

# Franklin Gazette

Volume 16, Number 4, Winter 2006

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*"Be at War with your Vices, at Peace with your Neighbours, and let every New-Year find you a better Man..." Poor Richard, December, 1755.*

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## Message From the President

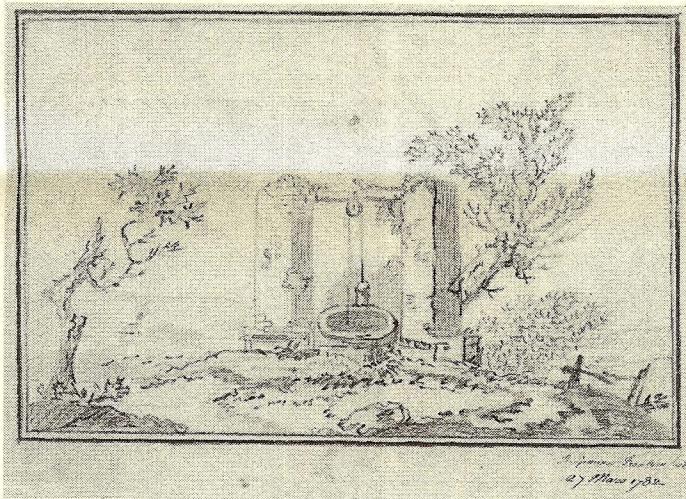
By Roy E. Goodman

Every winter I think about heating and fuel costs. Of course, Dr. Franklin had similar concerns. We know about Franklin's Pennsylvania fireplace, his interest in chimneys, stoves, insulation, and observations on Chinese and European heating technology. We can read about these topics in his papers, or consult [www.franklinpapers.org](http://www.franklinpapers.org).

Yet, if Ben the time traveler could visit us today he might be a tad disappointed and surprised that energy resources for the 21st century have lagged behind the incredible development of technology.

In a 1785 letter to Jan Ingenhousz, a brilliant scientist and frequent correspondent, Franklin notes, "much more of the prosperity of a Winter country depends on the plenty and cheapness of fuel, than is general imagined. In Travelling I have observed, that in those Parts where the Inhabitants can have neither Wood nor Coal...but at excessive Prices, the Working People live in miserable Hovels, are ragged, and have nothing comfortable about them. But where fewel [fuel] is cheap, (or where they have the Art of managing it to Advantage) they are well furnish'd with Necessaries, and have decent

Habitations..." (this letter, "On the Cause and cure of Smoky Chimneys" first appeared in print in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, v. II, 1786).



Sketch of garden at Passy, March 27, 1782 by Benjamin Franklin. *Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.*

Franklin was confident the abundance of America's forests, coal and water resources would provide the nation with ample means for the foreseeable future. Yet, he was intrigued with the possibilities of wind power, as well. The construction of better sails for ships and the design of windmills appear in writings. In a 1770 letter to Thomas Gilpin, Franklin, writing

from London, expounds on the potential advantage of an horizontal windmill. Several detailed drawings accompany the letter.

No doubt, today's efforts at harnessing the wind, experimenting with biofuels, and the conversion of coal into liquid fuel for the use of vehicles and airplanes would please Franklin very much. He understood that America's energy independence would create a plethora of opportunities and the ability for the nation to be healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Dear Friends, a warm and prosperous 2007!!

## Franklin Gazette

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## Franklin Abroad

Franklin symposiums took place on both sides of the ocean. Friend Dave Wang gave a presentation on Benjamin Franklin and Confucian Moral Philosophy at an international conference sponsored by the Italian National Center for American Studies. A summary of his paper will be presented in an upcoming issue of the *Gazette*.

### **Benjamin Franklin's Connection with Tenterden by Peter and Aline Davies**

*Editor's Note: This is an excerpt of a publication sent to Claude-Anne Lopez by Heather Crease.*

In 1774 Benjamin Franklin visited and stayed in Tenterden, England; in all Franklin made three visits to England. The first, in his early twenties, was to expand his knowledge and skills in the printing trade prior to setting up his own publishing business and the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Thirty-two years later, accompanied by his son William, Franklin was sent by the Assembly of Pennsylvania to negotiate financial support for the colony in the French and Indian War among other matters. His wife Deborah, afraid of the sea passage, remained in Philadelphia. It was in this period that he acquired a surrogate family, befriending Mrs. Stevenson, a widow, and her teenage daughter, Polly, with whom he lodged in Craven Street, near Charing Cross.

After a short return visit home, in 1764 he was sent for a second time to England to petition the King to make Pennsylvania a Royal Colony rather than remain under the control of the Penn family. He again set up home in Craven Street, effectively as head of the family, where he remained for next 11 years. In that period he spoke persuasively against the Stamp Act, so abhorrent to the colonies. It was subsequently repealed.

From 1768 onwards, as relationships between the colonies and the British deteriorated, he argued tirelessly for reconciliation. His attempts to bridge the growing misunderstanding foundered. In 1775 he returned to Philadelphia in the knowledge that his wife Deborah had died months before, during his absence, and that he had failed to avert war.

Why Did Franklin Come to Tenterden?

An escape to the country must have been particularly welcome to Dr. Franklin, far from the febrile political atmosphere in London in which he found himself in 1774.

In the events of 1773/74, leading to the outbreak of open rebellion by the colonies, he was accused of double dealing and betrayal over what came to be known as the Hutchinson letters episode. He was forced to reveal that it was he who had divulged the contents of a friend's letters, in his futile attempt to head off threatened rebellion in the colonies. He was abused in public and exoriated by the press:

"Thou base, ungrateful, cunning and upstart thing

False to thy country first, then to thy King:  
To gain thy selfish and ambitious ends,

Betraying secret letters writ to friends:

May no more letters through thy hands be past,

But may thy year's office be thy last"  
(*General Evening Post*, January 1774)

He became the scapegoat for the rapid deterioration in relations with the colonies and was publicly humiliated. After news of the Boston Tea Party arrived, in January 1774, he was summoned before the King's Council in the appropriately named "Cockpit". Franklin described his treatment as "bull baiting". Two days later he was humiliatingly stripped of his post as deputy postmaster general of North America.

