

Franklin Gazette

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Friends of Franklin, Inc. P.O. Box 40048, Philadelphia, PA 19106

"No man e'er was glorious who was not laborious." - B. Franklin, 1734

President's Message

by Ralph Gregory Elliot

I've just been reading Richard Brookhiser's book, *Founding Father: Rediscovering George Washington*, a reverential revisiting of various aspects of our first President's life and character. And it's occurred to me how serious we are when we write and read about our Founding Fathers. We approach Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and Adams with a kind of awe, even when we are critical of their views, policies, passions and prejudices. They are person-ages apart; they are different from you and me and people we know. They are wrapped in the togas of history, enshrined in a democratic pantheon, and we approach them with diffidence and deferentially, like one making votive offerings to deities whose like we can never hope to see again.

How totally different is our approach to Ben Franklin. How infinitely accessible he is. We feel as if he is among us today, that we know people like him, that they're in our families, our offices, our clubs and church groups and civic organizations. Franklin, unique among the Founding Fathers, has escaped the bonds of proud Olympus on which his colleagues remain confined, and walks the streets of Philadelphia (or Chicago, or LA, or Hartford) side by side with us, commenting on the passing parade of fallible humanity as he goes.

There must be a reason why, alone of all his peers, Franklin is so contemporary. Much of that, I think, is because of his widely-read *Autobiography*. While the historian is frustrated that it stops before he embarks upon the most significant 33 years of his life - the years beginning in 1757 as our chief lobbyist in England, the brief return to participate in drafting the Declaration in 1776, the return abroad as our special pleader in France, his role as sage of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 - that very truncation helps to explain why he is to us so modern. For the *Autobiography* concentrates on the life of Franklin the private citizen - the printer, the newspaperman, the local politician, the civic booster, the organizer of fire companies, libraries, insurance companies, colleges; Franklin the inveterate inventor and the inquiring amateur scientist whose experiments captured the attention and gained the respect of the learned classes throughout the world.

The Franklin we see in the *Autobiography* is a protean figure on a human scale.

And while the infinite variety of his interests and achievements is dazzling to behold, we all know people in our own communities who today do the sorts of things Franklin did in the first 50 years of his life. They are the businesspeople who help to start and fund local organizations to solve some local problem or fill some local

cont. p.2



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President's Message

cont. from p.1

void. They are the members of the chamber of commerce who spend what should be their leisure hours promoting civic programs and improvements. They are our friends and neighbors who volunteer their precious time and talents to leave their community just a little bit better than they found it.

To be sure, none of our friends and colleagues can be found on dark and stormy nights challenging the elements with kite and key. But in so many of the ways that Franklin - the pre-iconic Franklin, the pre-Founding Father Franklin - lived his life as a citizen of Philadelphia, we and our contemporaries live ours, and his efforts as a good citizen resonate with us as we try to be good citizens, too. Franklin in his first 50 years, before he took the stage of American history, was the paradigm of what Tocqueville almost a century later celebrated as that uniquely American spirit of voluntarism - the average citizen who senses a public need, and mobilizes his friends and neighbors to meet it, not looking to or waiting for government to assume the burden.

The contemporaneity of Franklin and our feeling on the cusp of his tercentenary that we know him, that he is one of us, that we can see him reflected in ourselves and our neighbors, is in large part the result, I think, of that remarkable *Autobiography*. All the other Founding Fathers, meet us for the first time in the pages of political history as players in the great drama of independence and the first years of the republic. Only after we have looked upon their graven images in the hallowed halls of political history do we seek to find out something about their antecedents; and usually the search discloses lives of little moment and scant achievement. The Revolution made most of the Founding Fathers.

Franklin, by contrast, was a flourishing human organism of celebrity and achievement long before the struggles of dawning colonial restiveness. He was a great man of world renown before he left for England in 1757. The last 33 years of his life - the years of national service here and abroad - were the culmination of a life well lived, the natural (and extended) coda of public service by a private man who as a private citizen had already accomplished so much, and so much of benefit to his fellow Pennsylvanians and mankind.

Thus, Franklin comes to us as first a human being like each of us, and only later as the great and venerated statesman and Founding Father assuming his rightful place on the dais of history. And because we know him full, from beginning to end, and know that for so long in his life he was just a private citizen like us, we embrace him as our own, as one of us, and rejoice the more in his triumphs. One of our boys made it!

From the Executive Secretary....

Through the submission of Gazette articles, by attending Franklin programs and tours, by recruiting new members, by volunteering time, and by sharing Franklin expertise, we continue to make the world aware of the great accomplishments of America's most renowned Founding Father.

