

Franklin Gazette

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Visit: www.benfranklin2006.org

All Mankind are beholden to him that is kind to the Good. *Poor Richard*, April, 1746.

Message From the President

By Roy E. Goodman

As we approach the beginning of the Franklin 300th, a number of people have asked me which of Ben's contributions most impacts us today. There are many obvious and worthy responses to the query, but my view is strongly influenced by current events.

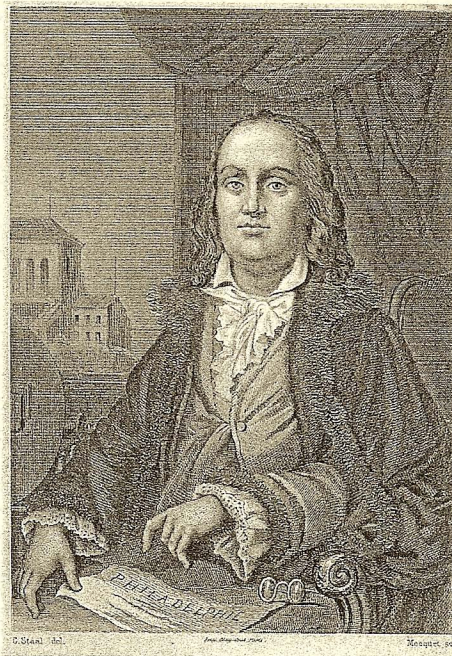
After all, shedding new light on Franklin's relevance for our times is a pursuit the Friends of Franklin should relish and promote. So, I'd say building community ranks number one. Community entails a broad range of tasks and services that Franklin addressed in a keenly insightful manner.

For example, the organization of fire brigades, medical facilities (Pennsylvania Hospital), fire insurance, the postal system, the militia, care and support of Philadelphia's, Pennsylvania's, and colonial infrastructure, i.e., water supply, wharves, forts, roads, as well as scientific, diplomatic and political participation, all fall into the purview of Franklin's communal concerns.

The Pennsylvania Gazette, and *Autobiography* along with the books, pamphlets and broadsides issued from Franklin's press, certainly fostered community. A quick search of the *Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (digital beta version) provides an array of letters using the term community. Everyone should read through the *Papers* to really appreciate the breadth of Franklin's vision.

Eighteenth century America, much like today's United

States, was a multilingual and diverse ethnic population. Ben promoted the Americanization of the large Pennsylvania German and Gaelic communities by encouraging them to learn English. He promoted education and reading to all, including black youth through a number of schools established by the Associates of Dr. Bray.



"Franklin" engraved by Mocquet, printed by Garnier Frères after G. Staal. Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society

In his will, Franklin provided trust funds for tradesmen in Philadelphia and Boston, mostly for home mortgages that would continue to strengthen and build neighborhoods in these cities for 200 years, beyond 1790. Today the remaining funds are administered by the Philadelphia Foundation to educate high school students pursuing vocational and technical careers.

No doubt, each of us can cite many more Franklin contributions that helped establish a United States that is truly a nation of "Common wealth." For the next few years, using the 300th Celebration, The Friends of Franklin can spread the word regarding Ben's efforts at instilling Americans with a can-do spirit and the possibility of following one's dreams. In effect, Ben challenges us, leads the way, and opens the door of human potential that all are able to pursue.

We will reach new audiences throughout the world via the many exhibits, books, talks and tours offered. The opportunity to reflect on the importance of Franklin's legacy comes none too soon!

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Friends of Franklin Elect New Members

On June 25, 2005 the Friends of Franklin officially elected Roy E. Goodman, President; Ralph Archbold, Vice-President; Lee Knepp, Treasurer, and Anna Coxé Toogood, Secretary. Joining them on the Board are David Browdy, DDS; Ellen Cohn; Stuart Green, MD; Noah Katz; E. Philip Krider, PhD; Blaine McCormick, PhD; Michael Newcomb, MD; and George Waters. Over the next few issues the *Gazette* will feature biographies of different Board members highlighting their achievements and specific Franklin interests.

STUART GREEN, MD

Stuart is a collector of Frankliniana. He is a Clinical Professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in the School of Medicine, University of California, Irvine, and has served as President of both the Association of Bone and Joint Surgeons and the Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction Society. He has authored several published papers on Benjamin Franklin, including an article on the Mesmer investigation and most recently, a review of the merchants' and manufacturers' Stamp Act testimony of 1765 that appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.

ANNA COXE TOOGOOD

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania (go, Franklin), Coxé joined the National Park Service as an historian in Washington, DC. After ten years of research and writing from there and from a center in Denver, Colorado, Coxé became historian for Independence National Historical Park, which includes the property of Benjamin Franklin's last home in Philadelphia. Recently she took a new position in the Interpretation and Visitor Services branch, where she serves as historian consultant to the Park's online and management staff.

LEE E. KNEPP

Lee is a resident of McClure, Pennsylvania, and serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the County of Snyder, a relatively small county in central Pennsylvania. He holds a degree in History from Pennsylvania State University. A longtime secretary of the Snyder County Historical Society and treasurer of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, Lee is active in numerous historical and community organizations. He has served as a board member and chair of nominating for The Friends of Franklin, and has been a regular on our organization's numerous trips.

