



Parker House, Boston, Massachusetts

# Our Purpose

**T**o provide a forum for the discussion of social, political, educational and literary topics that can lead to constructive change in our lives, our nation, and our world.

(As defined at the first New England Circle, February 26, 1974, and at each Circle since.)



# *The Circle Begins*

**W**hen fifty-two men and women gathered at Boston's Parker House for the inaugural New England Circle on the evening of February 26, 1974, they were the first to test a new idea with roots in New England history. The concept, as constructed by the Dunfey brothers, was inspired by an earlier tradition, but the guests who gathered that February evening were quite different from their predecessors of 125 years before.

In the mid-Nineteenth Century, the Saturday Club became a Parker House institution because its roster included the literary lions of the time: Charles Dickens, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes and John Greenleaf Whittier were the principals who gave the Saturday Club its purpose. They assembled to discuss the literary, intellectual, and political topics of their time.

And while it was these gatherings that planted the New England Circle's seeds, the Dunfey brothers created a new design from the original pattern. What they sought was not strictly a literary constituency, nor a political one. Their base was all New England, and their criteria began with diversity. Those first Circle guests represented every New England state and a range of ethnic and occupational backgrounds. Purposely selected to create a mix that would interact, they asked questions and conducted spirited dialogues, giving the New England Circle idea the vitality and energy it needed to survive and grow.

The concept worked, and as response has proven, it has kept working through the years.

# *The Circle Widens*

**T**he New England Circle gatherings began with a determination to maintain an environment that stimulates lively discussions, new friendships and fresh perceptions. With twelve years of Circles now history, time has proven that determination worthwhile. "Without the Circles," said John Kenneth Galbraith, "we would lack a center for the informed discussion of issues."

More than 1,000 Circle members have attended some 35 gatherings and many of them have echoed Circle discussion leader Hodding Carter who said, "The level of questions is about ten times higher than the average group. It's this kind of networking that makes things happen."

This effective networking springs from the diversity of Circle participants. They represent every age group, occupation and calling. Businessmen, professional women, public women and public men, students and teachers, city planners and rural specialists, mayors, governors and senators, as well as those who elect them — each has enjoyed the spontaneous fellowship the Circle generates. Each has contributed to a lively discussion, as the Purpose states, of the topics that can lead to constructive change in ourselves, our nation, and our world.

Now a non-profit organization with an active and interested board of directors, the Circle intends to continue demonstrating the prescience which has seen its discussion leaders articulate national and international issues before they became daily headlines. In the Circle's inaugural years, historian Henry Steele Commager outlined the constitutional and philosophic precedents for the impeachment of a president more than a year before Richard Nixon examined the identical issues, and resigned.

Today's urban crisis and the need for livable neighborhoods were topics outlined by Circle discussion leader James Rouse; former United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser brought labor issues into focus before crisis headlines appeared; and strategies



for a nuclear age were the subject of a Circle panel on the eve of the nation's first nuclear freeze referendum.

Georgia State Senator Julian Bond, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young, and Coretta Scott King each focused on the human rights issue.

New York Mayor Ed Koch traveled to Boston to join the Circle and talk about his city's renaissance; Jane Fonda and Gloria Steinem addressed the issues of twentieth century feminism in America; and House Majority Leader Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill and Senator Edward Kennedy brought Circle guests a Washington perspective on the state of the nation and the global community.

South Africa's apartheid, now the focus of world attention, has been a central Circle concern for more than six years. South African exile, author-journalist Donald Woods, and more recently, fellow exile Oliver Tambo, President of the African National Congress, both dramatically portrayed the struggle of their fellow South Africans under the nation's repressive regime. He was followed by The Reverend Beyers Naudé, the man who succeeded Bishop Desmond Tutu as the General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches.

The full roster of discussion leaders has established a New England Circle hallmark: a wide spectrum of speakers and guests, each initiating a lively, off-the-record examination of relevant issues, and always in an open, informal exchange.

Circle history by John N. Cole, journalist and author.

