

Franklin Gazette

Volume 21, Number 2, Summer 2011

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

Visit: www.friendsoffranklin.org

"The Doors of Wisdom are never shut."

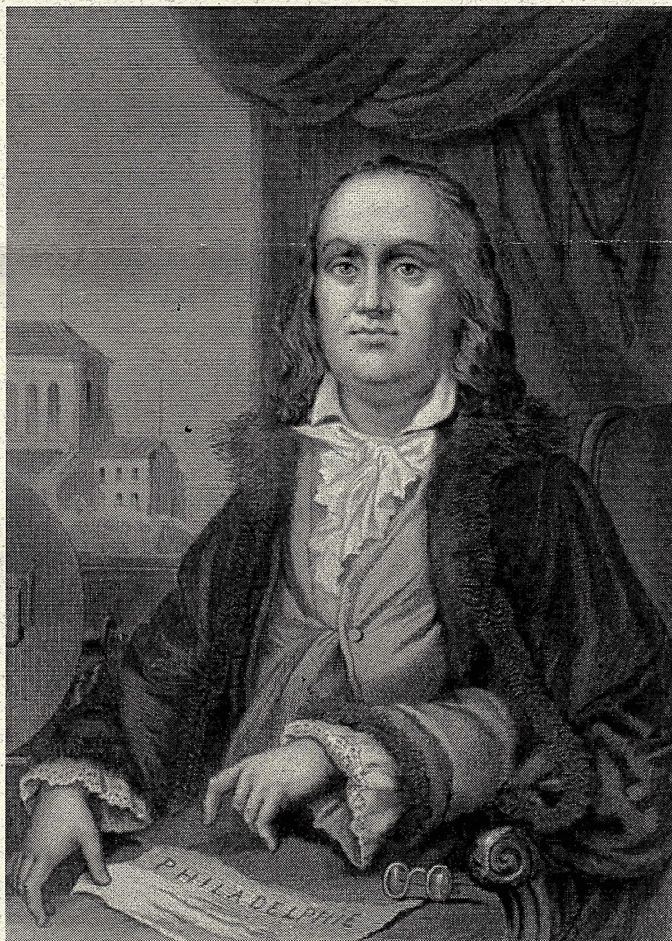
Poor Richard, August 1755

President's Message

By Lee E. Knepp

Members and guests who journeyed to Philadelphia for "Benjamin Franklin and the Germans in Pennsylvania" enjoyed several beautiful mid-September days. The symposium presentations proved insightful and the fellowship extremely enjoyable-- a perfect combination for any Benjamin Franklin enthusiast.

Sincere appreciation is due to the many who made the events possible: to our symposium speakers Dr. Friedericke Baer, Dr. John B. Frantz, and Dr. Carla Mulford, as well as to Dr. George Boudreau who so capably moderated the afternoon panel discussion; to John Peterson of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia who offered the luncheon presentation on the Muhlenbergs, tying in the "the patriarch" Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, his father-in-law Conrad Weiser, and his three prominent sons John Peter Gabriel, Henry Ernst, and Frederick Augustus with Benjamin Franklin and the Founding Fathers. Peterson also hosted a tour of the Archives, showing the recently restored Muhlenberg journals. Thanks are also due to our society's Executive Director Kathleen DeLuca, and members Anna Coxe Toogood and Jean Wolf for their planning efforts; to those sites and their docents who opened their doors to offer



Black and white engraving of Franklin seated at the table.
Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.

us information and hospitality; to Cecelia Brauer for her gift of glass armonica DVDs to tour attendees; and especially to the loyal Friends of Franklin members and guests who participated in both the

symposium and the tour: Frank and Carin Batchelor, their son Frank Batchelor, Jackson and Ann Boswell, Charlotte and Robert Craig, Stuart Green, Cutter Hughes, Lee Knepp, Jane and Martin Mangold, Watty Strouss, and Jean Wolf.

We anxiously await future excursions tied to the life and career of Benjamin Franklin, and we encourage suggestions for enlightening and enjoyable destinations from the membership. Two possibilities have been raised: a return to France, following Franklin's December, 1776, journey from the Port of Auray via Nantes to Paris, and a return to Philadelphia for a symposium and tour of Federal era structures.