Recreational Mathematics: A Short Course in Honor of the 300th Birthday of Benjamin Franklin (August 2-3, 2005)

Every summer, mathematicians and teachers from around the country gather for the Mathfest convention. This year's meeting started off with two days of lectures honoring Benjamin Franklin's 300th birthday. The host city was Albuquerque, whose tricentennial also falls in 2006. The speakers included Paul Pasles, a Villanova professor who spoke on Franklin's commitment to education and his interest in magic squares.

Another presenter was Maya Mohsin Ahmed, a recent Ph.D. from the University of California-Davis, who described Franklin's magic squares using polyhedra in many dimensions. A historian, a textbook author, and two mathematical magicians were also on the program.

Despite his limited formal education, Franklin was dedicated to learning and to facilitating the learning of others. As he famously opined, mathematical exercises with no direct application could still be valuable simply because they hone one's reasoning skills. The two-day program was designed to help prepare high school and college teachers to use fun exercises in class for the purpose of developing students' mathematical abilities.

Benjamin Franklin and Sports Hall of Fame

(Series #9)

In 1716, long before Jacques Cousteau surfaced with rubber swim fins, 10-year-old Benjamin Franklin invented his own wooden fins in an era when swimming was associated with death.

Young Benjamin Franklin came across a book, *The Art of Swimming and Advice for Bathing* (1696), written by Melchisdeck de Thevenot, who today is recognized as the father of swimming instructors. Although the book was written in French, Franklin taught himself how to swim by studying the illustrations. Although not documented, one might speculate that being the perfectionist that he was, Benjamin taught himself to swim in private until he mastered the skill competently enough to teach others.

Moreover, Franklin wrote that as a child he had "been ever delighted with this exercise (swimming), had studied and practiced all Thevenot's motions and positions, added some on my own, aiming at the graceful and easy, as well as the useful."

In 1726, while stranded in London, Franklin at the age of 20, demonstrated his prowess by swimming the Thames River from Chelsea to Blackfriars, a distance of 3 and 1/2 miles. In addition to his marathon swim, he wrote that he performed "many feats of activity, both upon and under water, that surprised and pleased those (who were watching)."

Franklin's swimming abilities and his willingness to assist in learning (he even made crude flotation devices to help others to learn to swim) soon spread throughout London, resulting in Sir William Wyndham offering Franklin a job teaching his sons to swim. Franklin afterwards contemplated opening a swimming school to meet the demand for such training. A friend even suggested that Franklin tour Europe, giving swimming lessons as a means to pay for the adventure. However, Franklin, grew "tired of London, [and] remembered with Pleasure the happy Months...spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see

it." He returned to Philadelphia where he ultimately proposed that schools have swimming programs for their students.

Franklin continued to swim throughout his lifetime. At the age of 77 he taught his grandson, Benny Bache, how to swim. Benny fondly noted in his diary, "My grandfather is not like other old people."

Is it little surprising that Benjamin Franklin, America's most intriguing citizen, would be honored for his swimming contributions by being admitted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame? Thus, Franklin has the distinction of being the only founding father to have been accepted into a sports hall of fame.

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Tercentenary Update

Franklin Fair and Marketplace

Sponsored by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, this one-time-only event will recreate the moment that the 17-year-old runaway first set foot in Philadelphia. Market Street will be returned to its colonial roots, with a lively mix of artisans, storytellers, food and more. As Franklin's journey through the marketplace unfolds, young Ben will purchase his famous puffy rolls and tip his hat to Deborah Read, his future wife, before being welcomed to Franklin Court by his older self. We invite you all to come meet young Ben, listen to Deborah's side of the story, and share in this unique event.

The marketplace opens at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 9, and closes at 4:00 p.m. Visitors will have a chance to see a young Franklin arrive in Philadelphia, hear stories from his future wife, Deborah Read, and experience Philadelphia as Franklin first saw it when he arrived in

1723. This event is free and open to the public.

Ben Franklin Cultural Programming: from Almanacs to Opera, via Flippers and Ballet

Over 40 Philadelphia-region culture and arts organizations have planned a wide range of Franklin-related programming to compliment the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary's exhibition, Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World (for which tickets will be available, starting in October, at www.constitution-center.org). A complete list of all the events taking place now through 2006 can be found at www.benfranklin300.org. Here you can also download a copy of the *Ben Franklin 300 Philadelphia Official Guide* or pick one up at any number of hotel and visitor destinations throughout the city of Philadelphia.

Throw your own party for Ben Franklin!

If you'd like to throw a birthday party for Benjamin Franklin, you can request a 300 Franklins Party Poster from the Tercentenary. We'll send you a special keepsake guide to help you plan your own party. Whether it's for two or twenty, you and your friends can be a part of the national celebration by putting on a special celebration in Franklin's honor. The guide includes suggestions for:

- Who to invite
- Where to have your party
- What to serve
- Details on the Philadelphia party at the National Constitution Center

And if you do throw a party, we'd like to hear about it so we can post it on our website and include mention of your party in our publicity materials. For further information call the Tercentenary's offices at 215.557.0733 or e-mail: postmaster@benfranklin300.org.



Franklin and His Philadelphia Row Houses

By Penelope Hartshorne Batcheler



Benjamin Franklin built four houses in Philadelphia—his own freestanding house in Franklin Court, torn down in 1812, and three large row houses at the front of his court facing Market Street, of which only a few walls remain. Franklin built these row houses in 1786 for rental income, to capitalize on his landholding, and perhaps to help shield his court from the noise and bustle of the food market in the street.

