

# Franklin Gazette

Volume 12, Number 1, Spring 2002

Friends of Franklin, Inc. P.O. Box 40048, Philadelphia, PA 19106 Website: [www.benfranklin2006.org](http://www.benfranklin2006.org)

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"Sell not virtue to purchase wealth nor liberty to purchase power."

*Poor Richard, May 1738*

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## President's Message

by Ralph Gregory Elliot

Benjamin Franklin. Just when you thought you'd heard everything there is to hear about him, something new materializes. And so it is as we approach his tercentenary four years hence.

We all know Franklin the printer, publisher, postmaster and patriot. We celebrate Franklin the inventor, scientist and sage. We recognize Franklin the diplomat and statesman, and still benefit from the host of institutions, companies and societies he was instrumental in founding. We view with amazement his protean labors for the public good; the average man would have been content with achieving a thimbleful of his accomplishments.

But Franklin the aphrodisiac? The most fecund imagination of the most fantasizing Franklinophile would not have conjured up such a talent. Yet the possibility exists, suggested by no less an authority than the celebrated biographer, Antonia Fraser. In her eminently readable latest work, *Marie Antoinette*, she writes of the marriage in 1770 of her subject and the Dauphin Louis, in four years' time to become Louis XVI. She writes feelingly of the inability or disinclination of Louis to consummate the marriage - a reticence lasting over 7 years, much to the embarrassment and dismay of the young bride and the consternation of her mother, the redoubtable Empress Maria Theresa.

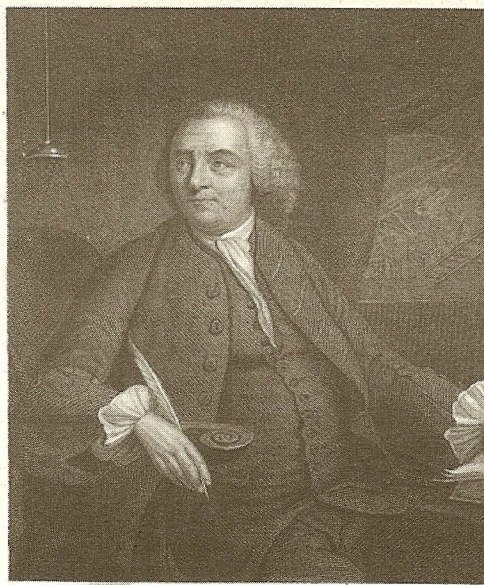
And then one day Louis does his duty, and nine months later Antoinette gives birth to a daughter. What caused

the laggard Louis suddenly to do his royal duty? Fraser, counting backward from the princess's birth, offers a suggestion: "It would seem that the baby had been conceived on roughly the date when Benjamin Franklin was officially received at Versailles, as one of the accredited envoys of the United States. In contrast to the French custom, Franklin wore neither sword nor powdered wig. Perhaps the King found this first contact with the virile New World inspirational." After all, Ben did snatch lightning from the sky.

As if the mind did not sufficiently reel from suggestion of this latest achievement, the new year brought yet more to ponder. In an interview on NPR in January, the distinguished actor Billy Bob Thornton confided his belief that in a previous incarnation he had been Benjamin Franklin. The multi-tattooed consort of Angelina Jolie did not, alas, share with the listening audience those of his characteristics and proclivities that might provide evidentiary support for the plausibility of this aperçu. But the possibility does tantalize, leading one readily to conjure an image of the beauteous and multi-lived Shirley Maclaine as Madame Helvetius.

Franklin is everywhere. I was in Philadelphia in early February, and decided to walk down Market Street from City Hall to see the new Visitors' Center opened last November at the corner of 6th Street. I proceeded down Market Street under the watchful gaze of Ben, whose visage filled a poster covering several floors on the side of a building around the corner of 8th Street tout-

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*published quarterly by:*

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Publication schedule is  
as follows:  
March, June, September, and  
December

Newsletter submissions are  
encouraged.

Deadlines are the 15th of the  
month preceeding publica-  
tion.

Submissions by e-mail or  
computer disks (text-only  
format) are preferred.

Gift memberships and  
back issues are available.

## President's Message

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ing vodka: "Absolut Philadelphia". Catherine the Great would have been so proud.

Congress at this writing is considering a resolution establishing a national commission to plan for Ben's 300th birthday in 2006. The bill, which passed the House last fall, may well have passed the Senate by the time these lines arrive in your mail. Meanwhile, as you will read elsewhere in these pages, the Franklin Institute, in cooperation with various other Franklin-related organizations and with a generous grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, is embarked upon plans centering around a world-wide exhibition of Frankliniana.