We treasure your membership and beg your continued support of The Friends of Franklin. You are reminded that notices for payment of annual dues will be issued in November. Please respond promptly. And, as the end of calendar year 2011 approaches, we remind you of your opportunity to make a financial contribution to The Friends of Franklin which will

qualify as a deduction under 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. Code. Contributions should be remitted to The Friends of Franklin, Inc., PO Box 40048, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

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March, June, September and December. Newsletter submissions are encouraged. Deadlines are the 15th of the month preceding publication. Submissions by e-mail or computer disks (text-only format) are preferred.

Editor's Note: Thanks to Bob and Charlotte Craig for sending the abstract below. This panel has been accepted and is scheduled for October 28, 2011 and will take place at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. For more information on this topic you may contact: Charlotte M. Craig, Ph.D., 51 Hedge Row Road, Princeton, NJ 08540 Res.Tel.: 609-452-8474

"YOU'VE GOT MAIL": THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POSTAL SERVICE BY LAND, BY SEA, AND IN THE AIR

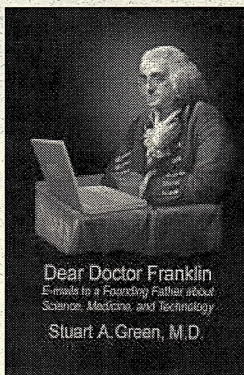
This panel endeavors to sketch the background of an age-old need through myriads of societies and regimes, with emphasis on the development through the eighteenth century: the need or desire to communicate. A form of "organized" postal service may be traced to the ancient world (Egypt, China, Persia, Greece, Rome), by means of post house relay systems and corps of messengers. New barbarian rulers apparently maintained a model after the Roman system; an Arabian system existed, as did a pre-Columbian and the Inca Empire service.

With expanding trade among nations, issues such as distance, speed, promptness and reliability of delivery weighed considerably on decisions involving regulating a postal system. In the late fifteenth century the growth of letter carrying became a profitable business leading to the rise of private enterprises, as that of the Taxis family. Under the patronage of the Habsburg emperors they organized an extensive network linking the imperial possessions, covering most of Europe with thousands of couriers operating a speedy, efficient and highly profitable relay system. As Postmaster, Franz von Taxis served Maximilian I, who had secured the privilege of carrying both government and private mail. In 1729, Frankfurt became the central

point of the Thurn-Taxis administration. In England, Henry VI appointed a "Master of Posts," and by 1765 the era of the stage coach was initiated. In the U.S., Benjamin Franklin was appointed Postmaster General for the American colonies. In 1785, letters were sent by hot air balloon from London to Franklin in Paris. The increased postal traffic fostered the introduction of new facilities, e.g. registration, postcards, preferential rates for books, printed matter, samples, and additional financial services, such as savings banks, postal orders, parcel post, and later, mechanical sorting, among various social reforms.

The modern era relied more and more on the development of intricate electronic and technical devices, such as automatic segregation or culling, facing and cancelling machines, code readers-sorters, etc. Much overseas postal business has been replaced by airmail service and, of course, the e-mail traffic has become the chief competitor of "traditional mail" as we know it. The "modern efficiency" means have taken on and continue to influence business, economics, trade, and personal correspondence, much to the detriment of the postal system which is feeling the impact through reductions of hours and deliveries, closing of post offices, all of which translates into loss of business, and the fading echoes of Romantic strains in music and poetry.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY



Consider giving a copy of Stuart Green's fascinating book: *Dear Doctor Franklin. E-mails to a Founding Father about Science, Medicine, and Technology*, Diane Publishing Company, 2008. You'll be doing your friends a favor and the Friends of Franklin as Dr. Green has generously donated to the Friends of Franklin the proceeds from this book.

To order contact Kathy DeLuca, 856-833-1771.