## *And Charts Its Future*

With each passing year, we realize how vigorously the New England Circle continues to grow. In response to this awareness, we are more determined than ever to honor the diverse, human-scale fellowship and communication that have been the Circle's hallmarks since its beginnings. We are encouraged by the way this privately sponsored concept has taken shape and we commit ourselves anew to maintaining the Circle's integrity. Every one of the Circle's more than 1,000 members has contributed to its beginnings and to its growth. In the future, we hope to welcome as many more new members.

We value your sustained interest and urge you to continue your lively correspondence. It is through your ideas, suggestions, and advice that the New England Circle will fulfill its purpose as a forum for change in our lives, our nation, and our world.

Your Circle Hosts

William B. Hart, Jr., Chair

Jerry Dunfey, President

## *Officers and Directors*

William B. Hart, Jr., *Chair*

John P. (Jack) Dunfey, *Vice-Chair*

Jerry Dunfey, *President*

Virginia Chick, *Secretary*

Walter J. Dunfey, *Treasurer*

JoAnne Wilburn, *Program Director*

William L. (Bud) Dunfey

Robert J. (Bob) Dunfey

Eleanor D. Freiburger

William S. Green, *Esquire*

Frederick M. Jervis, *Ph.D.*

The Honorable David S. Nelson



1974 ————— ● ————— 1985  
Previous Circle Discussion Leaders

Author Richard Goodwin Historian Henry Steele Commager U.S. Ambassador to Canada Kenneth M. Curtis Georgia State Senator Julian Bond Former Congressman Michael Harrington U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy Author & Columnist Jimmy Breslin Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Mayor Andrew Young Coretta Scott King	AMERICA'S FUTURE NIXON & IMPEACHMENT  NORTH AMERICAN NEIGHBORS NEW POLITICS  EARLY WARNING/CIA  THE KENNEDY VIEW  RACE AND THE CITY  YOUNG IDEAS  HUMAN RIGHTS & FULL EMPLOYMENT CONGRESS & CARTER  U.S. & THE ECONOMY  THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION  PEACE IN IRELAND  CITY DECISIONS  NEW RIGHT EFFECTS ON AMERICAN POLITICS AMERICANS FOR SALT  CONSUMER MOVEMENT & THE POLITICAL PROCESS FEMINISM TODAY PEACE ACADEMY  INDUSTRY IN TROUBLE  SOUTH AFRICA
Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill Economist John Kenneth Galbraith Press Secretary to the President of the U.S. Jody Powell European Parliament Member John Hume New York Mayor Edward I. Koch Former U.S. Senator Thomas J. McIntyre U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy & Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Ralph Nader  Gloria Steinem U.S. Commissioners for Peace & Conflict Resolution U.A.W. President Douglas Fraser Author/Journalist Donald Woods	

**Recent evenings of discussion have been held with.**

**Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank &  
New Hampshire Governor John Sununu  
Roger Fisher, William T. Sullivan Professor of Law,  
Harvard University,  
Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu, South Africa  
President & First Lady Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter**

Television Producer

Paul Fitzgerald

Bianca Jagger &

Congressman James

Shannon

Disarmament Negotiator Inga

Thorsson

Donald Woods &

Dick Gregory

Author Mark Gerzon

Jane Fonda

Congressman Edward Markey

Former Secretary of Defense

Robert McNamara

Canadian Ambassador to the

United States Allan Gotlieb

Urban Developer

James Rouse

Former Jamaican Prime

Minister Michael Manley

Journalist William Hodding

Carter, III

President, General African

National Congress,

Oliver Tambo

President, CEO,

J.H. Heinz Co.,

Anthony J.F. O'Reilly

General Secretary, South

African Council of

Churches

The Rev. Beyers Naudé

AFGHANISTAN BETWEEN

THREE WORLDS

CENTRAL AMERICAN

TURMOIL

THIS NUCLEAR AGE

LEGALIZED RACISM/

SOUTH AFRICA

A CHOICE OF HEROES

20TH CENTURY WOMAN

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

THE LINCOLN TRUST

CANADIAN/AMERICAN

RELATIONS

NEIGHBORHOOD

REVITALIZATION

THE CARIBBEAN FUTURE

MEDIA'S CHALLENGE

SOUTH AFRICA'S

STRUGGLE

IRELAND'S FUTURE

APARTHEID TODAY

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