Given these pressures, late eighteenth-century Tenterden, an agricultural community, a quarter its current size, in the depths of Kent, effectively a day's journey from the capital and his detractors, would undoubtedly have been appealing. It is claimed that Franklin had connections in Tenterden: "Franklin had friends in London among the Hewsons, who were connected with Tenterden; no doubt some of this family lived...in Hewson or Sandy Lane." (J. Ellis Mace, *Old Tenterden* [1902]).

It is through his adopted family in Craven Street that the suggested Hewson connection arose. Franklin had established a deep relationship with "Polly" Stevenson, then in her early twenties, whom he regarded as an adopted daughter: "My dearest child... I love you with all the Tenderness, all the Fondness of a father."

He had hoped that she would marry his own son, but she was to fall in love with a gifted surgeon, Dr. William Hewson. Significantly, it was Franklin who gave her away in marriage, Polly's mother by then being his close companion.

Hewson, a surgeon, died tragically of blood poisoning in 1774. His widow Polly was to join Franklin in Paris in the winter of 1784-85 and finally, in 1786, she and her three children were to join him in Philadelphia. She never returned to England and was at his bedside, with his daughter Sarah, when Franklin died of pleurisy in 1790.

How and whether Dr. William Hewson was related to the Husons of Tenterden (variations in the spelling were common), however, is far from clear. Huson Farm today stands in Sandy Lane, known formerly as Hewson Lane. The house itself dates probably from the late 16th century. The St. Mildred's altar tomb of Joseph Huson, late of Tenterden, gent., who died in 1738 has a coat of arms. However, he appears to be the last surviving Huson of Tenterden.

*continued on pg.3*

## Franklin Abroad continued

What we have then is a Tenterden family of some substance and pedigree which shared the same married name as Franklin's adopted daughter, but whose line was defunct by the middle of the 18th century. The family link identified by Ellis Mace, made a century and a quarter after Franklin's visit, appears therefore to be no more than conjecture.

The main reason for Franklin's visit has been attributed to his close association with Dr. Joseph Priestley, his junior by 27 years. In 1774 Dr. Priestley, "...bringing with him Benjamin Franklin," stayed in Tenterden. The friendship between Priestley and Franklin was fostered by their mutual interests in experimental science and their membership in the Royal Society. Priestley, an eminent chemist who prepared and studied various gases, including oxygen, shared Franklin's interest in electricity: he had published *The History and Present State of Electricity* in 1767. The relationship between the two men developed into a genuine friendship and their closeness and understanding is reflected in Priestley's observation of his friend in 1775 when "the tears trickled down his cheeks" as he received news of developments in Boston. Priestley became one of the strongest advocates of the colonies' independence and was to settle in Pennsylvania, in 1794, after Franklin's death.

### The Viney Brothers

A radical thinker both politically and theologically, Priestley was a major figure in the Dissenting Movement and was associated with what came to be known as the Unitarian Church. Franklin and Priestley attended the opening of the first Unitarian Church in

London in 1774. Dissenters were also a potent force in 18th-century Tenterden, among them the Viney family, who lived in Dovenden, Woodchurch Road, a town house built in 1753, which remains today. It was here that Priestley, "a friend of the Viney family" and Franklin were to stay in 1774. During his stay "Priestley was invited to preach in the Meeting House and Laurence Holden [the minister], who had already adopted Unitarian views himself, was quick to introduce them to his congregation."

Evidence has recently come to light, however, that reveals an unknown connection between Franklin and Tenterden. He had been in correspondence with the Viney brothers—Thomas, a carriage builder, and John a wheelwright—since 1770 and may even have visited Tenterden before the celebrated visit with Priestley in 1774. In January 1770 Thomas Viney had sought Franklin's advice, in confidence, on emigrating to America upon the sale of part of his estate to the cover the expense, "none but my Wife being privy to my relations". Shocked when he discovered what his brother was planning, John persuaded Thomas to remain, although part of the estate had already been sold. From a postscript to this correspondence: "Compliments to Mrs. Stevenson and Family in which I include Master T [William Temple Franklin, Franklin's grandson]". It appears that Thomas may have also met the Stevenson family at some stage.

Thomas Viney appears to have been a major force in the Tenterden Unitarians. He enjoyed the friendship of key Dissenters in county, including William Hazlitt, Sr. (father of the essayist), who regarded Thomas as "a friend and fellow preacher". It was natural

therefore that Thomas should invite Hazlitt, Sr., to Dovenden to meet Franklin on the occasion of his visit.

Franklin's friendship with the other Viney brother, John, was built on a shared interest in technology. John sought Franklin's advice on making wheels from a single piece of wood, which produced a stronger wheel, as was the practice in America where they used single saplings, unavailable in England. As a result, with Franklin's help, John devised a means of bending wood by steaming it to form a circle and then securing it with an iron band, for which he expressed his "love and gratitude" to Franklin.

Writing in 1773 about the "new art of making carriage wheels" to a friend in Dublin, Benjamin Franklin relates "I have seen peices so bent of six inches wide and three and a half thick into a circle of 4 feet diameter". This implies that he had visited John Viney's workshop, although no record exists.

### Postscript—Wine and Future Presidents?

There is an undated recipe in the American Philosophical Society with an endorsement on it by Benjamin Franklin, with the words, "from Mr Viney whose wine was remarkably good". Was John Viney also a vintner and an early producer of Tenterden wine?

Even more intriguing is the suggestion from Benjamin Franklin House that there may be evidence indicating that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, two future presidents, visited the Viney workshop in Tenterden in 1786. But that is another trail to be explored!