Middlemarch Films, in cooperation with Minnesota Public Television, is busily editing down scores of hours of film into three episodes on the life of Franklin, airing this fall on PBS. New Haven's Friends of the Franklin Papers received a preview of the series and insights from its creators into its production at their annual celebration of Ben's birthday January 19. (Trivia question: what city provides filmmakers with the most authentic 18th century streetscapes? Answer: Vilnius, Lithuania.) And two of the world's preeminent historians of 18th century America are each in the process of writing books about Franklin.

The Friends of Franklin, which in the late 1990s took the lead in convening a meeting of Franklin-related organizations to begin the planning phase of the tercentenary celebrations in an intelligent and coordinated way, will inevitably play its appropriate part in all of these doings. More importantly, you as member of the Friends, with the varied talents and interests you bring to the table along with your common allegiance to honoring Franklin, will through the Friends be enabled and encouraged to participate in whatever manner you find most comfort-

able and appropriate for you.

We welcome your suggestions - by snail mail, e-mail or fax - as to how the Friends, given its relatively small size but also the richly talented membership with which it is blessed, can make the most meaningful contribution possible to our goal of celebrating the life and achievements of the First American. I look forward to a veritable blizzard of thoughtful responses from you all.

## The Tercentenary Celebration of Franklin's Legacy

Philip W. Hammer  
and Evan L. Welsh  
The Franklin Institute

Benjamin Franklin is often referred to as the First American and America's First Citizen of the World. It was Franklin's remarkable combination of curious mind, ambition, luck, and timely career moves that positioned him to be among the most influential and well-known Americans of his times. Some suggest that he remains the most well-known American historical figure in the world. Franklin's astoundingly robust reputation, both in the United States and abroad, is sustained by his personal impact on modern civil societies. Indeed, it was Franklin's vision of the role of citizens in a society that transformed Philadelphia into the greatest city in the young United States, and made it a model for the other great cities that grew up in the US. Franklin's insight, realized through his gift for organizing well-meaning fellow citizens and their money, was that great civic institutions are created by the people they serve, and sustained by this civic energy. The hallmarks of such great cities have become trademarks of American society, namely, non-governmental, not-for-profit organizations that serve as a sort of civic glue.

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### **Focus on Risk Protection at Celebration! Benjamin Franklin, Founder**

On January 17, 2002 several hundred people gathered in Philadelphia to honor Benjamin Franklin on his 296<sup>th</sup> birthday and to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Philadelphia Contributionship by Franklin and his colleagues and the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franklin's invention of the lightning rod. The Philadelphia Contributionship is America's first successful fire insurance company; subsequently this year marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the insurance industry.

Participants in the procession gathered at the American Philosophical Society Library to march to Franklin's

grave at Christ Church's graveyard. Members of The Philadelphia Contributionship and others from the insurance industry, as well as representatives from the Carpenters' Company, the American Philosophical Society, the University of Pennsylvania, Historic Bartram's Garden, Fireman's Hall Museum, the Masons, the Philadelphia Fire Department, and the Franklin Institute set off behind several fourth graders from the George McCall School, Mayor John Street and Celebration! Chairman, B. Franklin Reinauer, II.

*"During the course of Franklin's remarkable life, he created a score of companies, organizations and institutions, many of*

*which prevail unto this day. He also inspired others to follow in the concept of his ideas and ideals. Many of these original companies and institutions are joined together to form the organization which plans and presents this day of Celebration! each year."*

In this fashion B. Franklin Reinauer summarized the nature of the groups gathered at Franklin's grave. At the conclusion of the short service Mayor Street placed a laurel wreath near the grave and representatives from Historic Bartram's Garden laid branches from the Franklinia tree, discovered by

*Celebration cont. on page 4.*



Bartram in Georgia, and named in honor of his old friend, Franklin.

Two hundred and fifty people attended the luncheon, which followed at the Downtown Club in the Public Ledger Building where a larger than life statue of Benjamin Franklin dominates the lobby. Christina T. Webber, President and CEO of The Philadelphia Contributionship recounted the history of the company founded by Franklin and his fellow volunteer fire fighters and was presented with a proclamation honoring the company by Mayor Street.