Our membership has grown this past year to include Friends in 30 states and the District of Columbia as well as Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and the United Kingdom. With the launching of our website, inquiries about the Friends of Franklin and about Franklin's many accomplishments, his life, and his descendants have been pouring in from all over the world, our most recent one from Bangladesh!

cont. on p. 3

So that we continue to grow, I ask for your assistance by forwarding names of prospective members. The Friends are now offering a complimentary copy of our Franklin chronology publication to all new members as an enticement to join us.

For our present membership, as a special renewal incentive for the year 2000, those renewing by January 31 will receive a complimentary Franklin 2000 calendar as a thank you gift for continuing to support the Friends in its operations and programs. This gift is but a small token of appreciation for the many ways in which you have supported us. (A calendar will automatically be sent to all Life members.)

2000 membership renewal notices will be mailed the first week in November and are payable by January 31. For those members who have recently joined the Friends, a prorated renewal fee will be calculated based on the anniversary date of your membership.

A form will be included with your renewal notice in the event that you wish to order additional calendars at \$3.00 each to give to your colleagues, friends, and family. The calendars are imprinted with contact information for the Friends and are a good way for you to participate in our ongoing membership drive.

On behalf of the Friends, I thank you for your continued support.

--Kathleen DeLuca

Friendly Feedback

Ben and Mark

Bill Anderson of Wichita, KS, reports that he greatly enjoyed Ralph Elliot's column on Ben Franklin and Mark Twain which appeared in our last issue. Bill writes: "Ruth and I also have visited Disney World and 'The Ameri-

can Experience.'" Then, just last month on a bus tour, we did an overnight tour of Hannibal, MO, boyhood home of Mark Twain. It was here the characters of Twain's stories were formed: Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Becky Thatcher, Tom's aunt, and even part of the white-washed fence. This Mississippi River town also provided the cave and the island where much of the stories took place, as well as the homes of the characters. It reminded us of the unique way Franklin and Twain were able in their humble way to depict "Our American Way" in their speech and writings."

West Coast Ben

Gene Collins, our west coast member who portrays Franklin, has checked in with a report from California: "Ben is alive and well in California and speaking to 200-300 children per day. Recently I officiated at the First Annual Ben Franklin Kite Classic held at the Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley, CA. It was a great day with over 300 kites in the air at any given time." Gene also portrayed Ben on July 4th, at a huge celebration at "Independence Hall" at Knotts Berry Farm. Gene would be grateful if anyone could help provide him with the following items, which will be useful in his portrayals: a working model of a Franklin printing press; facsimile copies of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* or the *New England Courant*; facsimile copies of *Poor Richards Almanac*. Contact Gene at genecpat@earthlink.net if you have any ideas.

Founding Fathers

Member Malcolm Smith of Highland Park, IL forwarded an article from the July 4th edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, concerning the Founding Fathers Project: the slow process of compiling the authoritative versions of everything written by Jefferson, Washington, Adams, Madison, and of course, Franklin. A picture of

Friend of Franklin Barbara Oberg, former Franklin Papers editor and current Jefferson Papers editor, prominently illustrates the article along with a picture of a copy of the Declaration of Independence in Jefferson's hand. Both Barbara and Ellen Cohn, Friend of Franklin and current Franklin Papers editor, are quoted extensively in the article. According to Ellen, the time and care given to the projects ensures that the volumes "should stand as definitive texts for centuries." It is also interesting to note that working on the papers of great men also sheds light of the lives of common men of the time. Ellen tells an interesting story of some of the letters sent to Franklin: "During Franklin's tenure as the ranking American official in Europe, American sailors who had been captured by the British often wrote to him seeking his help in winning their freedom. They wrote to him their life stories. This is a very rich source of information on a whole class of society that otherwise would never have committed pen to paper."

2nd Annual Celebration!

The organizations founded by Benjamin Franklin or founded in his name or image invite you to a two day Celebration of his birthday, January 13 and 14, 2000. The theme is Science Education and Technology.

Thursday's events start with a parade and laying of a wreath on Franklin's grave. Seminars will then be held at the University of Pennsylvania on "Science Education" and "Libraries and Technology in the 21st Century." The highlight is the evening's grand celebration dinner, which features a keynote address by author Stephen Jay Gould.

Friday's activities are open houses, tours, and exhibits sponsored by the participating institutions. Contact Barbara Cowan at 215-448-0984 for more information.