In this article I want to relate Franklin's three large row houses, #316, #318 and #322 Market Street, to the various types of row houses being built in 18th century Philadelphia, and then say something about his involvement in building these three houses.

When William Penn asked surveyor Thomas Holme to prepare the plan for Philadelphia, the land between the Delaware and the Schuylkill rivers presented a clean slate. The narrowest lots on this plan, between 2nd and 3rd Streets, seem to anticipate the high land values and denser population near the Delaware River and the eventual row houses. To gain the use of the interior of the large blocks eventually lesser streets and alleys were put through. The most basic row houses were built on these alleys. The smallest of these row houses had only one room on each

of three floors. Its fireplaces were against a side wall, with the winding stair tucked into the alcoves on one side of the fireplaces, and probably closets occupied the other side of the fireplaces. Another type of the smaller houses had two rooms on each floor, with both fireplaces against the side wall, and a winding stair located between. These houses usually had small back buildings that were built as kitchens.

The floor plans of these basic houses can be filled out by observing some general rules derived from surviving old row houses. Front doors usually enter near the party wall¹ opposite the fireplaces. The reason is simple. When entering the house you don't want traffic and outside cold air invading the seating area around the fireplace. The width of these houses depends on how far a floor joist can span. Most floor joists of modest eighteenth-century houses measure 3 inches by 9, adequate for a span of 18 feet from party wall to party wall. If there is a back building it is narrower than the main house to allow light and air into the main house back room.

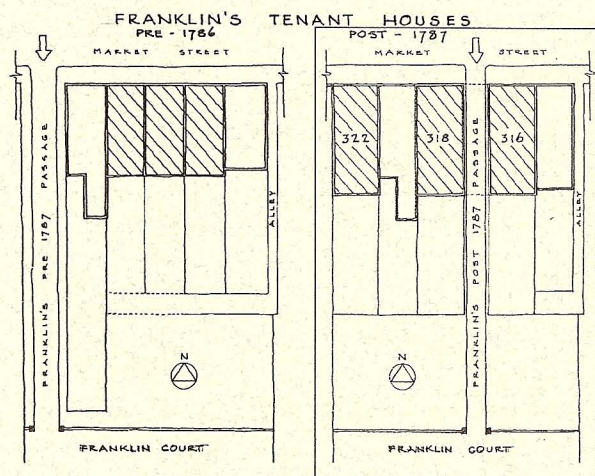
At 241 Pine Street, the John Drinker House of 1765, there is a passage in the main house which bypasses the heated front rooms. What also distinguished this plan is

that its stair is beyond the main house, a part of the narrower back building. The larger plan of the Bishop White House, at 309 Walnut Street, has the entrance passage also bypassing the two front rooms and leading to the stairway beyond, in what was called "the piazza," then on to the other back buildings, the kitchen and the necessary. The builders of the 25-foot-wide Bishop White House resolved the floor framing question by having a masonry bearing wall between the passage and the front rooms, reducing the joist spans to 6 feet under the passage and 18 feet under the rooms.

Regardless of size, it seems to me that Philadelphia row houses fall into one of two types, related to the position of the stairs. The John Drinker and Bishop White houses are of the type with the stair beyond the main house. The other type has the stair either within one of the front rooms or between them. The largest version of this type of house, with its stair between the front and rear rooms, often had its kitchen in the cellar under the back parlor. This was the layout of Franklin's tenant houses.

While Franklin was in England and France a carriage entrance led back to his freestanding house in the middle of the block where Debbie and his daughter Sally were living. In 1786, after his return to Philadelphia, Franklin tore down the three small old houses facing Market Street in front of his own house to develop two larger tenant houses at #316 and #318 Market Street. (He did not own #314 and #320). Of this development Franklin wrote, "since my coming home, the Market is extended before my Ground next the Street, and the high Rents such a situation must afford, has been one of my Inducements."²

Franklin incorporated a new carriage entrance through the tenant houses at #316 and #318. He described this to his sister Jane



Site plans for Franklin's old houses facing Market Street and his later 3 larger tenant houses, 316, 318 and 322 Market Street, drawn by Penny Batcheler. Courtesy of Independence National Historical Park.

Mecom, "...an arched Passage is left in the middle between them to come thro' down to my Dwelling, wide enough for a carriage."³ This freed his previous entrance, creating an empty lot on which he was then able to build the third tenant house at #322.

Franklin's two new houses, #316 and #318, interlocked beneath and above the "arch'd passage". In the cellar the houses shared vaults supporting the passage, and at the second floor and the third floor #316 had the front room above the passage facing Market Street, and #318 the rear room overlooking the court.

Franklin kept a detailed account of the construction expenditures for these houses which reads as a chronology of the process.⁴ He was indeed involved! He wrote in April, 1787, "The affairs in dealing with so many workmen and furnishers of materials, such as bricklayers, carpenters, stonecutters, painters, glaziers, lime-burners, timber-merchants, coppersmiths, carters, labourers, etc., etc., have added not a little to the fatiguing business I have gone through in the last year..."⁵

In the building accounts only one carpenter is listed: John Hall, a member of the Carpenters' Company. John Hall, who was a new member of the Carpenters' Company in 1786, could have been Franklin's master builder for the tenant houses, and together they would have worked out the complicated plans. We have no drawings for them, but even today drawings used on a construction site seldom survive.

