Preservation Trust. This was followed by a lively question and answer session.

The afternoon was concluded by a reception held in the "Sargeant Gallery", where there is a section of railings from our Guildhall Courtroom, presented to Boston, Mass. in 1919.

A most interesting visit to Harvard, founded by Governor Thomas Dudley, was much appreciated. The party was welcomed by the Marshal of the University in his 1727 mansion and at the University Archives by the Director.

A member of the US Partnership, Ralph Buonopane, took the Mayor and party to an early wooden church that he had been involved in restoring and a visit to an organic fruit farm was of special interest to Mayor Danby who also farms organically.

The visit was rounded off by the final event which was a formal dinner at the St. Botolph Club hosted by John Sears, a former city councillor, for the Mayor and two former mayors, Judy Cammack and Alan Day with their partners.

Radio Lincolnshire's William Wright and Charlotte Pitt accompanied the visit and presented a live edition of his morning show immediately following the reception at Parkman House.

Unlike the usual "twinning" arrangements, this is a "mother town/daughter city" relationship and is not intended to result in frequent civic exchanges. Rather, it is hoped that the imaginative links already being forged will encourage a proliferation of individual and group initiatives.