Franklin and Christ Church, Philadelphia

Although we tend to think of Benjamin Franklin as an agnostic, a scientist who epitomized the Age of Enlightenment, in reality he maintained close ties with Christ Church throughout his years in Philadelphia. Our earliest record recounts the baptism of Benjamin and Deborah's son Francis Foulger (sic) in 1733 at the age of 11 months by the Reverend Archibald Cummings. Sadly he died just a few years later at the age of four of smallpox. The burial register records the interment on October 22, of "Francis, son of Benjamin Franklin."

Seven years later, Sarah or Sally was born and baptized at Christ Church on October 27, 1743 by the Reverend Robert Jenney at the age of one month and 27 days. In 1767 the Reverend Richard Peters, D.D. presided over her marriage to Richard Bache at Christ Church.

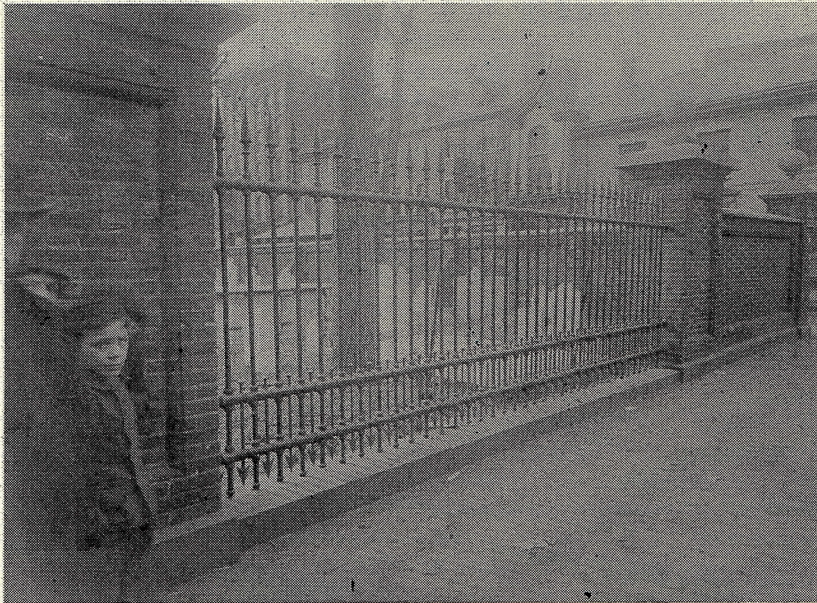
The Franklin family rented a pew at the Church throughout these years but prior to the pew rent records (begun in 1778) we have documentation of Franklin's support for the Church.

He was a subscriber to the 1739 fund for the completion of the Church, pledging £6. Franklin later served on the committee that raised money to build the steeple.

Philadelphia, 18th March, 1750-51

Whereas many well disposed inhabitants of this city have declared their desire that there might be a fit and commodious steeple built upon the foundation already laid some years ago, by the care and pious benevolence of the church at that time, and that a set of bells may be provided to be placed therein, which work will be an ornament, as well as a credit to the city,

Therefore, in order to defray the charge of building said steeple and purchasing bells, we, whose names are underwritten, do promise to pay unto the church wardens of Christ Church in Philadelphia, for the time being, or to such other persons as



Franklin's grave seen through fence, c. 1928. Courtesy of Christ Church, Philadelphia

the vestry of said church shall appoint to receive the same, such sums of money as shall be by us respectively subscribed. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our names the date above written.

On November 2, 1752 Franklin published in his Pennsylvania Gazette the idea of a

"Lottery for raising One Thousand and Twelve Pounds, Ten Shillings, to be applied to the STEEPLE of CHRIST CHURCH in Philadelphia, and the residue towards purchasing a Ring of Bells...."

The lottery proved successful and the steeple was completed in 1754.