On the Morals of Chess

Benjamin Franklin

[reprinted from The Papers of Benjamin Franklin,
Vol. 29, pp.750-757. Dated prior to June 28, 1779]

Sir,

Playing at Chess, is the most ancient and the most universal game known among men; for its original is beyond the memory of history, and it has, for numberless ages, been the amusement of all the civilized nations of Asia, the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese. Europe has had it above 1000 years; the Spaniards have spread it over their part of America, and it begins lately to make its appearance in these northern states. It is so interesting in itself, as not to need the view of gain to induce engaging in it; and thence it is never played for money. Those, therefore, who have leisure for such diversions, cannot find one that is more *innocent*; and the following piece, written with a view to correct (among a few young friends) some little improprieties in the practice of it, shows at the same time, that it may, in its effects on the mind, be not merely *innocent*, but *advantageous*, to the vanquished as well as to the victor.

The MORALS of CHESS

The game of Chess is not merely an idle amusement. Several very valuable qualities of the mind, useful in the course of human life, are to be acquired or strengthened by it, so as to become habits, ready on all occasions. For life is a kind of chess, in which we have often points to gain, and competitors or adversaries to contend with, and in which there is a vast variety of good and ill events, that are, in some degree, the effects of prudence or the want of it. By playing at chess, then, we may learn:

1. *Foresight*, which looks a little into futurity, and considers the consequences that may attend an action: for it is continually occurring to the player, "If I move this piece, what will be the advantages of my new situation? What use can my adversary make of it to annoy me? What other moves can I make to support it, and to defend myself from his attacks?"

2. *Circumspection*, which surveys the whole chess-board, or scene of action, the relations of the several pieces and situations, the dangers they are respectively exposed to, the several possibilities of their aiding each other; the probabilities that the adversary may make this or that move, and attack this or the other piece; and what different means can be used to avoid his stroke, or turn its consequences against him.

3. *Caution*, not to make our moves too hastily. This habit is best acquired by observing strictly the laws of the game, such as, *if you touch a piece, you must move it somewhere; if you set it down, you must let it stand.*

And it is therefore best that these rules should be observed, as the game thereby becomes more the image of human life, and particularly of war; in which, if you have incautiously put yourself into a bad and dangerous position, you cannot obtain your enemy's leave to withdraw your troops, and place them more securely; but you must abide all the consequences of your rashness.

And, *lastly*, we learn by chess the habit of *not being discouraged* by present bad appearances in the state of our affairs, the habit of *hoping for a favourable change*, and that of *persevering in the search of resources*. The game is so full of events, there is such a variety of turns in it, the fortune of it is so subject to sudden vicissitudes, and one so frequently, after long contemplation, discovers the means of extricating one's self from a supposed insurmountable difficulty, that one is encouraged to continue the contest to the last, of giving a *stale mate*, by the negligence of our adversary. And whoever considers, what in chess he often sees instances of, that particular pieces of success are apt to produce *presumption*, and its consequent, inattention, by which more is afterwards lost than was gained by the preceding advantage; while misfortunes produce more care and attention, by which the loss may be recovered, will learn not to be too much discouraged by the present success of his adversary, nor to despair of final good fortune, upon every little check he receives in the pursuit of it.

That we may, therefore, be induced more frequently to chuse this beneficial amusement, in preference to others which are not attended with the same advantages, every circumstance, that may increase the pleasure of it, should be regarded; and every action or word that is unfair, disrespectful, or that in any way may give uneasiness, should be avoided, as contrary to the immediate intention of both the players, which is to pass the time agreeably.

Therefore, *1st*. If it is agreed to play according to the strict rules, then those rules are to be exactly observed by both parties; and should not be insisted on for one side, while deviated from by the other: for this is not equitable.

2. If it is agreed to observe the rules exactly, but one party demands indulgencies, he should then be as willing to allow them to the other.

3. No false move should ever be made to extricate yourself out of difficulty, or to gain an advantage. There can be no pleasure in playing with a person once detected in such unfair practice.

4. If your adversary is long in playing, you ought not to hurry him, or express any uneasiness at his delay. You should not sing, nor whistle, nor look at your watch, nor

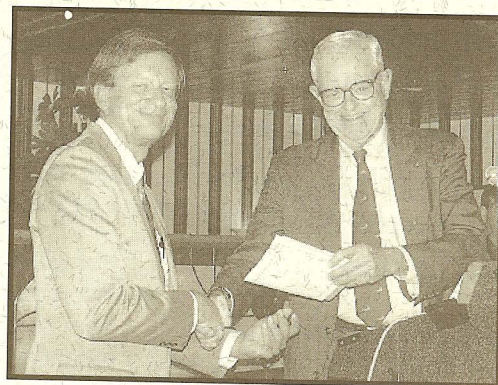
take up a book to read, nor make a tapping with your feet on the floor, or with your fingers on the table, nor do anything that may disturb his attention. For all these things displease. And they do not show your skill in playing, but your craftiness or your rudeness.