## Celebrating Franklin's 300th Birthday at the 2006 International IEEE EMC Symposium

By Aziz S. Inan, University of Portland, Portland, Oregon

Benjamin Franklin's contributions in electrical science hold a special place in the history of the Institute of Electrical Electronics Engineers (IEEE). The IEEE is the largest technical professional organization in the world consisting of close to 40 societies and a total of about 400,000 members in over 150 countries. The Institute's diamond-shaped logo was inspired by Franklin's famous kite experiment. In 1990, Benjamin Franklin House at 36 Craven Street, London, was designated an IEEE milestone in Electrical Engineering and Computing.

The IEEE Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Society held their 2006 international symposium at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon, on August 14-18. The

EMC Society specializes in a wide range of applications in electrical engineering including topics such as lightning discharges, lightning protection, grounding techniques and safety, measurement instruments and techniques, standards and regulations, shielding materials and techniques, electromagnetic interference, power transmission and wireless. Franklin's electrical studies and discoveries on lightning, electrical discharges, grounding, the action of pointed bodies, the distinction between conductors and insulators, and the conservation of charge principle constitute the early pioneering work for many areas of EMC. As a tribute to him on his 300th birthday, the 2006 International IEEE EMC Symposium Committee accepted a proposal

to hold a one-hour special session on Benjamin Franklin. That special session was held on Tuesday, August 15 during which a commemorative paper entitled, "Remembering Benjamin Franklin on his 300th Birthday," was presented. The attendance at this session was over 50 people and the presentation was very well received.

Also, on Thursday, August 17, another half-hour presentation was given about Franklin during the Awards Luncheon of the symposium. Over 500 attendees were present and the Franklin presentation was a success! In addition, at the luncheon, a trivia quiz on Franklin was passed out to all the attendees. For your enjoyment, those questions appear in this issue.

# *Graves of William Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin, and his son, William Temple Franklin*

*By L. David Roper*

In February 2005, Lady Joan Reid and I found in the English archives the burial record of William Franklin (born 1 September 1731 Philadelphia, died 17 November 1813 London, England), son of Benjamin Franklin.

The church is what is now known as the Old St. Pancras Church, which is on Pancras Road behind St. Pancras railway station in London. We went to the cemetery but were not able to find the grave, probably because it was dug up when the railway was expanded in the middle of the 1800s. There were many tomb stones stacked up against a tree inside a fence; William's may be among them.

The burial date of 25 November makes me wonder about the death date of 17 November.

This whetted my desire to find the grave of William's son, William Temple Franklin (born 22 February 1762 (?)

London, England, died 25 May 1823 Paris, France). He is buried at Père-Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, France.

On the October/November 2006 Friends of Franklin tour of England and France, I hoped to find the grave of Temple. The guide for the France part of the tour, Alice Jouve, and her husband, Daniel, obtained the following description of the location of the grave:

...Monsieur FRANKLIN William à été inhumé dans la concession no 343 PA de 1823, située à la 43ème division, 3 ème ligne face à la 42 ème division et 34 ème tombe à partir de la 45ème division...

So, I took the Paris Metro #1 line from rue de Rivoli to the Nation station and then the Metro #2 line to the Philippe- Auguste station. It was a short walk to the main gate (Porte Principale) of the cemetery. I tried following the instructions for finding the

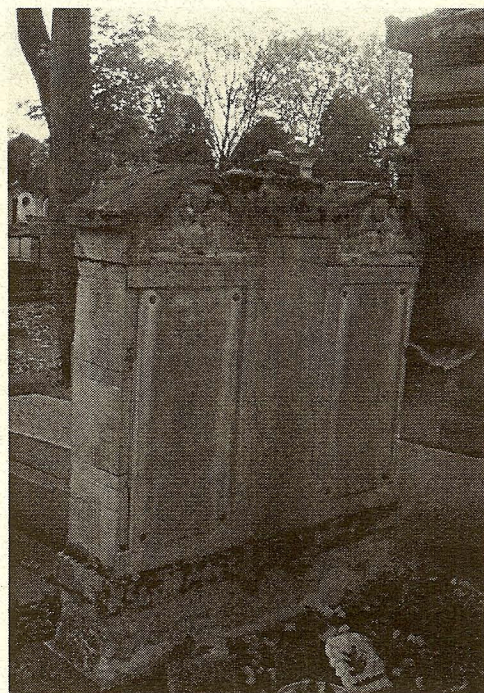
grave site, but the rows and columns of graves are not really ordered rows and columns. I counted several different ways, which yielded a circle of about twenty feet in diameter. I was told that no markings are visible on the grave, so I decided to take a picture of all grave stones that have no visible inscriptions within the circle. When I pulled out my camera and looked up I saw these words on a stone: William Temple Franklin! Explicit instructions for finding the grave are given in the web page

<http://www.roperld.com/FranklinWmTemple.htm>.

The best land mark for finding the tombstone is shown in the picture below to the left.



This shows the Greffulne tomb which is on the left when heading east on Avenue Transversale #1. I have inserted a red arrow pointing to the William Temple Franklin grave.

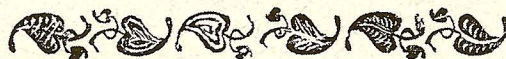


William's inscription is on the left and his wife's is on the right. The inscriptions and other pictures of the stone are given in the web page.

# *An excerpt from Franklin In Love*

## *A Play by Patrick Huguenin*

*Inspired by Mon Cher Papa: Franklin and the Ladies of Paris by Claude-Anne Lopez*



*Editor's Note: Patrick Huguenin's play, Franklin in Love, was staged at Yale University on Oct. 20.*

When Benjamin Franklin returned from France in 1785, he was 79. He had been sent to the French court in 1776 with instructions to secure political and financial support for the American Revolution and, this accomplished, he would not travel abroad again. Knowing the trip could be his last, Franklin embraced his stay in Passy, outside Paris, with such gusto that some of his contemporaries called him unpatriotic. Franklin was in France on a American mission but did not restrict his experiences; somewhere between his praise of French wine, his fascination with hot air balloons, and his flirtations with the neighborhood ladies, he fell in love.

