

BOSTON

Minstrel

COMPANY



Annual Report 2008





The Boston Minstrel Company (BMC), a Boston-based non-profit organization, brings vibrant troupes of volunteer singers, musicians, and facilitators to shelters, prisons, residential facilities and other venues where people are isolated from society. Founded in 1991, the BMC was incorporated as a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization in the year 2000.

Our Mission is to encourage a sense of well-being and empowerment among individuals and families living under highly challenging circumstances, through participation in the healing power of live music.

Our Goal is to facilitate change through the power of community music—from sorrow to joy; isolation to connection; withdrawal to participation; and self-abasement to self-esteem.

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Message from the Founder & Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I am fortunate to see people moved by the power of music. When we're at a "gig," beautiful things happen, whether we're at a shelter, hospital or correctional institution. What we witness is that we're helping people feel happier, stronger and more empowered. I am so inspired by the positive changes I see through these musical, heart-to-heart get togethers.

The year 2008 marked the BMC's 18th year of helping people living in isolation from society lift their spirits through music. Looking back over the past year, we see a story of growth and accomplishment, as we worked to provide quality programs, increase our visibility, sustain fund raising efforts, and deepen our impact on the people we serve.

Our programs create communities of connection and inspiration, under circumstances where feelings of hope are in short supply. Through singing, dancing and making music together, energy increases and moods brighten. It's something you can feel and observe, as shelter staff tell us. Research and our own experience show that this kind of impact can lead to lasting change.

In 2008, we added twenty new Minstrels to the roster, including two from the homeless community, and assembled a collection of percussion instruments, which enhanced the level and quality of participation in songfests. I continue to be amazed by the commitment of our Minstrels, who tirelessly reach out to others, with their voices and spirits. Over the past twelve months, we estimated that volunteers gave 7,000 hours of service, a huge commitment. Minstrels also provided mentoring, support and transportation to members of the troupe who live in shelters or subsidized housing.

We were pleased to have our work featured in a national magazine, *Making Music*, and on Jordan Rich's WBZ Radio talk show, that reached 38 states and Canada! The BMC also staged free performances at charitable and fund raising events. Doing so attracted potential Minstrels, volunteers and donors, who became more aware of our mission. This helped in our efforts to secure grant awards from Bloomingdales, The Cambridge Community Foundation, Boston College Neighborhood Fund, The Clipper Ship Foundation and Sandwich Works, as well as increasing the number of individual donors and volunteers. The response to our Annual Appeal set a new record.

Thanks to a great year in 2008, the BMC is off to a promising start—increasing and diversifying our venues, adding programs for children, and forming new alliances with volunteer organizations and corporate sponsors. This report highlights our efforts over the past year, the people who have benefited from them, and the volunteers and donors who make our work such a joy.

Tim McHale



The Boston Minstrels in Action

Program Definition and Philosophy

The Boston Minstrel Company (BMC) is a group of highly-charged singers, musicians, and facilitators who believe passionately in the healing, transformative qualities of music. Minstrels now appear and lead songfests 3-4 times a month at eight shelters, and semi-annually at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Framingham.

The Minstrels seek to create a “musical bridge” to people who are homeless, imprisoned, or in institutions, building a supportive community where self-expression and self-esteem can flourish. Making music together forms bonds of affection

broken down and new possibilities for change are imagined. Communities are strengthened and tensions eased. We have seen lives change and growth unfold. Joyful, participatory music unites and inspires us all.

Since 2005, the BMC has been listed as a charitable organization of excellence in the Massachusetts Catalogue for Philanthropy (www.catalogueforphilanthropy.org).

VOICES OF SHELTER RESIDENTS

“I wish I could see them all the time because they were very good—their music, their attitudes. They opened their hearts up to us. It made me open my heart even more.”

and hope between those who are often shut-out and the volunteers who make up our traveling troupes. To see the Minstrels bring a songfest to life for shelter guests, go to our website at www.bostonminstrel.org and click on BMC video.