5. You ought not to endeavour to amuse and deceive your adversary, by pretending to have made bad moves, and saying you have now lost the game, in order to make him secure and careless, and inattentive to your schemes; for this is fraud, and deceit, not skill in the game.

6. You must not, when you have gained a victory, use any triumphing or insulting expression, nor show too much pleasure; but endeavour to console your adversary, and make him less dissatisfied with himself by every kind and civil expression, that may be used with truth, such as, You understand the game better than I, but you are a little inattentive; or, You play too fast; or, You had the best of the game but something happened to divert your thoughts, and that turned it in my favour.

7. If you are a spectator, while others play, observe the most perfect silence. For if you give advice, you offend both parties; him, against whom you give it, because it may cause the loss of his game; him, in whose favour you give it, because, though it be good, and he follows it, he loses the pleasure he might have had, if you had permitted him to think till it occurred to himself. Even after a move or moves, you must not, by replacing the pieces, shew how it might have been played better: for that displeases, and may occasion disputes or doubts about their true situation. All talking to the players, lessens or diverts their attention, and is therefore unpleasing; nor should you give the least hint to either party, by any kind of noise or motion. - If you do, you are unworthy to be a spectator. - If you have a mind to exercise or show your judgments, do it in playing your own game when you have an opportunity, not in criticising or meddling with, or counselling, the play of others.

Lastly. If the game is not to be played rigorously, according to the rules above mentioned, then moderate your desire of victory over your adversary, and be pleased with one over yourself. Snatch not eagerly at every advantage offered by his unskilfulness or inattention; but point out to him kindly that by such a move he places or leaves a piece in danger and unsupported; that by another he will put his king in a dangerous situation, &c. By this generous civility (so opposite to the unfairness above forbidden) you may indeed happen to lose the game to your opponent, but you will win what is better, his esteem, his respect, and his affection; together with the silent approbation and good will of impartial spectators.



James M. Gassaway (right) presents a copy of the Franklin Gazette to John McCroary, President of the U.S. Chess Federation

Franklin Inducted into Chess Hall of Fame

On August 14, 1999, Benjamin Franklin was inducted into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame at the annual meeting of the U.S. Chess Federation in Reno, NV. James M. Gassaway, Friend of Franklin and Franklin descendant, was present at the ceremony, and accepted a memorial plaque, with the following inscription:

On this day with great respect and appreciation of the whole American chess community, Dr. Benjamin Franklin is inducted into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame, August 1999.

Mr. Gassaway in turn presented the U.S. Chess Federation President, John McCroary, with a special copy of Franklin's *Morals of Chess*, which was donated by the American Philosophical Society Library. He noted the book's continuing appropriateness, especially since the Chess Federation has programs that encourage proper moral conduct in young people as well as developing their interest in chess. Mr. Gassaway was accompanied by his nephew, Jon Peter Gassaway, who at one time played on the National Championship Chess Team for Wilson High School in Portland, OR. The younger Mr. Gassaway, who began his chess career in the second grade, also competed in the Chess Blitz contest which was part of the U.S. Open chess tournament.

During his acceptance remarks, James Gassaway quoted Franklin's remark to Madam Brillon, also a chess enthusiast, that his definition of Heaven was that "All speak the same language, dine on roasted apples, listen to bagpipes, and all chess games end in a tie; therefore no one is angry." He also noted the important role that chess played in Franklin's life and diplomacy; playing chess with Lord Howe's sister enabled him to conduct his peace negotiations away from the public eye.

The Chess Federation officers seemed to be very knowledgeable of Franklin, and Mr. Gassaway greatly enjoyed his visit and the hospitality of the Federation.

**Good Reads:
News and Reviews of
Franklin
Related Materials**

**Coming Soon!!
*My Life with Benjamin
Franklin***

Claude-Anne Lopez tells all (or almost all) of her "Life with Franklin" in a book to be published next spring by the Yale University Press. She is to receive the proofs on September 15. Meanwhile, the Press prepared the following blurb:

My Life with Benjamin Franklin
Claude-Anne Lopez

"This delightful book is a collection of incidental pieces that reveal little-known aspects of the life and personality of Benjamin Franklin. Written by the doyenne of Franklin scholars, it conveys Franklin's humor, resiliency, courage, intelligence, and his faith in a better future.