### **Franklin Founder Awards Presented to John C. Bogle and Commissioner Harold B. Hairston**

This year, in an unusual move, the Franklin Celebration committee presented two Franklin Founder Bowls. The first was awarded to Vanguard founder and former CEO, John C. Bogle. Just as Franklin helped make home ownership a safer investment for the average Philadelphian by providing insurance in the event of fire, John Bogle made the investment market accessible to the average citizen. Just as The Contributionship was a mutual company, Bogle too established his company on the concept of mutuality. (Although The Vanguard Group was built on the foundation of The Wellington Management Fund, Bogle changed it from a profit-making mutual fund to one that was truly mutual in nature and owned by the fund shareholders.)

In his remarks, " 'Energy and Persistence Conquer All Things: Benjamin Franklin's Entrepreneurship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,' " Bogle spoke of Franklin as an entrepreneur, one who worked not for personal gain but for the satisfaction of accomplishment for the public good. "Today as we move into the twenty-first century, I'd like to talk to you about three areas in which Dr. Franklin's idealistic eighteenth-century version of entrepreneurship should continue to inspire us. First the application of his relentless energy and persistence to the service of the community's greater good. Second, his invention -largely through trial and error and common sense- of devices that would improve the community's quality of life. And third, his view that virtue is not only achievable by us mortals, but is the principal requirement of a life well lived."

Bogle continued his remarks by examining Franklin's accomplishments with " parallels reflected in the creation of Vanguard" and its subsequent innovations in the investment area. It was in Franklin's views on virtue that Bogle saw the common thread that bound entrepreneurship, mutuality and invention. " Even viewed through the lens of twenty-first century cynicism rather than eigh-

teenth-century idealism, I confess a sense of wonder at the young Franklin's moral strength and disciplined self-improvement. While few of us in today's society would have the will to pursue a written agenda of virtue, Franklin had established, in his own words, the "character of Integrity" that would give him so much influence with his fellow citizens in the struggle for American independence. Wrapped in integrity and virtue, his character was also central to his dedication to the public interest. It is in that sense that his true entrepreneurship emerges."

Franklin Celebration committee vice chairman, Charles Ludwig, presented the second bowl to Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Harold B. Hairston on behalf of all firefighters whose hard work and dedication have led to safer communities. He recalled the beginnings of Franklin's Union Fire Company and their proposal to establish an insurance company that led to the beginnings of The Philadelphia Contributionship and the American insurance industry. It was noted that the industry owes much of its success to the efforts of firefighters everywhere who consistently fight to save the lives and property of neighbors.

### **Celebration! Seminars**

Two afternoon seminars rounded out the day, exploring in greater depth the two different facets of property protection being commemorated: the lightning rod and insurance. Dr. E. Philip Krider, well known Franklin Friend spoke about the lightning rod, "so simple an invention." Complete with demonstrations via an electrostatic generator, he gave an extensive, entertaining and informative talk on Franklin's role in developing the lightning rod showing its use in the eighteenth century via engravings and archaeological discoveries. More contemporary photographs showed the lightning rod still heavily in use today. From his opening transparency showing tens of thousands of lightning strikes in a radius of less than fifty miles around Independence Hall in a two year period, he had his audience captivated.

Dr. Robert Gibbons, executive director of the International Insurance Foundation and an economic historian, spoke on "Ounces of Prevention and Pounds of Cure: Risk Management and Economic Development." Looking at the beginnings of insurance and risk management he examined eighteenth century needs. "Franklin recognized fire's threat to civic well-being. His practical approach was to prevent fires when possible, and when not, to help the victims recover. That is why we now celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both the lightning rod [a loss control device] and the insurance company [a loss financing device.]. The Contributionship was an integral part of a larger program. It was sound risk management, characteristically pragmatic and enlightened. While its aim was to help the victims of fire, it was motivated not so much by charity as by utility."

*cont. p. 5*



*Seminars continued from p. 4*

Gibbons spoke of the contributions insurance companies made to the economic development of cities and nations and of the natural disasters that continue to occur with devastating results in undeveloped countries. Demonstrating that the largest share of the world's insurance belongs to the most prosperous nations, Gibbons queried, "so when American insurance experts ask, as Franklin did, 'What good can I do today?' the answer is clear. Let us help developing countries create the institutions of a free insurance market. Ounces of prevention for sound risk management of natural disasters will do far more good than the pounds of cure sent for post-loss relief." Dr. Gibbons used Franklin's own writings on the New Zealand expedition (see accompanying article, "A Mutual Exchange of Benefits") to confirm his agreement with this philosophy.