The BMC is the only known group in the country that provides this kind of therapeutic community music program. We have seen, firsthand, how positive changes in mood, energy, and behavior take place, not only for individuals, but for the group as a whole, as staff members will attest.

Both Minstrels and program participants share in musical camaraderie and its benefits. Barriers are



Target Population

The BMC provides expressive music programs for a diverse population of underserved men, women, children, and adolescents, including those experiencing the following types of difficulties: homelessness; mental illness; substance abuse; poverty; medical conditions; those with a history of incarceration; those living in residential facilities; female offenders; and veterans addressing challenges such as addiction, trauma, mental illness, homelessness, and unemployment.



This population is drawn from a wide range of communities in metropolitan and suburban Boston, as well as other parts of Eastern Massachusetts.

Partnerships

The Boston Minstrel Company has a long history of collaboration with a variety of human services agencies and the Massachusetts Department of Corrections. Through these community partnerships, twenty-five BMC programs were scheduled to take place at the following sites:

Facility	Website	Contact Person
Long Island Shelter Boston Harbor	www.bphc.org	Marie Sullivan 617-534-2526 Ext 308
Boston Rescue Mission Boston	www.brm.org	Mike Way 617-462-8819
CASPAR Shelter Cambridge	www.casparinc.org	Dick Riccio 617-661-0600
Shattuck Shelter Jamaica Plain	www.shattuckhospital.org	Jon Hartford 617-983-0351 X37
MCI Framingham Framingham	www.mass.gov	Sister Maureen Clark 508-532-5100 X131
New England Center for Homeless Veterans Boston	www.nechv.org	Stephen Cunniff 617-371-1701
Pine Street Inn Men's Unit & Women's Unit Boston	www.pinestreetinn.org	Scottie Wait 617-521-7626
Rosie's Place Boston	www.rosies.org	Ruth McDonough 617-442-9322



The Year in Review

During 2008, we completed our 18th year of bringing the joy of singing to underserved and marginalized people, including those who are enduring poverty, homelessness, and imprisonment. Since our inception, we have conducted over 1,300 events.

Making Programs Happen

Twenty-two highly interactive, expressive music programs reached 1,100 people, from children and youth to elders and families, in facilities at nine sites in metropolitan Boston, Jamaica Plain, Cambridge and Framingham.

A committed team of more than 65 volunteer Minstrels, from age 20 to 74, donated over 7,000 hours of time to songfests, rehearsals, fund raising, public relations, and other types of organizational support.

The BMC introduced a rousing new “percussion jam number” to songfests with fifty newly acquired high quality percussion instruments, which are handed out for

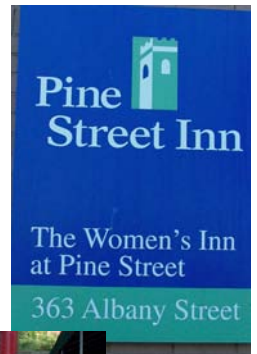
everyone to use. The new number triggers excitement, greater participation and enthusiasm among the residents every time we appear at the various venues.

VOICES OF SHELTER RESIDENTS

“You’re the only ones who make us feel part of the group.”

As a means of strengthening and increasing our alliances with other non-profits serving people living on the margins, we consulted with shelter directors to assess our programs and discuss new ways in which the Minstrels could meet the needs of their consumers. During 2009, the BMC will strive to implement these recommendations for diversified programming and inter-agency networking. The common theme however was to “come more often” and “put instruments into their hands”.

Tim McHale continued to attract new amateur musicians to expand and enhance the musical experience at songfests.