The fire insurance survey of his tenant houses described the decorative trim recorded in case of loss by fire. It reads like many others of this calibre of house: "Lower story back room Breast & Mantle cornice... wash boards surbase [that is, baseboards and a chair rail] Open Newel rampt stairs with a plain light handrail..."⁶ The vocabulary was not only that of the insurance surveyors, but also that of the Carpenters' Company 1786 price book. One of the plates in this book shows an open newel ramped stair, albeit one with a heavier, more elaborate handrail than the "plain light handrail" of Franklin's survey. The exact shapes of the wood mouldings for the houses I

suspect Franklin left up to his carpenter.

Where he clearly dictated details to the builders was in making these row houses as fireproof as possible. He wrote to his sister Jane Mecom: "I sometimes think men do not act like reasonable Creatures, when they build for themselves combustible Dwellings in which they are every Day oblig'd to use Fire. In my new Buildings I have taken a few Precautions not generally us'd: to wit none of the Wooden Work of one Room communicates with the Wooden Work of any other Room; and all Floors, and even the Steps of the Stairs, are plastered close to the Boards, besides the plaistering on the Laths under the Joists."⁷

National Park Service archeology uncovered the foundations for the brick walls which separated the woodwork of the front and rear rooms from that of the stairhall. The idea of plastering on the underside of the floor boards however was not Franklin's. This process was widely practiced. The earliest use I know was at the Pennsylvania State House where the plaster stains were found on the undersides of the original 1730s floor boards. But Franklin did carry this plaster fireproofing a measure further, not only by having plaster applied to the undersides of the stair, "steps & risers", but also behind the wood cornices, and at the large panel areas above the fireplaces which were usually of wood.

Another of Franklin's fireproofing measures is visible from the exterior of the houses. To separate the woodwork from house to house at the roof and cornice levels, Franklin had brick battlements and stone eave blocks installed. The battlements were essentially upward extensions of the brick party walls, and with the beautifully cut cornice profiles the stone eave blocks effectively closed off the end of the cornices. The Mutual Assurance Company reduced Franklin's premium for all of these precautions. We were excited to find one of these eave blocks embedded in the south end of the east party wall of #322 Market Street. Reconstructing buildings is a dangerous business; mistakes are made. But with this in mind, the Park Service determined that

so much could be read from the surviving party walls, and learned from historic documents, that a reconstruction of the front and rear facades was warranted to help preserve Franklin's original party walls. If you visit #318 you can see these party walls the way they were when uncovered.

Announcing to his sister that he was about to return from France in 1785 Franklin wrote, "tis time I should go home, and go to bed."⁸ As Walter Isaacson wrote in his wonderful biography, the trip home must have been a "tonic,"⁹ for Franklin regained enough strength to undertake building these three tenant houses, as well as building a print shop for his grandson, and enlarging his own house for his expanded family, for his library, and a large dining room for his many guests. In the midst of it all he wrote: "Building is an old Man's Amusement."¹⁰

Editor's Note: This article was based on a talk given on January 14, 2005, at the symposium in Philadelphia entitled "Franklin and Architecture: Building the City," a part of Celebration! Benjamin Franklin, Founder.

¹ A party wall is shared by two different contiguous buildings.

² BF to Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand, April 22, 1787, Albert H. Smyth, ed., *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin...* (10 vols., New York, 1905-7), ix, 576.

³ BF to Jane Mecom, May 30, 1787, Smyth, *Writings*, ix, 590.

⁴ B. Franklin's Waste Book 1785-1787, American Philosophical Society Library.

⁵ BF to Louis Le Veillard, April 15, 1787, Smyth, *Writings*, ix, 561-2.

⁶ Mutual Assurance Company survey, July 8, 1787, Isaac Jones, Surveyor. Isaac Jones was a member of the Carpenters' Company from 1786-1807.

⁷ BF to Jane Mecom, Sept. 20, 1787, Smyth, *Writings*, ix, 612.

⁸ BF to Jane Mecom, July 13, 1785, Smyth, *Writings*, ix, 363.

⁹ Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York and London, 2003), p. 434.

¹⁰ BF to Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand, April 22, 1787, Smyth, *Writings*, ix, 575.

Philadelphia Contributionship Unveils Digital Archives

Recognizing the historic importance of its early records, The Philadelphia Contributionship, the nation's oldest operating fire insurance company, is making public digital images of its extant early surveys. Surveys of Franklin's homes as well as those of other eighteenth and nineteenth century Philadelphians are now available on-line for viewing by the public. From its earliest days the Contributionship surveyed prospective properties to assess the level of risk. These hand-written documents provide a glimpse of the inhabitants of Philadelphia and their homes, taverns and work places. The project encompasses surveys ranging from 1752 until 1906. Currently on-line are surveys compiled in the years between 1752 and 1854.

Other key documents can be found on the site as well, including the 44 foot Deed of Settlement signed by those

interested in forming a fire insurance company in Philadelphia and subsequent policyholders. Franklin's is the second signature after Governor James Hamilton. Two others signers of the Declaration of Independence, John Morton and Robert Morris, signed this document as well.

The Contributionship has undertaken this project in conjunction with The Athenaeum of Philadelphia as part of its Philadelphia Architects and Buildings project. Scanning was done at the Athenaeum and survey information can be accessed either through the Contributionship's home site: www.contributionship.com/about.html and then click on Archives, or through the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings site, www.philadelphiabuildings.org.