### **"A Mutual Exchange of Benefits"**

Text from speech by Dr. Robert Gibbons

In 1771 the most remote place on earth was the South Pacific. Captain James Cook's first voyage of exploration had just returned with reports about New Zealand. Benjamin Franklin observed that

*The inhabitants of those countries, our fellow men, have canoes only; not knowing iron, they cannot build ships; they have little astronomy, and no knowledge of the compass to guide them; they cannot therefore come to us, or obtain any of our advantages. From these circumstances, does not some duty seem to arise from us to them? Does not Providence by these distinguishing favors seem to call on us to do something ourselves for the common interest of humanity?*

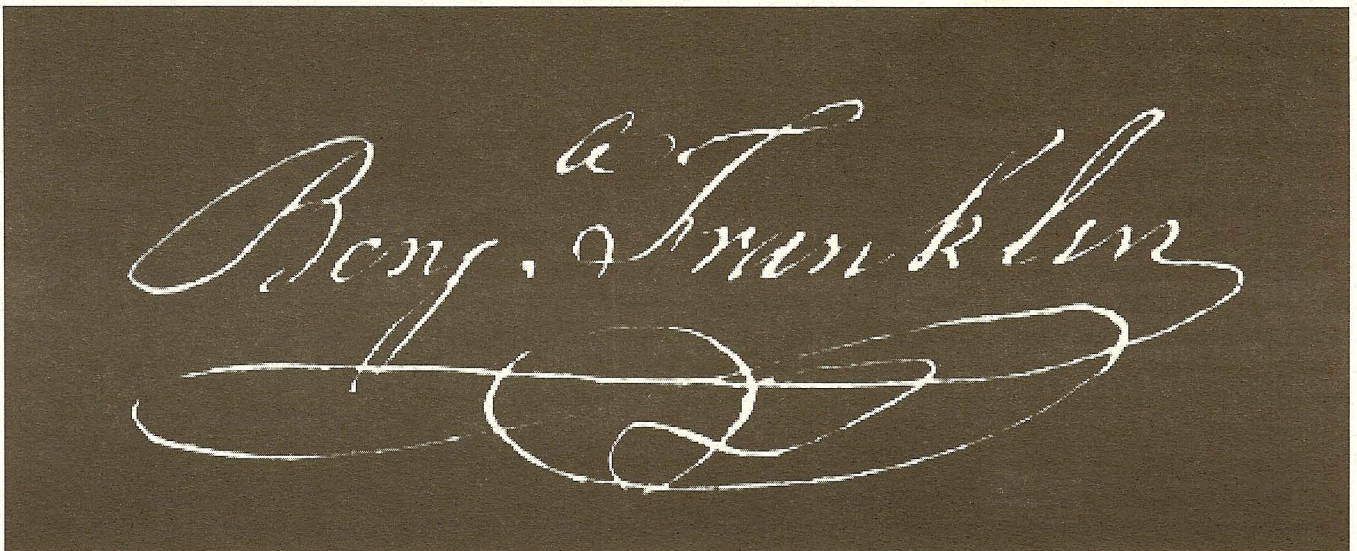
Franklin proposed to do something for the common interest of humanity through a new voyage to New Zealand, one with very different motivations from the ordinary ones.

*Many voyages have been undertaken with views of profit or of plunder or to gratify resentment; to procure some advantage to ourselves, or do some mischief to others; but a voyage is now proposed to visit a distant people on the other side of the globe, not to cheat them, not to rob them, not to seize their lands or enslave their persons, but merely to do them good and make them, as far as in our power lies, to live as comfortably as ourselves.*

For Franklin this spreading of useful knowledge was not so much an act of charity, but of **utility** [Franklin's favorite word]. He was quick to point out the advantages for the supporters of his proposed voyage:

*It seems a laudable wish that all the nations of the earth were connected by a knowledge of each other and a mutual exchange of benefits, but a commercial nation particularly should wish for a general civilization of mankind, since trade is always carried on to much greater extent with people who have the arts and conveniences of life than it can be with naked savages. We may therefore hope in this undertaking to be of some service to our country, as well as to those poor people who, however distant from us, are in truth related to us, and whose interests do, in some degree, concern every one.*

Franklin's sentiments apply just as well today. In contemporary terms, exporting our risk management expertise is a classic win-win proposition. For the Philadelphia insurance community, backed by 250 years of experience, what could be more useful than to share our knowledge of risk and how to manage it with those whose lives would become safer, more stable, and more prosperous as a result. We will all benefit.