Despite ongoing construction from the 1720s to the 1760s, Christ Church was continuing its outreach work. William Sturgeon was appointed in 1746 to serve as the "catechist for the Negroes" by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. While initially he limited instruction to catechism, by 1757 Sturgeon worked with the Bray Associates to establish a school for African Americans, many of them enslaved, teaching both boys and girls to read and the girls to knit and sew. We know from the *Franklin Papers* that Benjamin Franklin visited the school on at least one occasion as did Deborah who determined to send Othello, a young enslaved boy owned by the Franklins, for instruction in

1759. Franklin continued his interest in the school, writing to John Waring on June 27, 1763...

As soon as I return to Philadelphia, which I hope to do by the Beginning of September, I shall inspect the School very particularly, and afford every Assistance in my Power to Mr. Sturgeon, in promoting the laudable Views of the Associates, to whom please to present my best Respects...
(*Franklin Papers*, June 27, 1763)

He also shipped books for the Rev. Sturgeon in care of Deborah Franklin.

Later, Franklin placed an order for the burial of Charles Mason, the astronomer who surveyed the Line between Pennsylvania and Maryland with Jeremiah Dixon) in the Church Burial Ground in 1786.

While we have no way of knowing how often Franklin worshipped at Christ Church, the Church's burial ground at Fifth and Arch serves as his final resting place. He was interred on April 18, 1790. More than 20,000 people turned out to view the funeral procession, witnesses to what was a truly historic moment. Since that time, millions of others have visited his grave, both privately and as part of major celebrations as evidenced by photographs in the Christ Church Archives.

Franklin himself left the specifications for his grave stone in his will:

"I wish to be buried by the side of my wife, if it may be, and that a marble stone, to be made by Chambers, six feet long, four feet wide, plain, with only a small moulding round the upper edge," with a simple inscription consisting of names and dates.

Repairs have taken place over the years to protect the grave stone and its surroundings. What hasn't changed is the ongoing tradition of throwing pennies on his grave for good luck, pennies that are used today for the upkeep of the burial ground.

Worlds of Learning in the Age of Franklin: Part III

By John Pollack

Franklin may have neglected all of these educational initiatives in the *Proposals* in order to stress his own nondenominational approach. This nonsectarian vision is still celebrated at the University of Pennsylvania today (although the University claims 1740, when citizens formed a trust to build a charity school and preaching hall for the evangelist George Whitefield, as its founding date, and not 1749, the date of the *Proposals*). Yet even in this, Franklin was no pioneer. Other Pennsylvania educators had also emphasized practical training in schools over training for the ministry. Theophilus Grew, while employed by Franklin as the calculator of the tables for *Poor Richard's Almanac*, opened a school where he taught "Writing, Arithmetick, Merchants Accompts, Geometry, Algebra, Surveying, Gauging, Navigation, Astronomy, and all other Parts of the Mathematics." *Poor Richard* carried advertisements for Grew's school from 1735 through 1750.⁴¹ George Brownell, who had taught Franklin in Boston in 1715–16, appears to have opened a school in Philadelphia during the mid-1730s, teaching many of the same practical skills which Franklin espoused. Brownell advertised in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* that he would instruct students in "Reading, Writing, Cyphering, Dancing, Plain-work, Marking, with Variety of Needle-work" at his house in Second Street.⁴² We know little about these small-scale educational entrepreneurs and can often document their schools only through advertisements, but Franklin must have been aware of them, and their curricula may well have served as models for his own Academy plans.⁴³

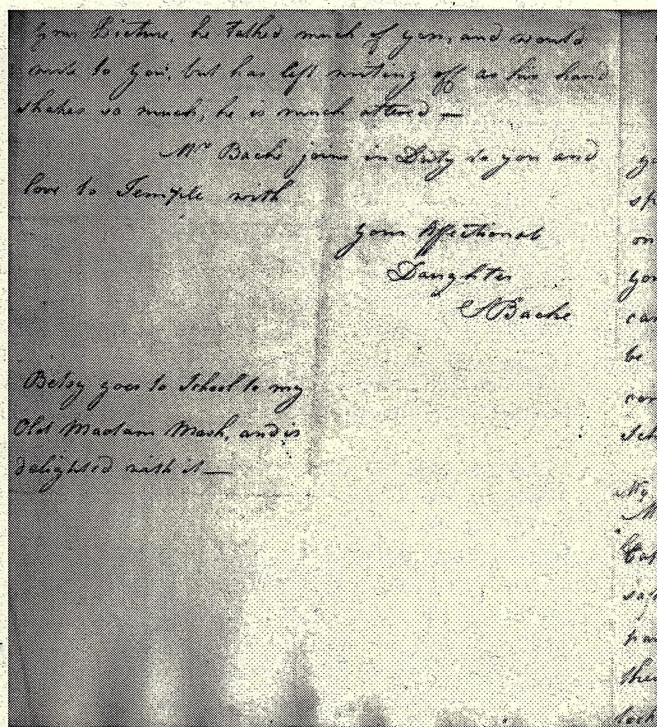
Brownell's advertisement suggests something else absent from Franklin's school plans: co-education. While Brownell and other enterprising schoolmasters were teaching needlework, writing, and arithmetic to both girls and boys in the same schoolroom, Franklin does not even mention any plans to teach girls. As Carla Mulford and Michael Zuckerman point out in this volume,