In His Own Words: *Music to His Ears: "Chantons nôtre Benjamin"*

In honoring Franklin by marking his 300th birthday, the Philadelphia Orchestra, a group of musicians from Franklin's adopted hometown, but with a worldwide reputation, will premiere a work entitled "Ben," dedicated to Franklin by composer Daniel Kellogg. This is an appropriate tribute, for Franklin's correspondence is full of talk of music. He loved it; he played it; and a number of his friendships found common ground in the passion for music. His invention, the glass armonica, is prominent in one of the movements of Kellogg's work. His friend, the Abbé Morellet, composed the lyrics to a drinking song in honor of Franklin which inspired Kellogg's final movement. The refrain is "Chantons nôtre Benjamin" (let us sing of our Benjamin). Morellet even went so far as to translate the lyrics of seven of Franklin's favorite songs and produced a small

songbook, from which he sang accompanied by Franklin at the armonica. Here is what Franklin had to say to Lord Kames, in a letter dated June 22, 1765, about his favorite songs, simple Scottish airs: "The Reason why the Scotch Tunes have liv'd so long, and will probably live forever (if they escape being stifled in modern affected Ornament) is merely this, that they are really Compositions of Melody and Harmony united, or rather that their Melody is Harmony. I mean the simple Tunes sung by a single Voice. In common Acceptation, only an agreeable *Succession* of Sounds is called *Melody*, and only the *Co-existence* of agreeing Sounds, Harmony. But since the Memory is capable of retaining for some Moments a perfect Idea of the Pitch of a past Sound, so as to compare with it the Pitch of a succeeding Sound, and judge truly of

their Agreement or Disagreement, there may and does arise from thence a Sense of Harmony between present and past Sounds, equally pleasing with that between present Sounds. Now the Construction of the old Scotch Tunes is this, that almost every succeeding emphatically Note is a Third, a Fifth, an Octave, or in short some Note that is in Concord with the preceding Note. Thirds are chiefly used, which are very pleasing Conords..."

Editor's Note: Mr. Kellogg's piece will premiere in November 2005. For additional information contact the Philadelphia Orchestra: www.philaorg.org or call 215.893.1999.



The Esteemed Dr. Benjamin Franklin was Back in Town

By Don D'Amato

On July 19, 2005, Dr. Benjamin Franklin once again graced Warwick with his presence. In addition to his visits in 1763, 1775 and 1776, the brilliant statesman and bon vivant paid another visit to the Cowesett home of his dear friend, Catharine Ray Greene.

The occasion of this visit came as a part of various planned events that will celebrate Dr. Franklin's long life and illustrious career. On September 12, 2005, a number of the "Friends of Franklin," an international organization, will conduct a tour of the places Franklin visited on his trips between Boston and Philadelphia. To facilitate matters, a trip to re-acquaint the good doctor with these places took place in mid-July. At that time, Benjamin Franklin, admirably played by Bill Meikle of Historical Entertainments, came to Warwick to recapture old memories. Meikle, accompanied by his wife, Barbara, endeavors to show the great 18th century sage as a charming and very human person as well as a statesman, scientist and philosopher. Without doubt, that aspect of Benjamin Franklin has shown itself time and time again through his encounters with the Greene family.

Franklin's long connection with Warwick began in 1754 when 48 year old B. Franklin of Philadelphia first met the lovely 23 year old Catharine Ray of Block Island. They met in Boston when both were visiting relatives. Almost immediately, the witty, urbane man of the world charmed the young lady who, in turn, amazed the famous statesman by her wit and "vivacious expression" as well as her beauty. After Catharine Ray married William Greene of Warwick in 1758 the friendship extended to the entire Greene family. In many aspects, the relationship between Franklin and Catharine is a tender love story of two very remarkable and fascinating human beings.

Fortunately, this long friendship is well documented in an excellent historical book by William Greene

Roelker entitled, *Benjamin Franklin and Catharine Ray Greene, Their Correspondence, 1755-1790*. Thanks to additional research by William G. Roelker's daughter, Helen Kessler, as well as that of Bill and Barbara Meikle, Franklin can be viewed, not as a one-dimensional textbook character, but a lively, vibrant man with all the wit and charm that captured the minds and hearts of so many, making him a much loved man in his own time.

Katy & B. Franklin

A great deal has been written about Franklin's amorous life and of his relationship with Catharine Ray Greene. Bill Meikle, who has made a deep and penetrating study of Franklin as a man, feels that too many historians have greatly exaggerated that aspect of Franklin's life. Mrs. Kessler agrees and feels that the relationship between Franklin and Catharine was avuncular, stating that Franklin acted like an uncle to the young Katy. The letters between the two bear out that position. During this friendship, which lasted for thirty-four years, Franklin counsels his "Katy" in a letter written on October 16, 1755 to, "Be a good Girl, and don't forget your Catechise.-Go constantly to Meeting-or Church-till you get a Good Husband;--then stay at home, & nurse the Children, and live like a Christian."

Franklin's wife, Deborah, seemed pleased with his relationship with Katy as did Franklin's daughter, Sally. On a number of occasions they speak of their fondness for Katy. In 1763, when Franklin was performing his duties as postmaster, he and Sally visited the Greens at Cowesett. This was the time when Franklin fell from his horse and seriously injured his shoulder. The letters of Franklin speak of that and of how Katy helped to nurse him back to health.