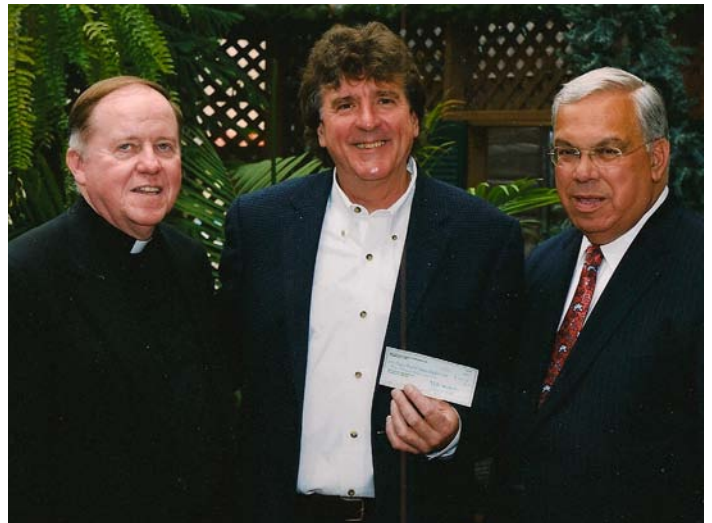
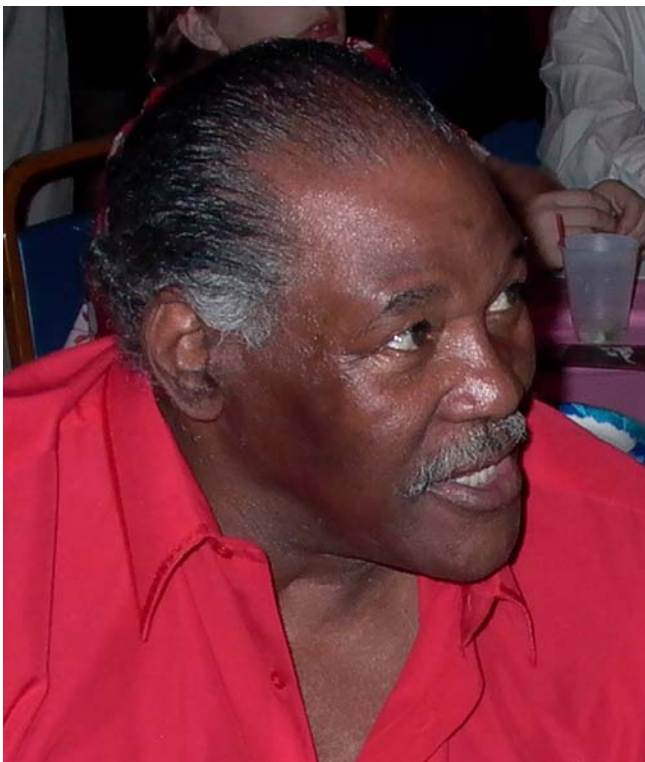


Increasing Funding and Awareness

- Jordan Rich of WBZ radio interviewed Founder and Executive Director, Tim McHale, as an energetic master of community-building through music, and a superlative asset to both the BMC and those served by the Boston non-profit sector. As the Minstrels sang selections from their repertoire, Tim encouraged listeners to join in and sing along. The show was heard throughout the WBZ broadcast area in 38 states and Canada.
- A national magazine, Making Music, featured the BMC in its November/December issue, which is available online at:

www.makingmusicmag.com/features_dev/show-feature.php?pageid=71

- We were honored to be chosen for the fourth consecutive year to receive a \$3,000 grant from the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood Fund of Boston College.
- The Clipper Ship Foundation, which supports human services to individuals in Greater Boston, gave BMC a grant of \$2,500.



- Bloomingdale's Charity Shopping Benefit provided a unique opportunity for BMC to raise funds and, at the same time, reach out to the wider community.
- We are grateful for the Cambridge Community Foundation's continued funding over the past five years. Their grant of \$1,500 helped to support two Minstrels' appearances at CASPAR Emergency Service Center in Cambridge.
- "Sandwich Works" restaurant in Newton Centre hosted a fundraiser to benefit the work of the BMC, which featured music by the Minstrels.
- Generous grants and donations of goods were received from our corporate and community partners, the State Street Bank, Newton Rotary Club, and Enigma, Inc.
- Individual donors set a new record in responding to our Annual Appeal.
- Sitzundjibber, a social networking group, promoted our events to its members, and successfully recruited sixteen Minstrels.
- The Minstrels staged a musical celebration for members of United Parish of Auburndale, who donate their parish hall for the BMC's monthly rehearsals.