"The selections are based on Claude-Anne Lopez's research in the treasure trove of nearly thirty thousand documents on Franklin assembled at Yale University. They include a detailed refutation of an anti-Semitic forgery attributed to Franklin and currently circulating on the Internet; three mini-detective stories showing Franklin on the fringes of the espionage world; discussions of Franklin's efforts to outfit Washington's army and to choose the first dinner set for the Foreign Service; and the tale of the misadventures of a French utopian scheme he sponsored. The only piece of fiction in the book is an imaginary party during which, on the first anniversary of his death, six illustrious Frenchmen discuss Franklin's influence on their country. Lopez has provided brief personal introductions to each of the pieces, giving her reasons for writing them and the process threading the essays together.

"Claude-Anne Lopez, for many years an editor of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, is also the author of *Mon Cher Papa: Franklin and the Ladies of Paris*, published by Yale University Press, as well as many other books and articles about Franklin."

Kate Ohno of *The Franklin Papers* also passes on another "good read" from a scholarly journal: "There is a recent article in *William & Mary Quarterly* that has a lot to do with Franklin as newspaper man & business man: 'Reading the Runaways: Self-Fashioning, Print Culture, and Confidence in Slavery in the Eighteenth-Century Mid-Atlantic' by David Waldstreicher. It was published in the April issue -- 3rd series vol. LVI, no. 2. Perhaps some *Gazette* readers would be interested, as *WMQ* is not widely read outside the circle of Early Americanists." Thanks, Kate!

We've heard from John Front of the Pennsylvania Historical Society that the special Ben Franklin issue of *Pennsylvania History*, Vol. 65, No.1, Winter, 1998 is sold out! If you do not have your own copy, it may still be possible to read this fine issue in a library near you. We're pleased to hear that Ben is still so popular!

**In His Own Words:
*Benjamin Franklin***

Franklin on Welfare and Workfare

The following piece appeared in the London Chronicle, Nov. 27-29, 1766, under the title "On the Price of Corn, and Management of the Poor." Franklin chose the pseudonym Arator for the occasion since, in the first part of the piece, devoted to the price of corn, he was defending the rights of British farmers. It appears in vol. XIII, pp. 510-16 of the Yale edition of the Franklin Papers.

"I am for doing good to the poor, but I differ in opinion of the means. I

think the best way of doing good to the poor, is not making them easy in poverty, but leading or driving them out of it. In my youth I travelled much, and I observed in different countries that the more public provisions were made for the poor, the less they provided for themselves, and of course became poorer. And, on the contrary, the less was done for them, the more they did for themselves, and became richer. There is no country in the world where so many provisions are established for them; so many hospitals to receive them when they are sick or lame, founded and maintained by voluntary charities; so many almshouses for the aged of both sexes, together with a solemn general law made by the rich to subject their estates to a heavy tax for the support of the poor. Under all these obligations, are our poor modest, humble, and thankful; and do they use their best endeavours to maintain themselves, and lighten our shoulders of this burthen? On the contrary, I affirm that there is no country in the world in which the poor are more idle, dissolute, drunken, and insolent. The day you passed that act, you took away from before their eyes the greatest of all inducements to industry, frugality, and sobriety, by giving them a dependance on somewhat else than a careful accumulation during youth and health, for support in age or sickness. In short, you offered a premium for the encouragement of idleness, and you should not now wonder that it has had its effect in the increase of poverty. Repeal that law, and you will soon see a change in their manners. St. Monday, and St. Tuesday, will cease to be holidays. SIX days shalt thou labour, though one of the old commandments long treated as out of date, will again be looked upon as a respectable precept; industry will increase, and with it plenty among the lower people; their circumstances will mend, and more will be done for their happiness by injuring them to provide for themselves, than could be done by dividing all your estates among them."

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Thank you for supporting the Friends of Franklin!

The “Franklin Table”

By Jay Robert Stiefel

On April 17, 1999, in the most successful sale in its 194-year history, Freeman’s auction house in Philadelphia sold the furniture of the late George Vaux. Described in an October 21, 1996 tribute in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, as “the dean of Philadelphia’s cultural leaders” and “a master of old values,” George Vaux was the tenth in his line to bear his name and had distinguished himself for his 31-year stewardship and revitalization of the Athenaeum in Philadelphia.

His furniture had come down to him from some of the best known and most prosperous early merchant families in Philadelphia, including the Sansoms, the Heads, the Morrisises and, of course, the Vauxes. But the item that drew the greatest attention at the sale was not one made for his forebearers, but one that had been purchased by a Vaux in the last century: a dressing table purportedly owned by Benjamin Franklin.