## Franklin Played Major Role in Protection of Property

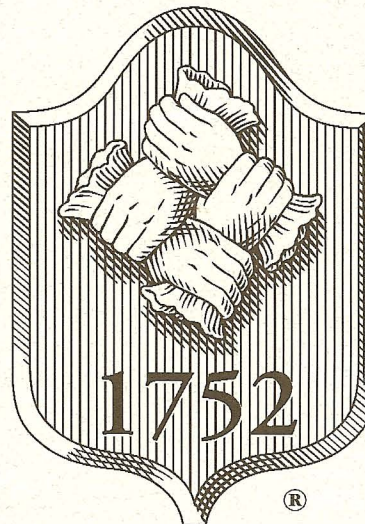
As much as he was a statesman, diplomat, scientist or inventor, Franklin was a businessman. Protection of property was a keen concern. As editor of **The Pennsylvania Gazette** he urged fire prevention measures, warning his readers that: "an ounce of Prevention is worth a pound of Cure." He advised them to clean chimneys more frequently, suggested public pumps as an added source of water and finally urged them to form societies to assist at fires hoping that would bring some semblance of order and organized training to firefighting. The result was the Union Fire Company, the nation's first truly volunteer fire company, founded in 1736. Although it began as a mutual aid fire club, within a few years it offered aid to anyone needing it. The Union fulfilled a social as well as civic purpose and, as membership was limited, it was soon imitated. By the mid-eighteenth century there were 7 other similar companies operating in Philadelphia. They purchased equipment, held drills and generally ensured that the city was well protected. They also began to look at ways to protect individuals from the economic hardships caused by fire.

In 1751 Benjamin Franklin and Philip Syng of the Union Fire Company met with representatives of the city's other fire companies to discuss the formation of a city-wide insurance company. This led to the founding of The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, the nation's first successful property insurance company in 1752. Earlier colonial experience with insurance was limited. The Friendly Society formed in Charleston, South Carolina in 1735, but was bankrupted by the fire which swept through the frame city in 1740. Philadelphia, in contrast, was a city planned to withstand major fires. Still fire when it occurred could be devastating.

These volunteer fire fighters likely knew that fire insurance companies had been operating successfully in England since the end of the seventeenth century. The Amicable Contributionship or the Hand in Hand of London provided an easily adaptable template for them to follow in Philadelphia. On February 4, 1752, Franklin inserted a notice in his **Gazette** that subscribers to the articles of insurance would meet at the Court House the following Saturday to determine how to implement them. The plan drew wide interest; within two months approximately 75 property owners had indicated their interest by signing the articles of agreement.

They met on April 13, 1752, to elect the first Directors of whom Franklin was one. By June the directors were issuing policies, not surprisingly printed by Franklin.

These year term which properties or damage Insurance to those which fell mile radius center of Prior to in each would be that the did could de- was a de- and if so,



were seven policies insured against loss by fire. was limited buildings within a ten of the the city. surance property surveyed so rectors termine if it sirable risk what the rate

of insurance should be. The Directors also insisted that a fire mark, four clasped lead hands mounted on wood, be placed on insured properties to identify them, much like today's fire marks and logo.

Although Franklin remained on the Board of Directors for only two years he continued to insure his homes with the company and it was The Contributionship's survey which provided the documentation for the National Park Service's recreation of the frame of Franklin's house in Franklin Court.

Franklin's fellow directors were wholehearted supporters of his views on fire prevention. They continued to insist on measures to safeguard policyholders' properties as well as the city. All insured homes had rails on the roofs to aid fire fighters; wooden buildings were discouraged and the directors' own fines went to purchase buckets for the city's watch houses in the 1750s. Careful underwriting and planning carried the company through the difficult war years and into the nineteenth century. In 1810 the Directors determined that the early seven year policies would be replaced by perpetual policies. A one time deposit provided coverage until the policy was cancelled.

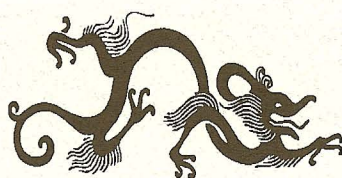
Today the Contributionship offers perpetual homeowners policies as well as term homeowners insurance in Pennsylvania and term homeowners insurance in New Jersey. The company continues to operate from its Greek Revival style home built by Thomas U. Walter for the company in 1836. It is now a National Historic Landmark. In addition to the company's executive offices, it houses a small museum area which is open to the public during normal office hours. The archives are also open by appointment. Call Carol Smith at 215.627.1752 ext. 1286 for further information.



## Lightning Rods

Having urged fire prevention measures and organized a volunteer fire company and an insurance company, Franklin turned his attention to capturing the forces of nature. In June 1752 on a stormy night Franklin set out with his kite and key to try to draw electricity. His subsequent invention of the lightning rod would prove a great boon to homeowners in the future protecting numerous properties from loss by fire. It was, however, hotly contested in its time. In 1760 members of the American Philosophical Society, of which Franklin was a founding member, debated: "May we place Rods on our Houses to guard them from Lightning without being guilty of Presumption?" Later generations accepted lightning rods with fewer qualms, grateful for the opportunity to add another fire safety feature to their properties.