When Franklin's sister, Jane Mecom, fled Boston in 1775, Franklin took her to the Greene home and Mrs. Mecom remained a guest of the Greens for many

months. In a very much quoted letter in which Franklin comments upon some cheeses Katy sent him he writes, "Mrs. Franklin was very proud, that a young Lady shod have so much Regard for her old Husband, as to send him such a Present. We talk of you every time it comes to Table; She is sure you are a sensible Girl, and a notable Housewife; and talks of bequeathing me to you as a Legacy." He goes on to say of his wife, Deborah, "she is willing I should love you as much as much as you are willing to be loved by me." Franklin goes on to say he wishes better than that for Katy and that he hopes his wife lives to be 100 years of age.

Potowomut and 'Pastuxet

In addition to his relationship with Catharine, Franklin had other ties to the Greene family of Warwick. His grandniece, Jane Flagg, married Elihu Greene, the brother of the famous Revolutionary General, Nathanael Greene. Franklin accompanied his sister, Jane Mecom, to the Greene home in Potowomut and to the Nathanael Greene home in Coventry. In 1763, Franklin appointed Nathanael Greene's uncle, Rufus, to the position of postmaster. Much as so many other leading statesmen of the time, Franklin was also a guest of Judge Philip Greene of 'Pastuxet, the area of Warwick we today call Coles Farm.

Franklin's visits to Warwick and his friendship with the Greene family are all part of the very rich heritage that helps to make us realize that our past was created by very real people who faced the realities of life much as we do today. Franklin, of course, was a brilliant and exceptional man in so many respects, but he was, after all, a human being who loved and was loved.

Editor's Note: This article was written for the Warwick Beacon and is reprinted here with the Beacon's permission.

Still Relevant...



"Those who would give up essential Liberty to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty or Safety." Benjamin Franklin, writing for the Pennsylvania Assembly on November 11, 1755.

Special thanks to Rick Stromoski for allowing us to reproduce this strip from his syndicated cartoon *Soup to Nutz*. More information and strips of Soup to Nutz may be found at: http://www.comics.com/comics/soup2nutz/html/about_comic.html

Forthcoming

Stanley Finger, *Doctor Franklin's Medicine* (University of Pennsylvania Press, December, 2005).

J.A. Leo Lemay, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin* (University of Pennsylvania Press, October, 2005). Friend Leo Lemay has generously made available his sources on-line at <http://www.english.udel.edu/lemay/franklin/>. Soon we will have the first two long-awaited volumes of what promises to be an ambitious seven-volume biography. Volume one is subtitled "Journalist, 1706-1730," and volume two, "Printer and Publisher, 1730-1747."

Mark Skousen, *The Completed Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (Regnery Publishing, October, 2005). Friend Mark Skousen has completed the *Autobiography* in Franklin's own words.

Page Talbott, ed., *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* (Yale University Press, November, 2005). The companion book to the tercentennial exhibit of the same name. It features essays by Ellen R. Cohn of The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, James N. Green of the Library Company of Philadelphia, Walter Isaacson, E. Philip Krider of the University of Arizona, J.A. Leo Lemay of the University of Delaware, Emma J. Lapansky-Werner,

Good Reads

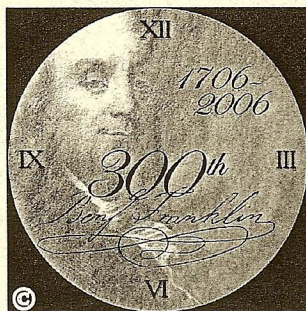
Robert Middlekauff, emeritus professor of History, University of California, Berkeley, and Billy G. Smith, of Montana State University, as well as the editor. The publisher calls it "the first extensively illustrated book documenting Franklin's life and work."

New in Paperback

David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution*.

The *Autobiography* (University of Pennsylvania Press, July, 2005). This new edition of Franklin's work will be the focus of the Penn Reading Project.

The project, begun 15 years ago, selects a single work to be read by the entire incoming class and many of the faculty and staff of the University of Pennsylvania. The preface is by Penn's President Amy Gutman, and the introduction was prepared by Professor of English Peter Conn. Along with Franklin's text will be presented four short essays by Penn professors, a chronology of Franklin's life, and Franklin's *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*.



Benjamin Franklin
1706 - 2006

300th
Commemorative
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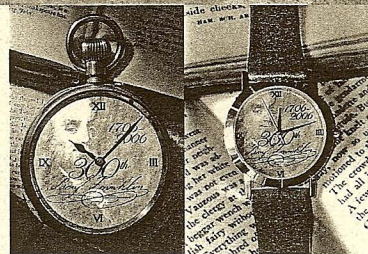
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Benjamin Franklin's Ghost

A new technology developed by Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center gives people the chance to converse with Franklin. Called "Benjamin Franklin's Ghost", it is a new attraction in the visitors' center of the "Lights of Liberty" show (see the calendar for more information), across the street from Independence Hall. Friend Leo Lemay, a Franklin scholar (for his forthcoming book, see Good Reads), is a consultant on the project. Using the patented technology invented by computer scientist Scott Stevens called "Synthetic Interview", visitors can choose from a list of 160 questions or draft their own questions based on a list of key words. Computer software then chooses the most appropriate answer as performed by Friend Ralph Archbold. The digitally-recorded images of Ralph's performances can then be displayed using a 150-year-old illusion known as "Pepper's Ghost", which makes the Franklinian image seem to float before the visitor, just like an apparition. Ben Franklin's Ghost is the first public exhibit to use the technology. An audience of as many as 250,000 is expected to enjoy the display.