In *Pedigrees of my Ancient Furniture/Articles of Virtu etc.*, a journal kept by George X’s antiquarian grandfather, George VIII, the circumstances of that purchase are recorded, in an entry dated December 28, 1900, for item #22, the “Franklin table”: *This small ancient table now in Moll’s room at 1715 Arch St[.] appears to be made of maple. It has three drawers in it with brass handles. It was bought by brother William at the Sanitary fair in 1863 [sic] and he seemed to be satisfied with the account given to him that it originally belonged to Franklin.*

The “Sanitary fair” was the Great Central Fair for the U.S. Sanitary Commission, held on Logan Square in Philadelphia, June 7-28, 1864, not 1863. The sale of relics and other objects donated to the Fair raised over \$1 million for the care of Union wounded in the Civil War.

George VIII’s brother, William Sansom Vaux, was in a unique position to be “satisfied” with the provenance of articles he bought at the Fair. He was Treasurer of its “Relics and Curiosities” section, and oversaw the sale of donated relics. Moreover, William was one of the pre-eminent mineral and gemstone collectors of his day. (The Academy of Natural Sciences, in Philadelphia, now has

his collection.) He was no novice to establishing the bona fides of a prospective acquisition and, thus, there is no reason to doubt that his satisfaction with the Franklin provenance was preceded by thorough “due diligence” on his part.

Several Franklin-associated pieces were displayed at the Fair. Many of Franklin’s direct descendants, the Baches, were connected with either the Fair or the Sanitary Commission, including his great-grandson Alexander Dallas Bache, Vice President of the Commission; his great-granddaughter Elizabeth Duane Gillespie, who ran the Fair’s post office; and his great-great grandson R. Meade Bache, who served on the editorial committee of the daily newspaper of the Fair, *Our Daily Fare*. Given their prominence at the Fair, one of them may have donated the dressing table to benefit the cause.



Photo courtesy of Samuel T. Freeman & Son, Auctioneers, Philadelphia

If the dressing table passed down the female line, it may have come from the estate of Franklin’s granddaughter Deborah Bache, who had died in 1863 and whose daughter was Mrs. Gillespie. If it passed in the male line, an obvious candidate would be Dr. Franklin Bache, who died in March, 1864, just a few months

before the Fair opened. He was the eldest son of Benjamin Franklin Bache, Franklin’s eldest grandson. The inventory of Dr. Bache’s estate discloses a “toilet table” (a contemporary term for a dressing table), presumably long out of fashion, being stored in his attic and valued at 25 cents! The accounting for his estate also shows that furniture of the estate was being disposed of by June, the month of the Fair.

Other clues which suggest that Dr. Bache’s “toilet table” may be the “Franklin table” bought by Vaux are the numerous other maple objects in the estate inventory; and the heat-induced crazed, “in-the-black” finish of the “Franklin table,” which suggests its prolonged storage in a dry, hot place, such as an attic.

Circumstantial evidence also lends support to William Vaux’s satisfaction with the Benjamin Franklin provenance given him. The table is an exceptional example of a form made circa 1750 in Philadelphia, a time and place contemporaneous to Franklin and his residency. Based on labeled examples and furniture descended in the Savery family, the table may be attributed to the shop

of William Savery, with whom Franklin did business. Savery billed him for repairs to chairs, including maple ones, which may have been used en suite with a dressing table of the same wood. Finally, the simple yet robust form of the table would presumably have appealed to Franklin, whose correspondence with his wife Deborah and daughter Sarah chastised them for considering extravagant expenditure for decoration, clothing, and furnishings.

The table will be on view at "The Arts of Early Baroque Pennsylvania, 1680-1758" exhibit, at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, October 10, 1999-January 2, 2000.

It is hoped that further research from as yet undiscovered sources will yield additional information regarding the "Franklin table." Information, suggestions, and inquiries from the Friends of Franklin are invited and may be directed to: Jay Robert Stiefel, 1622 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-6365, or to jrs@bm.net.

Franklin Genealogy

The database of Franklin descendants continues to grow! It is interesting to note that all Franklin descendants living today are from only one line, that of his daughter. That is why Franklin descendants, generally speaking, have surnames other than Franklin!

Elly Fitzig, the official Franklin genealogist has been gathering family trees and interesting stories for some time now. We look forward to having her share some tales of Franklin descendants in future editions of the Franklin Gazette.