Franklin was not hostile to women's education; on the contrary, he seems to have believed that women could become just as intellectually accomplished as men. Susan Stabile has traced Franklin's important role in "elevating and expanding the involvement of women in . . . exchanges of knowledge and power" through his extensive transatlantic correspondence, and both Zuckerman and Mulford note Franklin's stance as a supporter of women's science.⁴⁴ Franklin and his fellow Trustees did found a girls' school as one branch of the Charity School, but Mulford suggests that proposing advanced schooling for women in 1749 might simply have been too radical a proposition for Philadelphia's elite to accept.

Yet while it is true that academies and schools for women opened in large numbers

only after the Revolution, Pennsylvania had been favorable to female education decades earlier. Carl Bridenbaugh asserts that even in the 1720s "Philadelphia had perhaps more and better private schools for girls than were to be found elsewhere in the colonies."⁴⁵ His evidence is local newspapers, which contain advertisements such as that for a school run by a Mrs. Rodes in 1723, along with the later efforts of Brownell and others. We do not know how large or how successful Mrs. Rodes's school was, but we do know a great deal about the Quakers' exemplary commitment to women's education. Quaker elementary schools were coeducational and frequently run by women, who took responsibility for all matters from collecting tuition to supplying books, slates, ink, candles, and firewood. Teachers like Rebecca Jones and Hannah Catherall, who together ran a school, taught dozens of children from varied economic backgrounds.⁴⁶

As a number of scholars have observed, we cannot look only at institutional settings like schoolrooms if we wish to understand the nature and content of women's education during the colonial era. Girls learned in households, and many participated in intensive and extensive networks that involved the creation and sharing of copybooks, letters, commonplace books, and samplers. The earliest surviving manuscript copybook that I have been able to locate in eastern Pennsylvania is that of Grace Hoopes, a Quaker, now in the possession of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania. A note with the manuscript claims that Hoopes was born in 1697 and died in 1721, shortly after bearing her first child; she may have begun this copybook in 1710 and was likely still using it in 1719. Hoopes's book shows her elegant hand and high level of numeracy at a time when, as Patricia Cline Cohen has argued, mathematics "remained an arcane and difficult subject."⁴⁷ She also shared her book, probably before her marriage, with an unidentified female friend, who



Last page of an October 19, 1781, letter from Sarah Bache to her father, Benjamin Franklin. The letter was full, as usual, of family news, and the postscript is about Franklin's oldest grand daughter, Elizabeth ("Betsy"), then age 4. It reads: "Betsy goes to School to my Old Madam Mash, and is delighted with it." At the same age as Betsy, Sally had also been sent to school. Franklin, writing to his mother in 1747, reported "Your granddaughter is the greatest lover of her book and school, of any child I ever knew..." Photo facsimile of Sally Bache's letter courtesy of Yale University Library.