A More Low-Tech Portrayal--but Still Ghostly

In Portsmouth, N.H. the Blue Ribbon Cemetery Committee's "Spirits 2005--Bringing the Dead to Life" included a performance on July 6 by Tom Dunnington, a lawyer and a member of the Garrison Players in the role of Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin Brought Back to Life for Political Purposes

A Washington, D.C. webcast might be the last place you'd expect to find Franklin resurrected. In the battle over judicial appointments, Conservatives zapped their rivals in a satirical news broadcast, reporting that Democrats were opposing the nomination of both George Washington and Benjamin Franklin to the bench. This was in response to MoveOn.org's TV ad, which asks, "Will George Bush choose an extremist who will threaten our rights?"

Franklin Cartoon Makes Apparel Special

Did you know you could purchase a t-shirt emblazoned with Franklin's "Join or Die" cartoon? Find a picture of one at www.freedomhq.com.

Fifth Place????!!?

No Franklin's ghost here--maybe just Franklin rolling over in his grave (he did admit to having some vanity, even if he liked to downplay it). The Discovery Channel's "Greatest American" contest has named Ronald Reagan as the winner. His son, Ron Jr., admitted that his father's recent death may have helped his candidacy. But Franklinistas everywhere were surprised to find their hero came in fifth after Reagan, Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and George Washington. This was an on-line vote. Perhaps we need more internet savvy Friends?

PMHB Special Edition

On a more scholarly note, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania's *Pennsylvania Magazine of History & Biography* is dedicating its fall 2006 edition to Benjamin Franklin and is seeking essays that "shed light on all aspects of Franklin's life, as well as papers that examine Franklin's influence on Philadelphia and Pennsylvania during his lifetime and beyond." Deadline for manuscripts is October 1, 2005.

Franklin for Younger Readers

The National Endowment for the Humanities has launched its third "We the People Bookshelf," which distributes classic books to schools and libraries. This year's theme, "becoming American" includes the *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* ed. by Louis P. Masur, along with other well-known works such as Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*, and Betty Smith's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. The NEH is currently accepting applications for organizations wishing to take part in the program. Applications can be found at: <http://www.wethepeople.gov/bookshelf/becomingamerican-guidelines.html>

London Update

The website for the Franklin House in Craven Street is now up at <http://www.benjaminfranklinhouse.org>. Tours of the newly renovated property will begin in February of 2006, with reservations being accepted this fall.

Culinary Franklin: Ben's Birthday Bake-Off

"Ben's Birthday Bake-Off" brought master chefs together to create Franklin-inspired desserts at the invitation of the The Greater Philadelphia Tourism & Marketing Corporation. Former White House Pastry Chef Roland Messnier, Dorie Greenspan, author of *Baking with Julia*, and Rose Levy Beranbaum, author of *The Cake Bible*, judged the entries at the Franklin Institute on September 8, 2005. First place honors went to Philadelphia's Four Seasons' assistant pastry chef, Jennifer McDonald, who won the right to create the official birthday cake for Benjamin Franklin's upcoming 300th gala. Although only one official birthday cake will be presented, some local Philadelphia restaurants will continue to feature their Franklin-inspired desserts which include "The Dogood Apple" at **City Tavern**, "Franklin Minted" at **Lacroix** at **The Rittenhouse**, "Ben Franklin's Lightning Bread Pudding" at **Old Original Bookbinder's** and "Early to Rise Johnnycakes" at **Rx**. To see the full listing of desserts that will be available, visit www.gophila.com/ben. Images of the competition can also be found on-line at: <http://www.gophila.com/pressroom/main/highresphotos/>

Tofu anyone?

One of Franklin's lesser known claims to fame is his advocacy of vegetarianism. Pamela Roger Wagner in the June 2005 issue of the *Oxford English Dictionary* newsletter in her enlightening and entertaining account *Tracking down tofu: library research in the US* includes a wonderful letter from Franklin to John Bartram (also a vegetarian) of Franklin's discovery of a new recipe for Chinese tau-fu. The article can be read on-line at <http://www.oed.com/newsletters/2005-06/tofu.html>.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 15, 2005-December 15, 2006

"Shaping Franklin" Exhibit at Stenton, former home of Franklin's friend James Logan, 4601 N. 18th St., Philadelphia. Have tea, tour Stenton and the exhibit Tuesday through Saturday, 1 to 4 PM. Fees: Adults \$5, Students and Seniors \$4. More information: <http://www.stenton.org/>.

October 9, 2005

Franklin Fair & Marketplace. Market Street, Philadelphia between 3rd & 4th, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

October 11, 2005

Lecture at Christ Church by Stacy Schiff discussing her book, *A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France and the Birth of America*. Sponsored by the Friends of Independence National Historical Park. Call 215.861.4971 for more information or tickets.

October 27, 2005

Symposium sponsored by Benjamin Franklin House: "Benjamin Franklin, Design and Innovation," 4:00-9:00 p.m. (including a buffet dinner) at the Royal Society of Arts, London. Contact BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com for reservations. Please note this corrected date.

November 1-2, 2005

"Benjamin Franklin: Entrepreneurship, Effectiveness & Ethics" is the theme for this year's Baylor Business Ethics Forum 2005. Talks by John C. Bogle, Peter Handal and Dr. J.A. Leo Lemay are available by live webcast: visit www.baylor.edu/businessethics.

November 7, 2005

Meet Franklin Scholar, J. A. Leo Lemay, who will discuss his Franklin research. Penn Bookstore. Call 215.898.7595 for more information.