In the meantime, if you would like information concerning Franklin genealogy services, please contact Elly either through the Friends e-mail at fof@benfranklin2006.org or by sending an SASE to: Elly Fitzig c/o Friends of Franklin, PO Box 40048, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

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The Electric Franklin

New Website "Crackles with Energy" -- With Help from Friends

On July 1, 1999 a special ceremony took place at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia, to officially bring on-line the most exciting manifestation to date of Benjamin Franklin's presence on the World Wide Web. Instead of breaking a bottle of champagne, Franklin author and historian Claude-Anne Lopez "did the honors" by pressing an electronic button that made the new "Electric Franklin" website available to web searchers around the world. The web address is: <http://www.ushistory.org/franklin>

The new site has received consistently "rave" reviews from the press across the nation. The *New York Times* commented that "Benjamin Franklin, the classic American over-achiever, would surely be proud of The Electric Ben Franklin." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* named it a "Web Winner" and *USA Today* opines that "far from being dusty old history, the colorful site... crackles with energy."

It's easy to see why the reviews are so enthusiastic. One of the highlights of the site is "Temple's Diary" - an original piece of historical fiction by Friend of Franklin Claude-Anne Lopez which presents a view of Franklin as seen through the eyes of his grandson, William Temple Franklin. Claude-Anne's deep historical understanding of the period and the figures involved makes the piece not only ring true-to-life but creates a real "page-turner" as well!

Another Friend of Franklin also played a significant role in the website. Philadelphia's Franklin portrait artist Ralph Archbold stars as Franklin in a real-time video clip that

welcomes viewers to the site. Ralph's enthusiastic and articulate performance, filmed on-site at Franklin Court, is a real treat.

The site was developed by Independence Hall Association, the leading electronic publisher of American Revolutionary and Constitutional historical material, and Claude-Anne Lopez. It also features 360-degree panoramas of Independence Hall and Franklin Court, a virtual tour of Philadelphia, the full text of the Autobiography, a timeline, the kite experiment, fun and games for kids of all ages, and much, much more! Claude-Anne has commented that her involvement with the project was partly fueled by a desire to find a new way to connect with her web-savvy granddaughter. We're sure that surfers everywhere will be bookmarking this fun site -- and that the great electrical innovator himself would be pleased to be associated with such a fine example of this new technological medium.

Website Inquiries

Would you like to share your Franklin expertise? With the Friends of Franklin website up and running, we continue to receive inquiries pertaining to the many aspects of Franklin's life and career. If you would like to share your specific Franklin knowledge with others, please contact Kathy DeLuca via e-mail at fof@benfranklin2006.org. In order to assist us, you will need to have e-mail access.

Check out the latest changes and additions to the Friends of Franklin website at:

<http://www.benfranklin2006.org>



Special Thanks to Our Life Members!

William D. Anderson, Jr.;
Wichita, KS

Jackson C. Boswell; Arlington, VA

Elly Fitzig; Wichita, KS

Michael L. George; Dallas, TX

Doug Hall; Cincinnati, OH

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Barbara Oberg; Princeton, NJ

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Malcolm Smith; Highland Park, IL

Noriyuki Uenami; Tokyo, Japan

George Franklin Waters;
Rochester, MN

Ehsan Zayan;
London, UK

300th Birthday Celebration

*More Friends answer the question:
"How do you think Ben Franklin would
celebrate his 300th birthday?"*

"Hopefully, the world, especially America, would throw him a grand celebration. Top representatives from institutions bearing his influence—electric, fire, insurance companies, libraries, optometry, post office, etc.—would be on hand to honor his contributions and inventions. His descendants would explain how they've honored his life and accomplishments. French and British politicians would praise his political achievements in their respective countries, but more importantly, American politicians would recognize this and find some way to honor and thank him for having spent one third of his life abroad on behalf of America. In short, the world would give back to Franklin a mere fraction of what he gave to it." — Pamela Hartsock; *El Cajon, CA*

"With a hearty glass of Madeira and a lively discussion of Franklin's views on Immortality and present efforts to keep his memory alive." — Elly Fitzig; *Wichita, KS*

"At a civic dinner." — Malcolm Smith; *Highland Park, IL*



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

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Austin, TX

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Garry Apgar;
Black Rock, CT

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Student:

Carlye Hill; Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Franklin's Historic Boston and Nantucket

September 13-19, 2000

Everybody knows that Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston and that when he could not stand his brother any longer he dispatched away to Philadelphia. But not everyone has had a chance to stand on Milk Street where stood his childhood home; to look across Boston wharves that lured him to a lifetime of studying sailing and the ocean depths; to walk the battlegrounds at Lexington and Concord where Franklin is today featured and honored in the Masonic Museum of our National Heritage; to gaze from the grounds of America's other obelisk called the Washington Monument; or to learn about the history and art of whaling Franklin knew on the island of Nantucket—from whence came his mother and all of his Folger kin.