composed a poem in which she memorializes Grace's name. During the same years as Grace Hoopes was making her copybook, Francis Daniel Pastorius prepared a commemorative manuscript volume for Hannah Hill, Mary Norris, and Rachel Preston, daughters of Thomas Lloyd, the lawyer and ally of William Penn who had immigrated to Pennsylvania with Pastorius in 1683. Pastorius's manuscript, which he called the "Ship-Mate-ship," models, on paper, an intellectual and spiritual community of men and women akin to that of the earliest Pennsylvania settlers. The manuscript is a commonplace book, a book of memory, and a manual of moral instruction, covering virtues such as "True Love," "Peace," "Patience," and "Holiness." Hannah Hill's daughter, also named Hannah Hill, died in 1714 at age 11. A memorial tribute to her prepared by her mother reveals that she had studied at school and "greatly delighted to read." Thomas Chalkey testifies that she was "very Dexterous" "either at her Book or her Needle" and that she could "Write well, and would Indite Letters, that were full of Intelligence"⁴⁸

Other examples from later in the century testify to the active commitment of many women to self-education, to the teaching of their daughters and sons, and to public education, often despite social obstacles. Karin Wulf has documented the importance of manuscript production and exchange among women and argues that Philadelphia's literary culture owes a particular debt to unmarried women, who were "teachers, authors, circulators, copyists, and readers of manuscript literature" and whose impact, particularly through the Quaker school system, reached across classes and religions.⁴⁹ Public networks of intellectual exchange in which women played central roles also developed by mid-century, particularly among Philadelphia elites. Polly Hopkinson, sister of Francis Hopkinson, who went on to become a prominent author, composer, and jurist, participated in performances at the College of Philadelphia with her brother, and she and Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson were at the center of Provost Smith's intellectual circle, whose profound impact upon Pennsylvania's literary and artistic culture is traced by George Boudreau in this volume. Surviving artifacts also testify to continuity and change in women's educational practices. Samplers, long an important part of women's learning, underwent something of a renaissance, and a number of important regional styles developed, notably in Chester County. At the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, girls at the Westtown School practiced needlework in a plain, yet remarkably complex, style, even creating spectacular "globe samplers" to assist in their study of geography.⁵⁰

To be continued.

41. Grew later became Professor of Mathematics at the Academy and published an early textbook on navigation for "the young Gentlemen at the Academy in Philadelphia": Grew, *The Description and Use of the Globes, Celestial and Terrestrial . . .* (1753).

42. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 30, 1735. Lemay, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin*, 1: 50–51.

43. For an analysis of advertisements in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, see Murphy, "Schools and Schooling," pp. 136–47, 155–96. Keith Pacholl examines how advertisements and periodical articles document changing attitudes toward education in colonial Philadelphia in "Let Both Sexes Be Carefully Instructed": Educating Youth in Colonial Philadelphia," in *Children in Colonial America*, ed. James Marten (New York, 2007), pp. 191–203.

44. Susan Stabile, "Salons and Power in the Era of Revolution: From Literary Coteries to Epistolary Enlightenment," in *Benjamin Franklin and Women*, ed. Larry E. Tise (University Park, Pa., 2000), p. 130.

45. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, p. 447.

46. On Rebecca Jones as a seamstress, see Betty Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery: American Samplers & Pictorial Needlework, 1650–1850* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 2:335–7. On Jones and Catherall as teachers, see Karin A. Wulf, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia* (Ithaca, 2000), pp. 47–9.

47. Patricia Cline Cohen, *A Calculating People: The Spread of Numeracy in Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 82.

48. Hannah Hill, *A Legacy for Children, Being Some of the Last Expressions, and Dying Sayings of Hannah Hill, Junr. . . .* (1717), pp. 10, 17, 32.

49. Wulf, *Not All Wives*, pp. 45–50.

50. On samplers and other needlework in Chester County and at Westtown School, see Ring, *Girlhood Embroidery*, 2:388–401.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE MARKER DEDICATED TO UNION FIRE COMPANY



Courtesy of the Phila. Fire Dept.