When I first read Claude-Anne Lopez's chronicle of these French years, I was impressed by the vivid similarities to what we consider "modern" life. Franklin's Paris lived on such conveniences as bottled mineral water, frequent postal service, and a popular culture of printed poetry, satire, and romance. It was a time of new inventions from the small – gruyere – to the large – democracy, and the active Franklin wanted to be everywhere at once. I have tried to bring a reflective sense of contemporary excitement to the play.

While *Franklin In Love* does not strictly adhere to history, it is intended as an educated guess at what – given the vivacity of the founding father – could well have happened. Much is true. Madame Helvétius, widow of the philosophe Claude-Adrien Helvétius, lived close to Passy in a house populated by three bachelor lodgers and countless cats. She had a rivalry with Madame Brillon, 103 of whose amorous and emotional letters to Franklin survive today. Though she was asked by Franklin, Helvétius would not go back to America with him, and they wrote to each other for years after his return.

In the following scene, I have reconstructed Franklin's proposal of marriage to Madame Helvétius. It is an act referenced in their letters, even if the words are imagined.

Patrick Huguenin

(The garden of MADAME HELVÉTIUS.)

HELVÉTIUS: This has been the roughest week. Take off your shoes. This is not a house; it is a hovel. You may take off anything you want.

FRANKLIN: Time is wasting itself. For five days, I'm buried under paper. I haven't had a piece of good cheese in a week, nor a drop of brandy. What is the point of liberty when

we have no life to fight for?

HELVÉTIUS: (with a laugh) I'm pouring a glass of your wine. (She does.) A big one. You were quite a good printer, weren't you? Why ever did you become a diplomat?

FRANKLIN: For exercise. Ha! The only thing more thankless is to be a philosopher. Your dear husband must have known that.

HELVÉTIUS: More than some did.

FRANKLIN: But it was he who said it is worth being wise only so long as one can also be foolhardy. That's exactly what we've done.

HELVÉTIUS: By seeking your liberty?

FRANKLIN: And now half the nations in Europe are involved, all pitted against each other. The French are smartening up - the Spanish tramping between five royal residences with our poor ambassador at their heels. When the time to make peace comes, everyone will be in such a fit there will be no terms good enough.

HELVÉTIUS: You're already thinking of peace then? In the middle of a war.

FRANKLIN: I am always thinking of peace. It's why I talk about heaven so much.

HELVÉTIUS: But doesn't someone have to win first?

FRANKLIN: Not when it's so certain that we are going to lose.

HELVÉTIUS: You can't say that!

FRANKLIN: We tell France that we have hundreds of men, all strapping, all with perfect aim. And what we have is ten boys aged eight to fourteen in a shack somewhere with a bottle full of spirits and a match. No! They don't even have a match! And so, my dear, when fighting a hopeless conflict, you begin to think about peace. Or convincing Britain we're too much to tolerate.

HELVÉTIUS: And what about your peace? The peace of Franklin? When does that start.

FRANKLIN: When I am dead.

HELVÉTIUS: Come now.

FRANKLIN: When I can sit back on a cloud flying kites and being wise.

HELVÉTIUS: Without being foolhardy.

FRANKLIN: But then there is nothing for me, is there? I couldn't sit in heaven without improving it. Or trying. And I might shock, burn, degrade, and weaken myself in the process, but I try.

HELVÉTIUS: You discourse very nobly when you're angry.

FRANKLIN: Your husband had it right. There is no worth to wisdom without a little haphazard bravery. We have that in common he and I.

HELVÉTIUS: More than that.

FRANKLIN: You're right. I suggest we add you to our mutual interests. (Quick beat.)

HELVÉTIUS: Me?

FRANKLIN: I am here whenever I can spare the time. What if I ran my business from your garden?

HELVÉTIUS: You'd like to be a lodger?

FRANKLIN: I could never be happy as a lodger. I must be like the cats, allowed to be closer.

HELVÉTIUS: And I thought I had misunderstood you...

FRANKLIN: We are both alone, but there is no reason to be so. I can say almost certainly that I am the only husband who would not test your liberty.

HELVÉTIUS: (scoffing) No husband shall test my liberty. I will take no husband.

FRANKLIN: Very aptly put. So let us not be bonded. My Deborah lived in my house and took my name, but we never married.

HELVÉTIUS: I must beg you to stop at once.

FRANKLIN: She was married already! He had gone to the West Indies and never returned. Was he dead? Probably. But we couldn't know.

HELVÉTIUS: But my husband is dead. And I am free.

FRANKLIN: Then we are settled!

HELVÉTIUS: But I intend to remain faithful to his memory.

FRANKLIN: Isn't that what that chunk of granite on your lawn is for? His memory?

HELVÉTIUS: Do not mock me.

FRANKLIN: What if we obtain his consent? We will go to Mesmer, and he'll conduct one of those scientific séances.

HELVÉTIUS: Ugh. Now you're mocking everyone.

FRANKLIN: I'm perfectly serious. He can get a horse to sing a song. He can certainly pull one little "yes" out of your husband.

HELVÉTIUS: You have gone mad with...

FRANKLIN: With what?

HELVÉTIUS: With fatigue! With your blasted feet! I don't know! And you aren't even serious. This is the kind of thing you have surely said to Madame Brillon, Madame Chaumont, Madame Le Roy...

FRANKLIN: They are married!

HELVÉTIUS: Which proves no obstacle to your plan of cohabitation.

FRANKLIN: (with a grin) So is it my morals that disgrace you? Or my looks?

HELVÉTIUS: We are two ancients with centuries of wisdom and we act like buffoons?

FRANKLIN: Are you a buffoon?

HELVÉTIUS: Fine, you are the buffoon. Is this a joke? Is this a joke you tell in America?

FRANKLIN: I will be serious when you are accommodating.

HELVÉTIUS: I will be accommodating when you are serious.

FRANKLIN: So the answer is yes?

HELVÉTIUS: That's not what I said.

FRANKLIN: You said "I do?"

HELVÉTIUS: No.

FRANKLIN: "I will." "Yes."

HELVÉTIUS: Even if you could stop grinning for a minute, I would not comply. I have no purpose for a man. I am surrounded by men. Why would I want to be tied to one?

