“My guide brought history to life!”

BOSTON BY FOOT

ANNUAL REPORT

2016

Boston By Foot is dedicated to promoting public awareness and appreciation of Boston’s rich history and architectural heritage by offering a wide range of guided tours and programs conducted by a dedicated corps of highly-trained and enthusiastic volunteer tour guides.

bostonbyfoot.org

“In 40 years what has never changed is the quality, the enthusiasm and the spirit of the tours. This wonderful sense of dedication and fun still continues!” - Polly Flansburgh, Founder
2016 was a milestone year for Boston By Foot! Our 40th season kicked off May 1st, which was declared Boston By Foot Day by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and City of Boston. State Representative Daniel Hunt presented the official proclamation to Board Chair Libby Dilling at Old North Church as part of our graduation ceremony for our 2016 Class of docents. In June, we held a celebration at the Samuel Adams Brewery, a long-time corporate partner. We were thrilled to have our Founder Polly Flansburgh at this event to honor our fourth decade and the countless contributions of our volunteers and supporters. In November, we held an Awards Reception at the historic Omni Parker Hotel where we premiered a documentary on BBF created by filmmaker and BBF docent Pam Pacelli. Used throughout the year, our anniversary logo was designed by Sheila Frazier, another talented member of our docent community. Our 40th anniversary gave us plenty of reasons to celebrate and share our profound gratitude for the people, places and passion that makes Boston By Foot so special.

Record Breaking
2016 was a year of new records. We provided public and private tours to 19,000+ people — a 22% increase over 2015. Bob Perkins, our Guide of the Year for the past three years, continued his own record-breaking ways by delivering 160+ walking tours.

Customized Walking Tours
In addition to our regular and special tours, Boston By Foot is proud to offer a menu of 100+ tours for private groups and families. These tours feature Boston’s neighborhoods, various historical topics and other aspects of the city’s cultural fabric. We also customize these tours to suit specific needs or interests. In 2016, we hosted 235 private tours ranging from families, schools, corporations, alumni gatherings and other affinity groups, including international Naval Officers from the Naval Command College, scholars from the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders program, families and staff of Northeastern Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, as well as a group from Warner Brothers who requested a tour of Whitey Bulger’s Boston to complement their Black Mass production.

Cruising
Architecture Cruises continue to be a spectacular way for us to display Boston’s evolving skyline and waterways. In 2016, nearly 6,000 people enjoyed a cruise, which we offer in partnership with Boston Society of Architects and the Charles Riverboat Company. We expanded our schedule to include daily cruises from Memorial Day through Labor Day and twice-daily cruises on weekends through mid October.

New Funding Support
Boston By Foot is proud of the support we receive from state and local cultural councils. In 2016 we were invited to join the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Gateway Program, which sets us on the path for inclusion in the Cultural Investment Portfolio.

Welcoming Graduates
We welcomed 34 talented docents to our volunteer corps, including educators, librarians, a doctor, a lawyer, a nurse, an urban planner and many already active in community volunteerism. Our Class of 2016 graduated May 1st following rigorous training coordinated by our Academic Affairs Committee.

Looking Ahead
Our 40th anniversary gave us an opportunity to reflect on our past and plan for the future, including our educational programming, docent training, community outreach and membership. Boston By Foot members continue to represent a vital part of our mission and we are grateful for their continued support and enthusiasm.
Volunteer Committees

Thanks to the collective efforts of our volunteer committees, our programming is creative, extensive and thoughtfully evolved, our tours are well promoted, and our guides are trained and provided with opportunities to collaborate. We applaud our 2016 committees and committee chairs.

Academic Affairs: Doug Upton and Dayl Cohen
Continuing Education: Justina Chu and Patricia Sabbey
Publicity Committee: Lynn Smilde and Rebecca Camerato
Special Tours: Margaret Bratschi and Nancy Heywood

Tours of the Month: Andrea Bonanno and Mike Bauer

Distinguished Service

All of our volunteers give so much to BBF, and each year we honor volunteers who truly go above and beyond. The 2016 Distinguished Service Awards were presented to three remarkable volunteers.

Steve Kluskens does as much work behind the scenes for Boston By Foot as he does on the front lines leading tours. In Steve’s 20 years with BBF, he has delivered hundreds of tours, as well as provided invaluable technological support. This was especially helpful in 2016 when BBF made major system upgrades. From building and maintaining databases and fixing computers, Steve has helped BBF use technology to make the most of our limited resources.