On Saturday, October 1, 2011, a new Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission state marker was dedicated to the Union Fire Company founded by Benjamin Franklin and his fellow Philadelphians in 1736. The marker was placed on the north side of Market Street at the intersection of Grindstone Alley (between 2nd & 3rd), the alley in which the Union members stored their equipment – ladders and pikes and possibly the engine – so that it would be readily available when fire broke

out. The marker reads: "Union Fire Company 1736-1843. This first truly volunteer fire company served as a model for others across the nation. Members, including Ben Franklin, purchased tools stored here in Grindstone Alley, helped provide a fire bell, buckets and engine for the city and developed the idea of fire insurance." Volunteer firefighter Ed Welch spearheaded this project with the help of others across the city including Fireman's Hall Museum and Friend Ralph Archbold, shown in the photograph below with Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers, Congressman Roger Griswold portrayed by Steve Perlman and Ed Welch.

This marker is only the latest of a string of plaques that have dedicated the alley, the first installed in 1936 by the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies in the alley itself. In 1956, Kingsland Coffyn, the historian for Christ Church, who happened to be blind, and his secretary were walking down the alley when they noticed the plaque had been stolen. Once more the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies installed a plaque dedicating it in fire prevention week during Franklin's 250th anniversary year. In 1959 the building housing the plaque was torn down, but the plaque was rescued, reinstalled and rededicated. Since then it seems the original brass or bronze plaque was once more replaced with an acrylic plaque which has weathered badly. To mark the alley permanently the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies sponsored the manufacturing of the new state marker.

In His Own Words

"Cannot our Countrymen be roused?"

Consternation over the Possible Default of the United States, 1784



This summer you have not been able to listen to the radio, watch the news, or scan the headlines without encountering the debate over the national debt. Government default is on everyone's lips, but few remember that the nation has come close to it before. The evidence is in the National Archives. In fact, Franklin was deeply involved during the American Revolution with both borrowing funds to support the new nation and making arrangements for those debts to be repaid. In the summer of 1782 he wrote from Paris to Robert R. Livingston, the secretary for foreign affairs: "The Order of Congress for liquidating the Accounts between this Court and the United States, was executed before it arrived. All the Accounts against us for money lent, and Stores, Arms, Ammunition, Clothing &c^a furnished by [the French] Government were brought in and examined, and a Balance received which made the Debt amount to the even Sum of Eighteen Millions [livres tournois], exclusive of the Holland Loan for which the [French] King is Guarantee. I send a Copy of the Instrument to Mr. [Robert] Morris [the superintendent of finance]. In reading it you will discover several fresh marks of the King's Goodness towards us, amounting to the Value of near two millions. These added to the Free Gifts before made to us at different times, form an object of at least twelve Millions for which no Return but that of Gratitude & Friendship are expected. These I hope may be everlasting. The constant good Understanding between

France and the Swiss Cantons, and the steady Benevolence of this Crown towards them, afford a well-grounded Hope that our Alliance may be as durable and as happy for both Nations; there being strong Reasons for our Union, & no crossing Interests between us."

But a little over two years later, Franklin and his fellow American commissioners in Europe (John Adams and Thomas Jefferson), hard at work at cementing alliances with other nations on the Continent after the peace treaty that ended the war, were appalled at the idea that the United States might default on its obligations to its former ally. On November 11, 1784, the commissioners wrote to the president of Congress in the most vivid language: "A Letter received from the Count de Vergennes [the French foreign minister] & another from Monsr. Grand [the United States' banker in France] to Doctor Franklin of which No. 21 & 22 are Copies give us reason to apprehend an uneasiness in this Court lest we should fail not only in the punctual payment of the interest on their particular Loans, but should permit the payment on the Dutch Loan which this Court guaranteed, to fall in the first instance upon them. This circumstance under the present probability of a War in Europe might be really inconvenient to them & give unfavourable Ideas of the sense we entertain of their past favours: Congress will know whether measures have been taken

to make timely payments here, and they can best judge of what exertions the States are capable for reducing their foreign debt even faster than their stipulations require. A hearty disposition in the People goes far towards making them equal to whatever it is their duty & interest to do; and we cannot help supposing that our Countrymen would boldly look that part of their foreign debt in the face, which they have a right to discharge, if they would view it and view themselves they would find they could master it, perhaps in a single effort. Of this we can assure them that nothing would produce such a resolution in the opinion entertained in Europe of their powers of their justice and of the tone of their government. If a reputation for equity and gratitude, if a demonstration of our resources and of resolution, if the subjection of the riches of Europe to our wishes on any future emergency may be bought at half a Guinea a head cannot our Countrymen be roused to make the purchase? Add to this that it would command for us a respect which might save us in the end millions of money and torrents of blood."