You will be able to discover these things and much more about Benjamin Franklin's Boston and Nantucket roots on a two-part tour of Boston and Nantucket with the Friends of Franklin, September 13-19, 2000. The touring Tise and DeLuca duo will again perform their magic on this educational tour that will spend September 13-16 (Wed.-Sat.) in Franklin's historic Boston and then proceed September 17-19 (Sun.-Tue) to the picturesque Nantucket.

Mark these dates on your calendar! Tour brochures will be mailed in November.

The Historic Paris of Franklin, Jefferson, and Paine

April 27-May 3, 2000

Maybe you have been to Paris to see the Louvre, Notre Dame, and the Arc de Triomphe. But chances are you

did not see or know where to look for all of the Paris haunts of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine. You perhaps did not notice the spot on the Champs-Élysées where Jefferson lived. Or if you passed the Palais de Luxembourg (home of the French Senate), you probably did not note that this was Thomas Paine's prison for a year during the French Revolution. And as you went up the Eiffel Tower, you perhaps did not note the statue of Benjamin Franklin nearby or know that Franklin stood on this spot to watch the first successful hot air balloon flight in human history. Or that when you saw Voltaire's tomb in the Pantheon that Franklin knew the great philosopher and presided over his Masonic funeral. Well, you will be able to learn about these sights while enjoying many other memorable moments as the touring duo of Tise and DeLuca trace the historic steps of Franklin, Jefferson, and Paine across Paris and France for April 27-May 3, 2000.

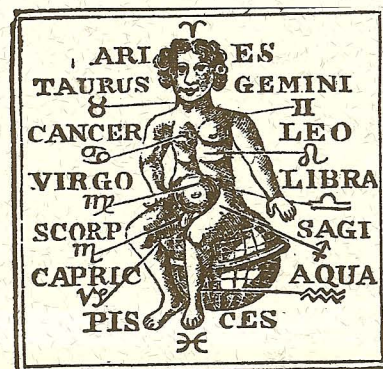
For more information or to request a brochure, contact Kathy DeLuca at 856-854-7257 or by e-mail at kdeluca@eplus-services.com.

Support Friends of Franklin: Buy Books!

Friends of Franklin has entered into a cooperative agreement with "the world's largest bookseller" -- Amazon.com. Now everytime you buy books online, you have an opportunity to support Friends of Franklin!

How does it work? Simple! Just go first to the Friends of Franklin website at <http://www.benfranklin2006.org>. Go to the Amazon.com link at the bottom of the page, click on, and then proceed to browse and order books on the Amazon site. A percentage of all purchases will be returned to the organization. Remember, the "kickback" only happens when you enter the Amazon site *through* the Friends of Franklin site. It doesn't

"work" if you go directly to Amazon.com. The book selections reviewed in the *Gazette* and the website are a good place to start ordering, but remember: *Any* book you buy through the link supports Friends!



Calendar of Events

October 15, 1999. "Benjamin Franklin of Craven Street, London" is a half-day symposium to be held at the RSA in London, followed by a special tour of the Craven Street house. Cost is £22. Call 0171-930-5115 or e-mail Library@rsa-uk.demon.co.uk for further information.

January 13 & 14, 2000. Celebration! of Ben Franklin with dinner and symposium in Philadelphia. Stephen Jay Gould will be the keynote speaker. See article on p. 3.

April 27-30, 2000. World Glass Music Festival 2000, in Philadelphia. There will be more information on this event in a future *Gazette*.

April 27-May 3, 2000. April in Paris! Franklin/Jefferson/Paine Tour to France. See article to the left for more information..

September 14-18, 2000. Benjamin Franklin's Historic Boston and Nantucket. Friends of Franklin tour to the Boston area. See article to the left for more information.

Join Friends of Franklin!

Would you like to become an official member of the Friends of Franklin organization? Do you have a friend or relative who might wish to join, or who would appreciate a gift membership? All individuals, scholars, students, collectors, and Franklinophiles, as well as institutions, are invited to become members of the Friends of Franklin at the following membership rates:

Life Members	\$1,000	Franklin Friend	\$50
Institutional Members	\$1,000	Student Members (full time only; photocopy id)	\$20
Sustaining Friend	\$ 100	Subscription (Educators and libraries only)	\$20

YES, I'd like to join the Friends of Franklin!

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