A multitalented guide who tells stories on the trail and on the screen, Pam Pacelli has documented what is great about Boston By Foot on video. Several years ago she recorded a series of interviews with guides, and in honor of BBF’s 40th Anniversary, she and her husband Rob Cooper created a documentary about the history of Boston By Foot. The video serves as a record of BBF’s remarkable story and introduction for new guides and members.

Always coming up with new and clever ideas, Dina Vargo is one of our most prolific manual writers. True Lies and False Facts, one of her brilliant ideas that truly turns the tour concept on its head, has become one of Boston By Foot’s signature events for the past five years. We are so proud to kick off the BBF season with this clever and innovative tour that she spearheads each year!

Volunteers

Boston By Foot would not exist without the time and talent of 200+ dedicated volunteer guides. They generously prepare content, present tours and support each other in our ongoing efforts to engage audiences in meaningful and memorable ways.

Flansburgh Travelers

Since 2009, longtime friends and BBF supporters Bill and Lia Poorvu have funded the Flansburgh Traveling Fellowship to honor Earl & Polly Flansburgh. Each year Boston By Foot volunteers are invited to apply for this fellowship for the purpose of travel, research, and personal growth in a city best experienced in our favorite way: by foot! For 2016, three fellowships were awarded.

Dayl Cohen — Bath, England
Jeff Doucette — Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Liz Morgan — Milan, Italy

Awards were presented to three remarkable volunteers.

Guide of the Year:

Bob Perkins, 162 tours

60 – 120 Tours

Laurel Perkins (112)
Tom Revay (97)
David Coviello (62)

50 – 59 Tours

Tom Coppeto
Gretchen Grozier
Steve Kluskens

40 – 49 Tours

Margaret Bratschi
Jeff Doucette
Sharon Fogarty
Tom McNamara
Elisabeth Piquet

30 – 39 Tours

Regina Cockerill
Jan Engelmar
Aline Kaplan
Lisa LeBlond
Steve Loher
Kurt Morris
Sigourney Street
Liam Sullivan

20 – 29 Tours

Andrea Bonanno
Rebecca Brooks
Beth Charney
Dayl Cohen
Harvey Cohen
Barry DeVincze
Hannah Diozzi
Sheila Frazier
Marylee Gilchrist
Ronda Grodberg
Dennis McCarthy
Gene Moulton
David Phillips
Michele Steinberg
Dina Vargo
Nancy White
Joni Youngwirth
PROGRAMMING
217 Docents • 1351 Tours • 235 Private Tours • 19302 Tour Participants

2015 Tour Attendance Breakdown
- 39% Public Tours
- 30% Architecture Cruises
- 22% Private Tours
- 2% Special Tours
- 1% Tours of the Month
- 6% Continuing Education Events

Special Programming & Events
Tours of the Month
- Chinatown
- East Boston: Maverick Square and Beyond
- Fort Point Channel
- Grave Undertakings: Boston's Burying Grounds
- Longwood and Cottage Farm
- Roxbury Highlands

Continuing Education Events
- Archaeology of the North End
- Boston's Post-War Architecture
- Boston Common, America's First Park
- Cyrus Dallin Museum, Arlington
- Dorchester: From Early Settlement to Streetcar Suburb
- Murder, Martyrs and Mysticism

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Partners
Boston By Foot proudly presented programs in partnership with the following organizations:
- ArtWeek Boston
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay
- Boston Book Festival
- Boston Harborfest
- Boston Literary District
- Boston Lyric Opera
- Boston Society of Architects
- Brookline Adult & Community Education
- Cambridge Center for Adult Education
- Charles Riverboat Company
- First Night
- Historic New England
- Old South Meeting House
- Massachusetts Teacher Association
- Revolution 250
- UMass Boston OLLI

2016 Income & Expenses
- Grants $7,500
- Contributions $36,262
- Membership $33,410
- Total Income $263,324
- Payroll Taxes $13,004
- Total Expenses $225,654
- Support Services $23,072

Payroll Taxes Benefits $19,926

*Accounting, Insurance, Banking, Taxes

Supplies & Rent $69,652

Staff
Samantha Nelson, Executive Director • Cortnee Bollard, Program Coordinator

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Barbara Berenson • Tom Chung • John Cinkala • Anne Cowie • John Currier • Lori Karas • Susan Pepin • Betsy Thompson
Boston By Foot wholeheartedly thanks its volunteers, members and supporters for their tireless commitment to promoting awareness of Boston’s history, architecture and distinctive neighborhoods.

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Please excuse any unintentional errors or omissions.

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[Logos of various supporters]

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