Building Community and Organizational Capacity

Each month, the Minstrels gather for an evening of rehearsal. We strengthen our bonds with each other, train new song leaders, gel in singing, add new instrumentalists, and think about ways to improve. We express our values, share ideas about what the world might need, and envision ways we can help to meet those needs through community music.

VOICES OF SHELTER RESIDENTS

“Thank you for coming tonight. It makes us feel we’re not alone.”

Every time the Minstrels come together as “musicians with a mission,” we deepen our concern for one another, and compassion for the people we serve.

An accomplished Board of Trustees, with expertise in a variety of fields, provided approximately 4,800 hours of consultation, service, and organizational oversight. The Board and Executive Director produced clear job descriptions for Board committees and administrators, and developed information packets for prospective Board members.

A committee of the Board led by Tim McHale initiated discussions with Boston’s Arts and



Business Council for the purpose of attracting new Board members.

Members of the BMC created an online network group that has increased social and informal communication and connection among Minstrels.



Approximately 60 of the Minstrels gathered at the Annual Retreat in September. When volunteers talked about their experience, the overwhelming theme was that “Minstreling” is one of the most pleasurable and satisfying ways to help those in need.



The Boston Minstrels make an impact on groups and individuals through live musical outreach and dynamic interactions with those in need. At BMC's community songfests, celebration and healing take place.

According to Peggy Coddling, Ph.D., Professor of Music Therapy at the Berklee College of Music, "Music can have a positive psychological effect, a positive physiological effect." "We respond at a cellular level especially to music that is live."

Research supports Dr. Coddling's viewpoint. Studies show that, with populations such as those we serve, the arts and creative expression can have a significant impact in facilitating life change.

VOICES OF SHELTER RESIDENTS

"Who would have thought we'd be here on a Friday night singing songs? God bless you."

Reflections from Our Minstrels

In their own words, here's how people who participate in the Minstrels' programs describe their experience:

- "When we first come into the room at a shelter, sometimes we hear arguing and fighting. By the end of the program, the same people are holding hands and cheering for each other. When people get up and speak from their hearts, we get as much out of it as they do."
—Susanne McInerney



- "One of the most meaningful things we do is the circle at the end of each gig—holding hands....It never fails that someone offers thanks. They're grateful for what they do have. Whatever we're giving, it's needed."
—Annie Walsh
- "It is thrilling to see the pleasure that these people receive from being appreciated. Our view is that the Minstrels represent the broader community when we go into a prison or homeless shelter. No matter what our situation in life, we are all one. The Minstrels take the message that someone cares." —Jay Uhler

The BMC's impact on shelter residents takes many forms, as can be seen in their comments quoted throughout this report. They express heartfelt appreciation for an opportunity to join with Minstrels in lifting spirits and voices in song.

Comments from Facility Staff and Administrators

- “You folks performed a miracle tonight. That was a ‘musical intervention!’ Thank you!” — Mike Way, Executive Vice President of Programs, Boston Rescue Mission
- “They’re probably the most loved volunteer group we have and they probably have the most impact on our guests... Tim has a talent for bringing people out of their shells, and he includes absolutely everybody.” —Prudence Chapman, Shattuck Shelter – Center for the Homeless



- “I know it helps their spirits because we have tenants and residents who ask us all the time ‘When is the next Minstrel group coming in?’ Having something to look forward to is such a positive thing in this environment when you are struggling with your life.” —Scottie Wait,



Volunteer Coordinator, Pine Street Inn, as quoted in the November/December 2008 issue of the national publication, Making Music