November 18-22, 2005

Philadelphia Orchestra premieres *Ben*, a special work commissioned in honor of Franklin's 300th birthday. For additional information contact the Philadelphia Orchestra: www.phila.org or call 215.893.1999. Other birthday events are listed as well.

November 18-20, 2005

The Philomel Baroque Orchestra presents "Franklin's London," at Christ Church, Philadelphia, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Doylestown, PA, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Chestnut Hill, PA. For more information call 215-487-2344 or check the web site: http://www.philomel.org/fs_calendar.htm.

information call 215-487-2344 or check the web site: http://www.philomel.org/fs_calendar.htm.

December 15, 2005-March 15, 2006

"Franklin's Poor Richard Almanacs" Exhibit at the Rosenbach Museum & Library, 2008-2010 DeLancey Place, Philadelphia. Tour the historic Rosenbach House and the exhibit Tues., Thurs., Fri., Sat. & Sun. 10-5 PM, and Weds. 10-8 PM. Fees: Adults \$8, Students and Seniors \$5. For more information: <http://www.rosenbach.org>.

December 15, 2005

The special tercentenary exhibit, "Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World," will open in Philadelphia on December 15, 2005 at the National Constitution Center. The exhibit will travel to St. Louis, Houston, Denver, Atlanta and Paris, closing at the end of March 2008.

December 18, 2005

Salon Concert at Carpenters' Hall by Philomel featuring fine wine, chamber music and popular tunes of Franklin's era. For more information call 215-487-2344 or check the web site: http://www.philomel.org/fs_calendar.htm.

January 1-June 30, 2006

"Benjamin Franklin and China" Exhibit, Hollis Branch of Queens Borough Public Library, 202-05 Hillside Av., Hollis, N.Y. Discover how Franklin used Confucius' moral philosophy to cultivate virtue and how he borrowed Chinese technologies to improve the quality of life for people in North America. Open Mon. & Thurs. 1-8 PM, and Tues., Weds., & Fri. 10-6 PM.

January 14, 2006

The Royal Meteorological Society and the National Maritime Museum (Greenwich) will host a one-day conference at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England, in honor of three significant anniversaries: the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, the 200th anniversary of the first publication of the Beaufort wind scale, and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Matthew Maury, an early and well-known oceanographer. Friend E. Philip Krider, will be speaking on "Benjamin Franklin's Science."

January 15, 2005

Musical tribute to Benjamin Franklin at the Curtis Institute of Music at 3:00 p.m., featuring performances by Friends Cecilia Brauer and Ralph Archbold. Call 215-893-7902 for more information.

January 17, 2006

Celebration! of Benjamin Franklin, Founder. Procession to Franklin's grave and luncheon in honor of Franklin's 300th birthday, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This year's honorees are Claude-Anne Lopez and B. Franklin Reinauer, II. Contact Carol Smith, 856.429.8331 or cwsmith@verizon.net for more information.

Gala Opening Celebration of Benjamin Franklin House, London, to be held at The Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, London. Contact BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com for reservations.

Germantown Friends School celebrates the 300th anniversary of Franklin with a dinner at the Constitution Center, tour of the exhibit, "Benjamin Franklin in Search of a Better World", and lecture by Walter Isaacson. Contact Germantown Friends School, 215-951-2340 for more information.

January 19-March 17, 2006

"The Common Wealth: Benjamin Franklin and the Building of Community," exhibit at the Lancaster Historical Society focuses on Franklin's impact in shaping the image of Pennsylvania and America through a grass-roots approach to community. For more information on this free exhibit. Call 717.392.4633.

January 19 - March 10, 2006

"Cents & Sensibility: Benjamin Franklin and Popular Culture," exhibit at Franklin & Marshall's Phillips Museum of Art, looks at Franklin through 20th century advertising literature and memorabilia collected by Roy E. Goodman. This free exhibit is open Tuesday through Sunday. Call 717.291.2879 for more information.

January 20-22, 2006

"Franklin's Philadelphia," concert in honor of Franklin's birthday by the Philomel Baroque Orchestra with the Pittsburgh Chatham Baroque. For more information call 215-487-2344 or check the web site: http://www.philomel.org/fs_calendar.htm.

February 3, 2006

"Images of Franklin...As Seen by Himself & Others." Exhibit at the Bobst Library, New York University. Academic conference will be held the day before. Check the Friends of Franklin website for updates: www.ben-franklin2006.org.

February 17, 2006

"The Princess and the Patriot: Ekaterina Dashkova, Benjamin Franklin and the Age of Enlightenment" will be on view in Philosophical Hall, 104 S. Fifth Street from February 17 - December 31, 2006. Admission is free.

April 20-23, 2006

British Association for American Studies Annual Conference at the University of Kent. Several sessions will be devoted to Franklin's vast legacy and influence.

April 27-May 12, 2006

"Lightning Rod" by Tim Slover at the Fulton Opera House, Lancaster, Pa. Tickets may be ordered by phone (717) 397-7425 or on line. Tap into <http://www.atthefulton.org>.

May 5-7, 2006

Philomel presents, "Franklin's France," the last in a series of programs honoring Franklin's tercentenary. For more information call 215-487-2344 or check the web site: http://www.philomel.org/fs_calendar.htm.

October 26-November 4, 2006

Friends of Franklin's London-Paris tour, limited to 45 people. Download reservation form at www.benfranklin2006.org, or call 856-979-1613.

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