FRANKLIN: Because he is me.

HELVÉTIUS: That answer is so simple it could only come from a Quaker American...

FRANKLIN: I'm not a Quaker!

HELVÉTIUS: Speak to Beaumarchais, he will write you a marriage proposal.

FRANKLIN: And if he wrote it? Would you accept?

HELVÉTIUS: Maybe if it came from him.

FRANKLIN: From him?

HELVÉTIUS: I think he's handsome.

FRANKLIN: HANDSOME?!

HELVÉTIUS: Well one of us should be handsome for a proper match to happen. Beaumarchais and I – well, people would wonder, but they would talk. You and I – people would turn their eyes away from us! We would be ridiculous! Would we be married with a ceremony?

FRANKLIN: Now you mock me.

HELVÉTIUS: Would I be dressed in... what? Black? Would my cats be my bridesmaids?

FRANKLIN: At our wedding, you would be dressed in nothing.

HELVÉTIUS: Oh how I wish those remarks had all been directed toward Madame Brillon.

FRANKLIN: Madame Brillon has never heard the like from me. And you talk about her too much to tell me you're not jealous.

HELVÉTIUS: Keep going and you shall actually offend me. A very difficult thing to do. Even now, I'm not offended, I'm entertained. This has been thoroughly engrossing. You should copy our talk into your notebook, brush it up, send it to Madame B to correct the French, and publish it in the paper. It is that good. "One ancient proposes to another." You should have done it in Greek.

FRANKLIN: I never knew you to be concerned with appearances.

HELVÉTIUS: Because the only people who see me are slob and lawyers. Were I your wife, the queen would see me, Abigail Adams would see me, and women of the neighborhood would look at me with disgust. "Of all the women in France, Monsieur Franklin has chosen the most embarrassing."

FRANKLIN: But you are beautiful!

HELVÉTIUS: You are lonely –

FRANKLIN: Yes! And in need. There are flies in my apartments who eat more of my food than I do! I need a woman in my life. And not some child, I need someone who can stand up to me – someone who has her own life for the times when I am away!

HELVÉTIUS: Yes and what about that?

FRANKLIN: You will still have the abbés.

HELVÉTIUS: No. What about that. When you go away. Not to Versailles, but to America. When, against the impossible, you win your war. Or when France can no longer support you and you leave in anguish. When you go to Philadelphia or Zanzibar or Japan because you cannot stay. In your last marriage, how long did you spend in the same country as your wife?

FRANKLIN: But we were not exactly married.

HELVÉTIUS: Agh! Your technicalities!

FRANKLIN: WE WERE NOT IN LOVE. (Pause.) As I am with you. For I would marry you on this spot and tell no one, just to have you as mine. I would marry you with the quiet word of one of the abbés just to be assured of meeting you hereafter. What if you depart before me, not to America but to heaven? That I could never tolerate. But I would.

HELVÉTIUS: You talk about death too much. You will never die. You will be as eternal as you are famous. But you will most certainly go back to your country – in a rush of aid or victory – and once I had been wed to you, all this would never be the same.

FRANKLIN: But do you love me?

HELVÉTIUS: I... I don't remember.

FRANKLIN: You don't remember?

HELVÉTIUS: I have felt many things for you. One of them may have been love.

FRANKLIN: But you will not accept me?

HELVÉTIUS: For all your skill, you know nothing of how to draw a woman out. An ultimatum will not do it.

FRANKLIN: Then I have none for you. But I will come here every day. And bit by bit, I will win you.

HELVÉTIUS: You already have.

FRANKLIN: And perhaps some night I will have a very fine dinner sent.

HELVÉTIUS: I'd like that.

FRANKLIN: And invite a good number of our friends.

HELVÉTIUS: I see where this is going.

FRANKLIN: And if – only if – I ever return to America. You can come with me. (Beat.)

HELVÉTIUS: Why oh why did you say that?

FRANKLIN: Say what?

HELVÉTIUS: And you were proceeding with such subtlety.

FRANKLIN: You might like the sail! (HELVÉTIUS moves away.)

HELVÉTIUS: I am married already. That he is dead does not change it. Forgive me, but I am ready to go in.

(MADAME HELVÉTIUS exits.)

# In His Own Words:

## *The Elysian Fields*

This bagatelle, written for Madame Helvétius, and printed by Franklin on his press at Passy, expresses his profound affection for his friend. Was this a genuine proposal of marriage, or was it nothing more than a piece of light flirtation? In any case, it should be read as a companion piece to the scene from Patrick Huguenin's *Franklin in Love*, also in this issue.

"Mortified at the barbarous resolution pronounced by you so positively yesterday evening, that you would remain single the rest of your life, as a compliment due to the memory of your husband, I retired to my chamber. Throwing myself upon my bed, I dreamt that I was dead, and was transported to the Elysian Fields. I was asked whether I wished to see any persons in particular: to which I replied, that I wished to see the philosophers. 'There are two who live here at hand in this garden; they are good neighbors, and very friendly towards one another.' 'Who are they?' 'Socrates and Helvétius.' 'I esteem them both highly; but let me see Helvétius first, because I understand a little French, but not a word of Greek.' I was conducted to him: he received me with much courtesy, having known me, he said, by character, some time past. He asked me a thousand questions relative to the war, to the present state of religion, of liberty, and of the government in France. 'You do not inquire, then,' said I, 'after your dear

friend Madame Helvétius; yet she loves you exceedingly: I was in her company not more than an hour ago.' 'Ah,' said he, 'you make me recur to my past happiness, which ought to be forgotten in order to be happy here. For many years I could think of nothing but her, though at length I am consoled. I have taken another wife, the most like her that I could find: she is not indeed altogether so handsome, but she has a great fund of wit and good sense; and her whole study is to please me. She is at this moment gone to fetch the best nectar and ambrosia to regale me: stay here a while and you will see her.' 'I perceive,' said I, 'that your former friend is more faithful to you than you are to her: she has had several good offers, but has refused them all. I will confess to you that I loved her extremely; but she was cruel to me, and rejected me peremptorily for your sake.' 'I pity you sincerely,' said he, 'for she is an excellent woman,--handsome, and amiable. But do not the Abbé de la R\*\*\*\*, and the Abbé M\*\*\*\*, visit her?'--'Certainly they do: not one of your friends has dropped her acquaintance.' 'If you had gained the Abbé M\*\*\*\* with a bribe of good coffee and cream, perhaps you would have succeeded, for he is as deep a reasoner as Duns Scotus or Saint Thomas: he arranges and methodises his arguments in such a manner that they are almost irresistible. Or, if by a fine edition of some old classic, you had gained the Abbé de