- “New talent comes out of them. There’s not much to do here. After you leave, some are still dancing. George—he’s dancing. He never gets up for anything! Keep on coming. Come more! They would be sitting in Central Square or drifting off to their rooms by now. It makes for a long night. When the Minstrels come, it’s like they can go to a club and hang out. No other arts or cultural group comes to us. Coming into their space is great.” —Linda, evening shelter supervisor, CASPAR





Financial Reports for Fiscal Year 2008

January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

BALANCE SHEET FY 2008

As of December 31, 2008

ASSETS

Current Assets – Cash at Bank Accounts 25,714

TOTAL ASSETS **25,714**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities 0

Opening Balance Equity 40,774

Net Income -15,060

TOTAL EQUITY **25,714**

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **25,714**

During FY 2008, the Board of Trustees decided to use \$15,060 from unrestricted funds to promote planning for program expansion and diversification. In FY 2009, we are expanding our fund raising efforts to increase the number of major gifts from individual donors, grants from foundations and additional corporate sponsors. We are pleased that Scullers Jazz Club will be donating a significant portion of the function room costs for our annual fund raising event in 2009.

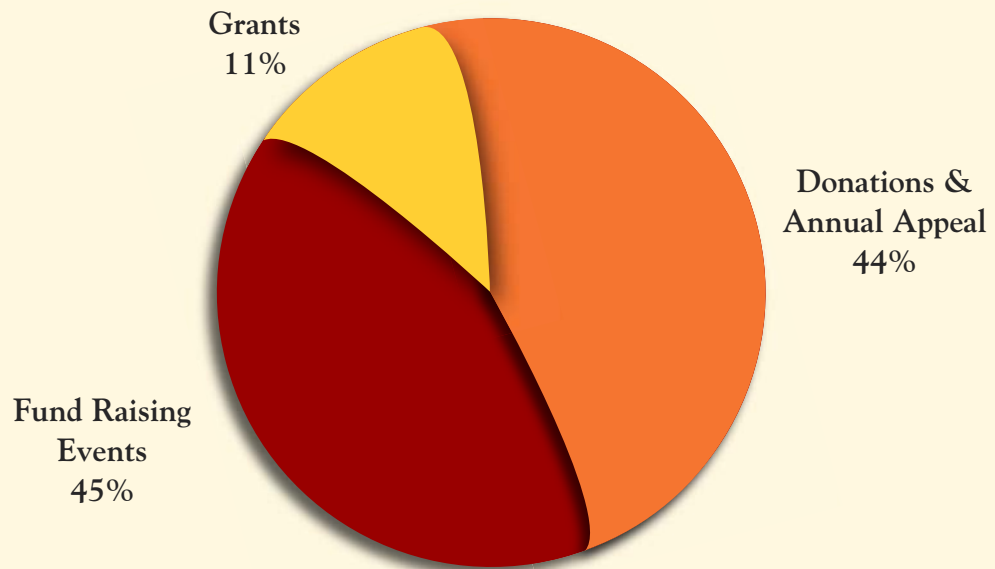
FY 2008 INCOME-EXPENSE SUMMARY

As of December 31, 2008

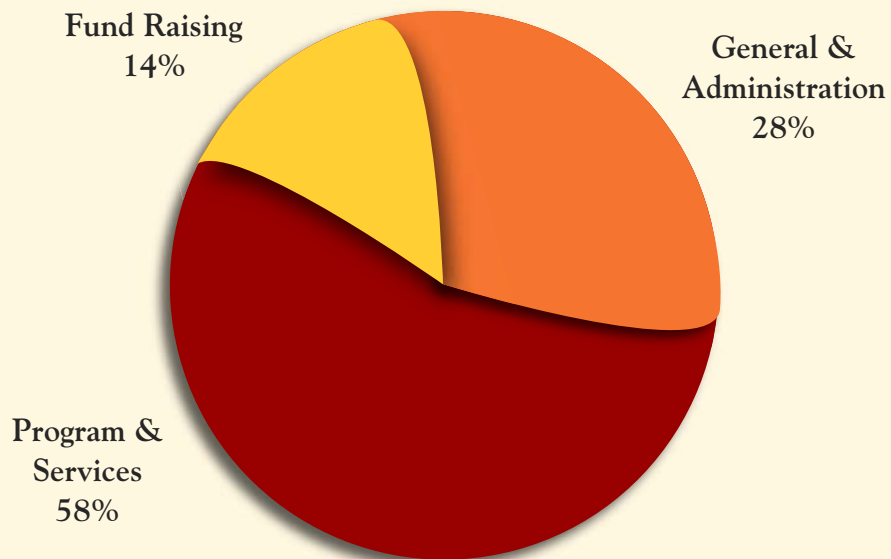
INCOME		TOTALS
Annual Appeal Campaign/Individual Donations	\$24,796	
Fund Raising Events	25,500	
Foundation and Corporate Grants	<u>6,500</u>	
TOTAL INCOME		\$56,796
EXPENSES		
General & Administrative	\$20,416	
Programs & Services	41,518	
Fund Raising	<u>9,940</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>\$71,874</u>
OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)		(\$15,078)
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSE)		
Interest	<u>\$ 19</u>	
NET INCOME (LOSS)		(\$15,059)

The above summary financial statement shows grant amounts received and income raised for our charitable programs, the cost of generating funds, and amounts spent on service delivery.