Franklin would be amazed at what his early efforts spawned. The Union Fire Company has today evolved into the Philadelphia Fire Department, one of the finest in the world, still actively promoting fire prevention. The Philadelphia Contributionship continues to offer insurance protection to consumers, serving as a cornerstone of the mutual insurance industry. While the lightning rod may not be as common, Franklin's early invention provided the basis for further work and research leading to a greater understanding of electricity, lightning and atmospheric conditions.



## Lightning Exhibit to Open at the Bakken May 11

On May 10, 1752, French scientists labored to prove Franklin's thesis that lightning was a form of electricity as he explained in his 1751 publication, *Experiments and Observations on Electricity*. Franklin himself experimented with his kite later that summer. In celebration of the 250th anniversary of the lightning rod, The Bakken Museum in Minneapolis will open a special exhibit on the history of the lightning rod on May 11, 2002, which will remain open until December 31, 2002. Special features of the exhibit include: electrostatic generators from the 1700s and electrostatic toys from the same era, an eighteenth century "Thunder House" as well as a more recent example, an early wrought iron lightning rod and a letter from Franklin.

## Tercenary Celebration

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As Benjamin Franklin's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday approaches, several organizations connected to the Franklin legacy have joined together to organize an international celebration of Franklin's Tercenary, the centerpiece of which will be a major international traveling exhibition. The countdown to Benjamin Franklin's 300<sup>th</sup> Birthday was launched at a ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial at The Franklin Institute on Franklin's 296<sup>th</sup> birthday, January 17, 2002, with the announcement of this major exhibition. The Pew Charitable Trusts presented a consortium of distinguished Franklin-related organizations with a grant totaling \$4 million that will support the development and traveling tour of a major Franklin exhibition designed as part of the celebration of Franklin's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday on January 17, 2006. The Franklin-related institutions consist of The American Philosophical Society, The Franklin Institute, The Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum

of Art, and University of Pennsylvania.

The Pew Charitable Trusts support nonprofit activities in the areas of culture, education, the environment, health and human services, public policy and religion. Based in Philadelphia, the Trusts make strategic investments to help organizations and citizens develop practical solutions to difficult problems. In 2001, with approximately \$4.3 billion in assets, the Trusts committed more than \$230 million to 175 nonprofit organizations.

"The Trusts are honored to partner with the consortium to highlight the many accomplishments of this great American—from his thirst for learning to his dedication to democracy," said Rebecca W. Rimel, President of The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The leaders of the consortium include: Dr. Edward C. Carter II, Librarian of The American Philosophical Society; Dr. Dennis M. Wint, President and CEO of The Franklin Institute; Dr. John C. Van Horne, Librarian and CEO of The Library Company of Philadelphia; Ms. Gail Harritty, COO of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and Dr. Judith Rodin, President of the University of Pennsylvania.

The centerpiece project titled "The Creation of Benjamin Franklin, American Citizen of the World," will open in Philadelphia in October 6, 2005, 282 years to the day that Franklin arrived in Philadelphia. It will travel to three other cities in the United States and Europe. In advance of the exhibition, the grant will support locating, cataloging and conserving items that were owned by or associated closely with Franklin. The best of these publicly and privately owned artifacts and documents will be sought for the exhibition.

"The events surrounding Franklin's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday will offer Philadelphia an extraordinary opportunity to showcase itself to a worldwide audience," said Dr. Wint, spokesman for the con-

*cont. on p. 8*



*Tercentenary cont. from p. 7*

sortium. "The Pew Charitable Trusts have positioned this great city to lead a celebration that will shine a spotlight on the best that we have to offer. The partnership of The American Philosophical Society, The Franklin Institute, The Library Company of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the University of Pennsylvania looks forward to working with local and state officials to ensure that Ben Franklin's life receives the attention it deserves."

Together, the Consortium will: 1). Locate, catalog, research and conserve Franklin's material heritage in Philadelphia and beyond; 2). Build on this heritage to create a major international exhibition, "The Creation of Benjamin Franklin, American Citizen of the World;" 3). Publicize, promote and support the exhibit with print, electronic and other ancillary materials.

In addition, the Consortium will partner with the City of Philadelphia, along with many other local, national and international organizations, to develop programs, publications and events to publicize and celebrate Franklin's heritage during his tercentenary and beyond.