la R\*\*\*\* to speak against you, that would have been still better; as I always observed, that when he recommended any thing to her, she had a great inclination to do directly the contrary.' As he finished these words the new Madame Helvétius entered with the nectar, and I recognised her immediately as my former American friend, Mrs. Franklin! I reclaimed her, but she answered me coldly: 'I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and four months,--nearly half a century; let that content you. I have formed a new connexion here, which will last to eternity.' Indignant at this refusal of my Euridice, I immediately resolved to quit those ungrateful shades, and return to this good world again, to behold the sun and you! Here I am--let us avenge ourselves."



*Editor's note: You can read this bagatelle in the original French in vol. 31 of The Papers of Benjamin Franklin (pp.322-7), where two different versions were published. The translation above is from William Temple Franklin's Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin.*

## Reading Franklin

Michael Sletcher, "Benjamin Franklin: the First American," *History Magazine*, January, 2007 issue. <http://www.history-magazine.com>. The author is one of the editors of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*.

Brett F. Woods, *Letters from France: the Private Diplomatic Correspondence of Benjamin Franklin, 1776-1785* (Algora Publishing, Nov., 2006). The author, a senior fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard is interested in political, military and literary history. Professor Woods has selected letters from this interesting period of Franklin's life, and has provided explana-

tory notes to help readers place the letters in context.

### Reissued:

Paul M. Zall, *Benjamin Franklin's Humor*. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005.) Heavily punctuated by writings of Franklin, Zall explores Franklin's use of humor throughout his life.

### Online:

Nian-Sheng Huang, "From the 'Fur Cap' to Poor Richard: The Chinese Connection," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 150, no. 2, June 2006 now available on-line at [www.amphilsoc.org](http://www.amphilsoc.org).

### Children's Literature

Stephen E. Hume, *Ben Franklin's War* (Dundurn, Nov., 2006). In this fantasy, set in Canada, Franklin's balloon comes down near the St. Francis of Assisi's Home for Foundlings in Quebec City, and Franklin's plan to persuade Canadians to join the American Revolution goes awry. The orphans hide the American from the British, and these intrepid friends of Franklin carry secret messages through underground tunnels in Montreal to save Franklin's life. One of the orphans is deaf, and the sign language he uses to communicate inspires Franklin to invent a cipher to baffle his enemies. Intended for readers ages 9-12.

# FRANKLIN TIDBITS

**Franklin Abroad** Elena Kogan's article on Benjamin Franklin, "Chelovek, Kotoryi sdelal sebja sam (The Man Who Made Himself)" appeared in the March, 2006 issue of *Bibliografiia*, a Russian library journal.

**Deep in the North Sea:** The Nov. 12 issue of the *New York Times* reported that The Ocean Technology Foundation of Groton, a marine research and educational organization at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus, thinks they've located the wreck of the *Bonhomme Richard*. The ship, captained by John Paul Jones in 1779, was the only one of the squadron sunk following an intense Revolutionary War battle in the North Sea off Flamborough Head (Yorkshire). The Americans won the day, but the Continental navy lost one of its few warships. Last summer, the Foundation discovered 5 previously unknown wreck sites, one of them containing a large amount of iron ballast, which the *Bonhomme Richard* was known have had on board. The group used eyewitness accounts of the battle, court testimony, damage assessments, meteorological and tide information, as well as Coast Guard computer models to find ships lost at sea to narrow the search. The Foundation hopes to raise \$250,000 to return to the site next summer. They plan to employ remote control underwater vehicles, super sensitive sonar, and divers to search for more clues that might identify the wrecks. The *Bonhomme Richard* is doubly identified with Franklin; its name, translated into English, is *Poor Richard*, and it was christened in remembrance of Franklin's almanack, which was read throughout the colonies. As minister to France, Franklin also gave orders to John Paul Jones, the squadron's commander, while he was in European waters. The American victory off Flamborough Head was thus in part Franklin's own. Franklin's involvement with the battle did not cease with his orders. To his dismay, two of the captains of the squadron became embroiled in a bitter dispute over who was responsible for the loss of the vessel, and it was left to Franklin to sort out their competing stories. If the *Bonhomme Richard* is found, new light may be shed on the claims of the two mariners. Friends can refresh their memories of the action by reading Thomas Schaeper's excellent book, *John Paul Jones and the Battle Off Flamborough Head: A Reconsideration* (Peter Lang, 1990).

**Franklin's Paris:** Caroline Weber's new book, *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* depicts the importance of dress in Franklin's Paris. The impact of fashion and presentation was not lost on the American minister to France. He stood out in the sea of powdered heads and exotic fabrics at court, conscious of being "a representative American". He was probably not surprised that his personal attire was the focus of almost as much interest as the Queen's ensembles. That was, after all, his intention.

**Franklin in the U.S.A.:** First Lady Laura Bush visited the Tercentenary exhibit, "Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World" on Oct. 19. She told 6th-graders that "Benjamin Franklin invented the idea of our nation."

**Constitution Day, 2006** This year Yale University's celebration of Constitution Day highlighted the thought and writings of Benjamin Franklin. Ellen Cohn, editor-in-chief of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* spoke, as did Professors Jonathan Holloway and Joanne Freeman. If you install free Realplayer software on your computer you can watch the video of their speeches at "Yale Celebrates Constitution Day": <http://www.yale.edu/opa/media/multimedia.html>

**Franklin Gets Out the Vote:** At the University of Connecticut, Storrs, a Franklin impersonator stood on a busy corner on Election Day and exhorted passers by to cast their ballots.