FY2008 INCOME



FY2008 EXPENSES





Leadership



Board of Trustees

President	Joy Reo	Director of Marketing, Enigma, Inc.
Vice President	Susanne McInerney	Realtor, Re/Max Landmark Real Estate
Treasurer	Gregory Sullivan, Esq.	Partner, Malloy and Sullivan, Attorney
Trustees	Curt Anderson	President, Medical Billing Management
	Raymond Ciccolo	President, Village Automotive Group
	Peggy Ann Coddling, Ph.D.	Professor of Music Therapy, Berklee College of Music
	Robert A. DeSimone	Principal, Robert A. DeSimone Associates, Inc.
	Denis Minihane	Proprietor, Minihane's Floral Shop

Founder, Executive Director & Artistic Director

Tim McHale



Community Support

Foundation, Corporate and Local Support

Allston-Brighton Neighborhood Fund of Boston College

Athens Bakery

Aurora Painting, Inc.

Bloomington

Brookwood Associates

Cambridge Community Foundation

Clipper Ship Foundation

Cohen-Brinker Family Foundation

Crockergraphics, Inc.

Enigma, Inc.

Houghton Chemical Corporation

Mr. Music, Inc.

New England Foundation

Rotary Club of Newton

Scullers Jazz Club

State Street Bank

The Building Doctor, Inc.

The Morin Company

United Parish of Auburndale

Individual Support

Barbara Allen	M. R. Fairley	Dick & Carolyn Lopes	Anne H. Richards
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Sharon Aviram	Mark Federman	Gertrude MacDonald	Steven Rioff
Helen Bakeman	Kate Flather	Don & Joan MacGillivray	Domingo & Diana Rosa
Bill & Maureen Bannon	Newell Flather	Maria & Alexander MacLeod	Ann Rowan
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Robert Barrett	Austine Frawley	Dennis & Tracy Mahaney	Patricia Schilling
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Rachael M. Dorr	Susan Korsmeyer	Ronald Ouellette	Richard Whiteley
Carol Doucette	Michael Krieger	Marianne Pantelakis	Kim Rice Whittemore
Dennis & Nancy Dowd	Ted & Janet Kuklinski	Melinda Ponder	Richard Williams
Mariana Downer	Marie Lande	Dudley Post	Linda Wilman
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Robert & Dorothea Engler	Penny & Jay Locey-Geyer	Nancy & Michael Reo	
Ted Fairchild	Donna Lomp	Beth & Jose Ribeiro	

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