The centerpiece of the Tercentenary celebration will be the 10,000 square foot exhibition which will be a multidisciplinary exhibition. The exhibition will display and interpret a broad-ranging collection of artifacts, documents and art related to Franklin, his work, his impact and his time. Carefully conserved, fully researched historical objects will be the core content of the exhibition. Other approaches, including immersive environments, interactive elements, and multimedia presentations will create an engaging educational experience for audiences age ten and above. Publications, Web sites and other ancillary materials and programs will enhance the educational and promotional impact of the project.

"The Creation of Benjamin Franklin" will be an opportunity to introduce audiences around the world both to Franklin's character and achievements and to Franklin's Philadelphia. The Project will also bring Philadelphia, through Franklin, to the positive attention of an international audience. Indirectly, the project will present Philadelphia as a seminal focus of 18<sup>th</sup> century thought and action, and promote Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia as a tourist destination.

## Upcoming Tours

**"Franklin's Philadelphia - Then and Now"** September 25-29, 2002.

With behind-the-scenes visits to the Masonic Temple, The Philadelphia Contributionship, the American Philosophical Society, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Franklin Institute, the Lights of Liberty, and The Liberty Museum. View various Franklin artifacts and collections at each venue. Learn about the new Constitution Center scheduled to open July 4, 2003. And, for those of us who were scheduled for Belgium last year (and even if you were not), enjoy a lunch at a popular Belgian restaurant, dine on authentic Belgian cuisine, all while delighting in information that will be shared by friend and scholar, Claude Anne-Lopez, on Franklin's time in Belgium. Look for all the details in the mail.

**"Franklin's California—A Visit to West Coast Friends"** - February 2003.

After many requests, a special visit has been arranged at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. A full day of activities at the Huntington

Library is planned where you will enjoy visiting the library, archives, and will view the manuscript of Franklin's **Autobiography**, one of the many, many treasures housed there. Friend Dr. Pamela Hartsock will join us and speak about the **Autobiography**. Additionally we will visit Friend Mark Barbour at the International Printing Museum where we will take a tour and enjoy a special reception. Friend, Gene Collins, our California Ben Franklin, has arranged a special Franklin program for us at Knotts Berry Farm, where we will see their Independence Hall, a replica of the original. Other visits (non-Franklin related) will be the Nixon Library (special tour) and San Juan Capistrano Mission. Complete details will be mailed shortly.

Please join us for these Franklin excursions. Philadelphia and our West Coast Friends await our visit. More information, contact Kathy DeLuca at 215-236-0300.

## Children's Video

"Ben Franklin: Scientist and Inventor, is a color animated film chronicling Franklin's life and achievements. Highly recommended for children in grades one to four, it is part of the Animated Hero Classics Video Series. Available in both Spanish and English.

## Ben and Me Revisited

Children continue to delight in Robert Lawson's enchanting book, "Ben and Me: An Astonishing Life of Benjamin Franklin by his Good Mouse Amos." Written for children 9-12 from the perspective of Amos, Franklin's four footed friend, this book was written in 1939. Amazon now has sample pages of the 60th anniversary edition on-line to refresh readers' memories and captivate new ones. **Amazon.com continues to support the Friends of Franklin by contributing a portion of book sales when books are ordered through the Friends of Franklin website's Amazon link.**



# Franklin Tidbits

## Franklin's Bequest

Tom Ferrick, Jr. in his January 27, 2002 column in **The Philadelphia Inquirer**, updated the story of Franklin's £1000 gift to Philadelphia upon his death in 1790. Franklin intended that his gift, be used initially for low-interest loans to "young married artificers." After the first 100 years he felt some funds could be available for public works. A large portion of this was given to help the newly formed Franklin Institute in the early twentieth century. The rest was used for mortgage loans for working men. In 1990 Franklin's dictates ceased and, after some controversy, then Mayor Wilson Goode asked a panel of historians for their recommendations. In line with Franklin's interests slightly more than 1/3 was given to community organizations across Pennsylvania to fund projects including libraries and fire companies. Approximately \$800,000 was given to the Franklin Institute. The final piece was given to the Philadelphia Foundation to administer, which disperses interest income to the Philadelphia Academies, a non-profit organization that runs vocational programs within some of the city's public schools and Mercy Catholic Vocational High School. Funding provides scholarships to students to continue their study in colleges or trade schools and sometimes supplements existing programs. Ferrick announced the winners of these scholarships and an exciting finish in the Tour de Sol race for high school students from the Philadelphia Academies. A recent \$4,300 grant helped them build an

electric car for the Tour de Sol race. Their car placed eighth, ahead of a \$4,000,000 entry from Motorola!