**Franklin On Stage:** In Ithaca, N.Y., Benjamin Franklin was part of the cast of "Clean Alternatives" performed by the Kitchen Theatre. A review indicates that

"his polite smile often stole the show from his fellow actors". Franklin was depicted as an animated hundred dollar bill.

The Main Street Theater of **Houston, Tx.**, recently produced "Benjamin Franklin, Printer, Etc.", which was written and performed by Burdette Parks, who has been playing Franklin for 20 years.

At Western **Washington** University Christopher Lowell, an historian as well as an actor, portrayed Franklin at a recent gathering.

**Franklin on the Worldwide Web:** Dr. David Fleischman has just added a Franklin section to his web site. There you can see contemporary works of art showing Franklin in spectacles and read the most up to date research on Franklin's eyewear and invention of bifocals. <http://www.antiquespectacles.com/topics/franklin/franklin.htm>.

An excellent on-line exhibit of the Library Company *Benjamin Franklin Writer and Printer* can be found at: <http://www.librarycompany.org/BFWriter/index.htm>.

## Franklin in the Polls:

In the December 2006 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, historians ranked the "Top 100" most influential Americans.....Lincoln first, followed by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Alexander Hamilton, and Ben Franklin. Go to: <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200612/influentials>. Franklin was #5 last year in the AOL/Discovery Poll of the general public.

## Franklin in Action:

A talking action figure of Benjamin Franklin is available online from: [http://www.toypresidents.com/view\\_prod-](http://www.toypresidents.com/view_prod-)



By Mike Thompson,  
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Detroit Free Press

# London – Paris pilgrimage

On October 26, 2006, a number of Friends of Franklin began a journey to visit different locales in England and France that held special significance to Franklin during his lifetime. Captured here in photos and memories are some of their experiences. David Roper's account of finding William Temple Franklin's grave is elsewhere in this issue.

Ralph Archbold, Vice President, Friends of Franklin:

"What a joy it was to be with such a wonderful group during the recent London-Paris tour of Friends of Franklin. Each event was an adventure enhanced by the good company. I especially enjoyed dining at Procope in Paris where Ben had been. The hotel in London was a delight with a special bonus of a great location near the theatre district and a wonderful Historic Trust gift shop. But I think the best part of the trip was the way everything went so smoothly, a tribute to the extensive work of Kathy and Jackie, the Llama Lady. (You will have to go on the next tour to find out the story behind that!) Some of the travelers even followed the *Da Vinci Code* trail. It was overall an experience not to be missed. No pompous people, just Franklin lovers who had a terrific time. Don't miss the next one!"

Ann Jackson Boswell:

"The London/Paris trip was outstanding! Walking in the alleys and streets of London that once received the footsteps of Benjamin Franklin gave one an amazing sense of the past. That sense continued onto Paris as we explored Benjamin Franklin's ventures there. It was an uncommon tour for participants with a common interest. The trip was researched and executed to perfection. Kathy and Jackie joined us in our enthusiasm for each 'Benjamin Franklin experience'. A dazzling tour, and a lot of fun."

Buzz Carnahan:

"The most wondrous event was the afternoon visiting the Château de La Roche-Guyon and having an extensive conversation with the present owner. I had never been outside of Paris before, so the opportunity to see the countryside en route was a pleasure, including passing the home where Monet lived in Vetheuil. The location of

the château, built into the white cliffs and overlooking the Seine River Valley, was spectacular. The opportunity to speak with the owner {Guy-Antoine de La Rouchefoucauld} about his family's centuries-old ties to the property, combined with the remarkable World War II history, was unforgettable."

James M. Gassaway:

"My family lived in the Westminster part of London and attended St. Margaret's Church. So before we got started, I visited the church which recalled many great moments. Here the marriages of Henry VIII and Churchill took place and Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded. His body, sans tête, is buried under the altar. Franklin also lived nearby.

"One of the problems with the Church of England is that it has been losing attendance in Great Britain where there is a lot of friction developing over whether women should be priests. I was interested in this issue, and asked about the controversy during our visits to different places.

"The experience continued to Ecton, the ancestral home of Franklin where we had lunch at the World's End which, of course, is shrouded in mystery concentrated in that village. This old coaching inn was known as "The Globe" during the 17th century when the main road passed to the rear of the building. William Hogarth, the famous painter, and Benjamin Franklin are just two of the famous people reputed to have affiliations here. Ben's cohorts included Erasmus Darwin, Matthew Boulton, James Watt, Josiah Wedgwood, John Whitehurst, Joseph Priestley and others who shared values and aspirations.

"At this stop, we attended a local church where two male parishioners described the great progress the church had made in recent years because of a woman priest. She built

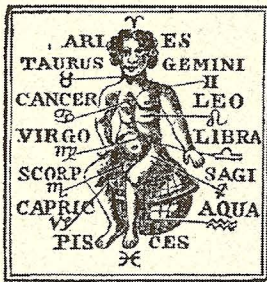
up the membership to over 200 and has developed a Sunday service to 80 attendees. The two male speakers were high in her praise and gave her credit for all the good work that had been done in developing the parish.

"Several days later, we attended St. Bartholomew-the-Great, which was built in the year 1265 in London. This is a great architectural attraction as well as a very active church. It is the only surviving part of a Norman priory and London's oldest parish church. In 1725, Franklin served a year as a printer in Samuel Palmer's printing shop, located in the Lady Chapel of the old priory. The rector, The Reverend Dr. Martin Dudley, FSA, FRHistS, FRSA, took a very different attitude than the members at our earlier stop when I asked him about women in the priesthood in the Church of England. He made it very clear that there was no place for women, especially in the priesthood. At the end of his dissertation, I returned to the question of women in the priesthood. He made his opinion crystal clear: that they should not serve in that capacity in the Church of England. After his talk, I sought him out on a one-to-one basis and explained to him that my own church in Swarthmore had three priests, two of whom were women. He told me that in his church there were also three priests and they were all men.

"The religious experience continued to the town of Winchester, England's ancient capital, most known for its 11th century cathedral, the mysterious King Arthur's Round Table, the birthplace of the modern game of cricket, the resting place of Jane Austen and an inspiration to the many artists who live there. Different parts of the church built after the Norman Conquest have collapsed over the years."

Ann Boswell and James Gassaway, both descendants, inside Twyford summer cottage where Franklin began the *Autobiography* and the group outside the cottage.





## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January 10, 2007

Walter Isaacson, the author of *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*, speaks at a dinner hosted by the Honorable Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs at the Department of State, Washington, D.C. at an event in recognition of The Benjamin Franklin House Foundation. By invitation only.

### January 17, 2007

Celebration! of Benjamin Franklin, Founder features a morning seminar, procession to Franklin's grave and luncheon. Guest speaker at both the seminar and luncheon is Dr. Arthur Caplan. Call Carol Smith 856-429-8331 for more information.

### Ongoing:

"The Medical World of Benjamin Franklin" at the College of Physicians, 19 S. 22nd Street, Philadelphia, PA. Call 215-563-3737.

"Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World," opened in Houston at the Houston Museum of Natural Science on Oct. 13, and will later travel to Denver, Atlanta and Paris, closing at the end of March, 2008.

### Through December 31, 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. Admission is free.

### Through December 31, 2006

"Images of Benjamin Franklin: As Seen By Himself and Others" at New York University (the Mamdouha Bobst Gallery, Bobst Library, 70 Washington Square South, New York, NY). An exhibit from Friend Stuart Karu's collection of Franklinaiana.

### Through January 1, 2007

"Franklin... He's Electric!" and "The Curiosity Show." Both shows are at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia. The latter, shown daily, reenacts some of Franklin's famous experiments. Check for show times.

### Through January 17, 2007

"Ben Franklin at the New York Historical Society." Exhibit that features paintings, sculptures, ceramics, textiles and other artifacts interpreting Franklin's life. For more information: <http://www.nyhistory.org/programs.html>.

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MATH PUZZLE PROBLEMS

(Compiled by Aziz S. Inan)

**Problem # 1. My birth year.** The sum of the digits of my birth year equals 14. Also, my birth year and its reverse add up to 7777. Both my mom and I died at age 84. My mom was 38 years older than me and her birth year was 14 years short of a square year. What was my death year?

## Benjamin Franklin's 300th Birthday Trivia Questions

Editor's Note: Test your knowledge of Franklin's life with this quiz prepared by Aziz S. Inan for the IEEE Seminar in Portland, Oregon this past August.

- In what year was Benjamin Franklin born?  
(a) 1607 (b) 1706 (c) 1670 (d) 1760
- In what city was Benjamin Franklin born?  
(a) Boston (b) New York  
(c) Philadelphia (d) London
- What was the name of the street where Benjamin Franklin was born?  
(a) Cheese (b) Coffee  
(c) Milk (d) Tea
- Who was the Englishman who kept Benjamin Franklin informed about electrical experiments being conducted in Europe?  
(a) Thomas Hopkinson (b) Peter Collinson  
(c) Ebenezer Kinnersley (d) Philip Syng
- Which year did Benjamin Franklin conduct his famous kite experiment?  
(a) 1737 (b) 1745 (c) 1752  
(d) 1672
- Which publications did Benjamin Franklin publish when he owned his printing shop?  
(a) *The New England Courant* and *The Boston Gazette*  
(b) *The Boston Gazette* and *Poor Richard's Almanack*  
(c) *The New England Courant* and *Poor Richard's Almanack*  
(d) *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and *Poor Richard's Almanack*
- Which of the following did Benjamin Franklin invent?  
(a) Bifocals (b) Rocking Chair  
(c) Swim Fins (d) All three
- Which of the following musical instruments did Benjamin Franklin play?  
(a) Guitar (b) Harp (c) Violin (d) All three
- Which musical instrument did Benjamin Franklin invent and construct?  
(a) Guitar (b) Harp (c) Violin  
(d) Glass Armonica
- How many children did Benjamin Franklin have?  
(a) 1 (b) 3 (c) 5 (d) 17
- What was the main reason Benjamin Franklin's wife, Deborah Read, never accompanied him on his extended trips to Europe?  
(a) She feared the ocean  
(b) Franklin didn't want her to come  
(c) She stayed behind to take care of his business  
(d) She was happy to see him go
- In which city did Benjamin Franklin spend approximately ten of his last fifteen years?  
(a) London (b) New York  
(c) Paris (d) Philadelphia
- Which institutions were founded by Benjamin Franklin?  
(a) American Philosophical Society  
(b) Pennsylvania Hospital  
(c) The University of Pennsylvania  
(d) All three
- Which documents were signed by Benjamin Franklin?  
(a) The Declaration of Independence  
(b) The Constitution  
(c) The Treaty of Peace between England, France and the United States  
(d) All three
- Benjamin Franklin wanted which animal to be the symbol of the United States of America?  
(a) Eagle (b) Horse (c) Lion (d) Turkey
- Which of the following terms used in electrical science were coined by Benjamin Franklin?  
(a) Plus and minus charge  
(b) Positive and negative charge  
(c) Electric battery  
(d) All three
- Franklin is the unit of a physical quantity named after Benjamin Franklin. Which physical quantity is this?  
(a) Capacitance (b) Charge (c) Current  
(d) Voltage
- Which US currency currently has Benjamin Franklin's picture on it?  
(a) \$1 bill (b) \$2 bill (c) \$20 bill  
(d) \$100 bill
- In which city is Benjamin Franklin buried?  
(a) Boston (b) Paris  
(c) Philadelphia (d) London

### Answers

1. b; 2. a; 3. c; 4. b; 5. c; 6. d; 7. d; 8. d; 9. d; 10. b; 11. a; 12. c; 13. d; 14. d; 15. d; 16. d; 17. b; 18. d; 19. c

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