## Virtue: Part of the Curriculum

In Franklin, Massachusetts, students at the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School, follow Franklin's model for self-improvement and virtue. Each week teachers identify a new virtue and send information home to parents. Self-improvement is expected to continue at home; children set small goals each week and work towards them.

While many schools incorporate character education into daily life, few use the vocabulary word "virtue." At the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School virtue is woven into daily lessons and is an integral part of the curriculum. Katherine Fraumeni Ginnetty a founder and teacher writing for the U.S. Department of Education's **Community Update** gives examples of fourth graders studying about Valley Forge learning the meaning of courage and perseverance, eighth graders reading about scientists discuss their fortitude as they patiently worked towards goals.

Believing that good habits, instilled early and practiced, lead to character traits that are universally admired, the founders of this school hope that the children, like Franklin, will find happiness in striving towards virtue throughout their lives.

## Looking for Virtue in the Digital Age

An electronic search for the word "Virtue" in Franklin's Autobiography yielded 23 entries from the web site "Great Books: Texts and Fully Searchable Concordances" at

Those seeking specific passages or quotes from this or other great works may find it useful and enjoyable. For those wishing to support the site a voluntary contribution can be made through the Amazon Honor system.

## Franklin Posts Early Drug Warnings

A June 1999 issue of **Pediatrics** by LK. Altman, "Who Goes First? The Story of Self-Experimentation in Medicine" recounts Franklin's 1728 article in the **Pennsylvania Gazette** on making rope from hemp. He instructs the reader to dry the plant and then burn the leaves before immersing the stalk in water. He warned however, "...do not stand in the smoke for it makes the head feel funny."

## New Computer Game Starring Franklin

"Ally 2: Ben Franklin Adventure" is a new computer game which transports its players, and its protagonist, Ally, back into the eighteenth century. As she meets Franklin and other historical figures and unravels puzzles, she learns about Franklin's world, including his list of virtues and kite flying experiments. Designed for Windows.



## *Special Thanks to Our Life Members!*

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## *Welcome and Thanks to New Members!*

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William H. Greer, Jr.,  
*Chevy Chase, MD*

Pamela Hartsock, Ph.D.,  
*Spring Valley, CA*

L. David Roper,  
*Blacksburg, VA*



## Welcome and Thanks to New Members!

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## Calendar of Events

### September 25-29, 2002.

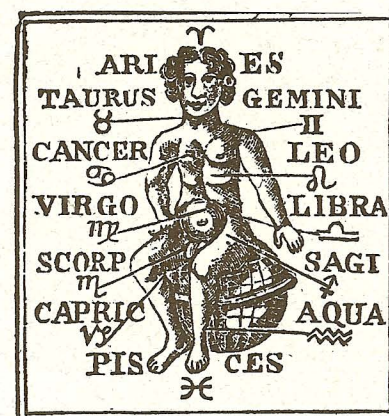
"Franklin's Philadelphia – Then and Now." Friends of Franklin tour in Philadelphia.

October 4, 2002. "Risk & Reputation: Insecurity in the Early American Economy." Conference of the Program in Early American Economy and Society, The Library Company of Philadelphia, 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. This one-day conference highlights new research on how early Americans devised systems to protect their property and lifestyles, thus contributing to the growth of the nation's economy. The conference is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is requested; forms can be found on the program's website at:

or those interested may call The Library Company at 215.546.5588

November 4-6, 2002. Conference on the History of Lightning Rods to be held at The Bakken Library and Museum in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Contact the Bakken at 612.926.3878.

February, 2003. "Franklin's California—A Visit to West Coast Friends." Friends of Franklin Tour to California.



January 17, 2003. Benjamin Franklin, Founder Celebration! Philadelphia. 2003 marks the 250th anniversary of Franklin's appointment as Deputy Postmaster General of North America. This year's event will focus on the interchange of information in the colonies and today. Morning seminars will be followed by a procession to Franklin's grave and luncheon.

Stay Tuned! for the upcoming three part PBS series, **Benjamin Franklin** to be aired in the fall of 2002. The series depicts Franklin's life from his early days in Boston through his days of printing and civic responsibility in Philadelphia and ultimately his contributions and responsibilities as a founding father, scientist and American diplomat. Drawn from his own writings and those of his contemporaries it is placed within its context of the major political and scientific events that transformed American life. An interactive web site and teachers guide will be also be available as a supplement to the series at PBS.ORG.



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Volume 12, Number 1, Spring, 2002