Franklin's Spirit Invoked

By Eleanor Gesensway

In 1865, after achieving financial success as an inventor and fabricator of various fixed iron woodworking machines, 49-year-old Hezekiah B. Smith established a model industrial and agricultural village.

Located on the Rancocas Creek two miles upstream from the county capital of Mt. Holly, NJ, he named his village Smithville. Always concerned for the welfare of his workers and their families, he built and supported decent and attractive worker housing, retail shops with farm fresh food, a weekly newspaper, a schoolhouse, an opera house with a resident brass band, and even a wildlife menagerie, in

addition to the H.B. Smith Machine Company's extensive factory complex.

In the 1870s, Smith became increasingly prominent in the larger community. Both Republican and Democratic county newspapers were fascinated by him. When elected to the 46th Congress as a Democrat in 1877, his goal was to represent the interests and needs of the country's inventors. To that end, on May 27, 1880 he spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives of the necessity to publish the records of the U.S. Patent Office.

Passionately, he enumerated recent labor-

saving inventions responsible for the country's greatly increased industrial and agricultural productivity and described inventors' difficulties in securing patents. He followed by invoking the spirit of Benjamin Franklin:

"Let us suppose that Franklin could return to earth today. He would say: 'This is not the world I left, but the one I saw in my brightest, happiest dreams. This is the work of the godlike American inventors, who have made my dreams living realities'."

U.S. Congress, House, Congressional Record, 46th Cong., 27 May 1880, pp.3890-3893 as quoted in Smithville: the Result of Enterprise, William C. Bolger, Burlington County Cultural and Heritage Commission, 1980, p.149.

More 17's in Ben Franklin's Life

By Aziz S. Inan, Ph.D., Professor, Electrical Engineering, University of Portland, Portland, Oregon

The number 17 pops up repeatedly in Benjamin Franklin's biography. For example, he was born on Sunday, January 17, 1706 (1-17-1706, or simply, 1171706) and died on Saturday, April 17, 1790 (4171790). Since Franklin lived during the 18th century, all years that fall in his lifespan start with the number 17 as 17AB. Franklin's parents had 17 children. Also, Franklin moved from Boston to Philadelphia at age 17. These are the well-known 17's that appear in his life history. Are there any other number 17's "hiding" in Franklin's life? You bet there are. Here are more examples.

First of all, since Franklin was born on Sunday which is considered to be day 1 of each week and died on Saturday which is day 7, Sunday-Saturday numbers put side-by-side yield number 17.

Second, Franklin was the 15th of his parents' 17 children and interestingly enough, the reverse of 15, which is 51, equals three times 17.

Third, the difference between the reverses of Franklin's birth and death years is $6071 - 0971 = 5100$ which is 300 times 17, where astonishingly 300 is the difference of 417 (April 17) and 117 (January 17).

Fourth, the difference of the reverses of numbers 300 and 17 yields $71 - 3 = 68$ which is four times 17.

Fifth, the squares of the digits of number 117 (January 17) add up to 51 (which is 3 times 17).

Sixth, the reverse of number 117 is 711 which equal $3 \times 3 \times 79$ where the sum of these three numbers yield $85 = 5 \times 17$. Note that Franklin died during the 85th year of his life.

Seventh, 417 (April 17) is 3 times 139 where the difference of these two numbers is $136 = 8 \times 17$.

Eighth, the reverse of 417 is $714 = 42 \times 17$.

Ninth, the digits of Franklin's death year 1790 add up to 17. (Franklin had nine other years in his life with digits adding up to 17.) Also, the sum of the squares of the digits of 4171790 is 197, where again, $1 + 9 + 7 = 17$.

Franklin had five years divisible by 17 in his lifetime: 1717, 1734, 1751, 1768, and 1785. Only year 1775 in his life was divisible by 71 which is the reverse of 17.

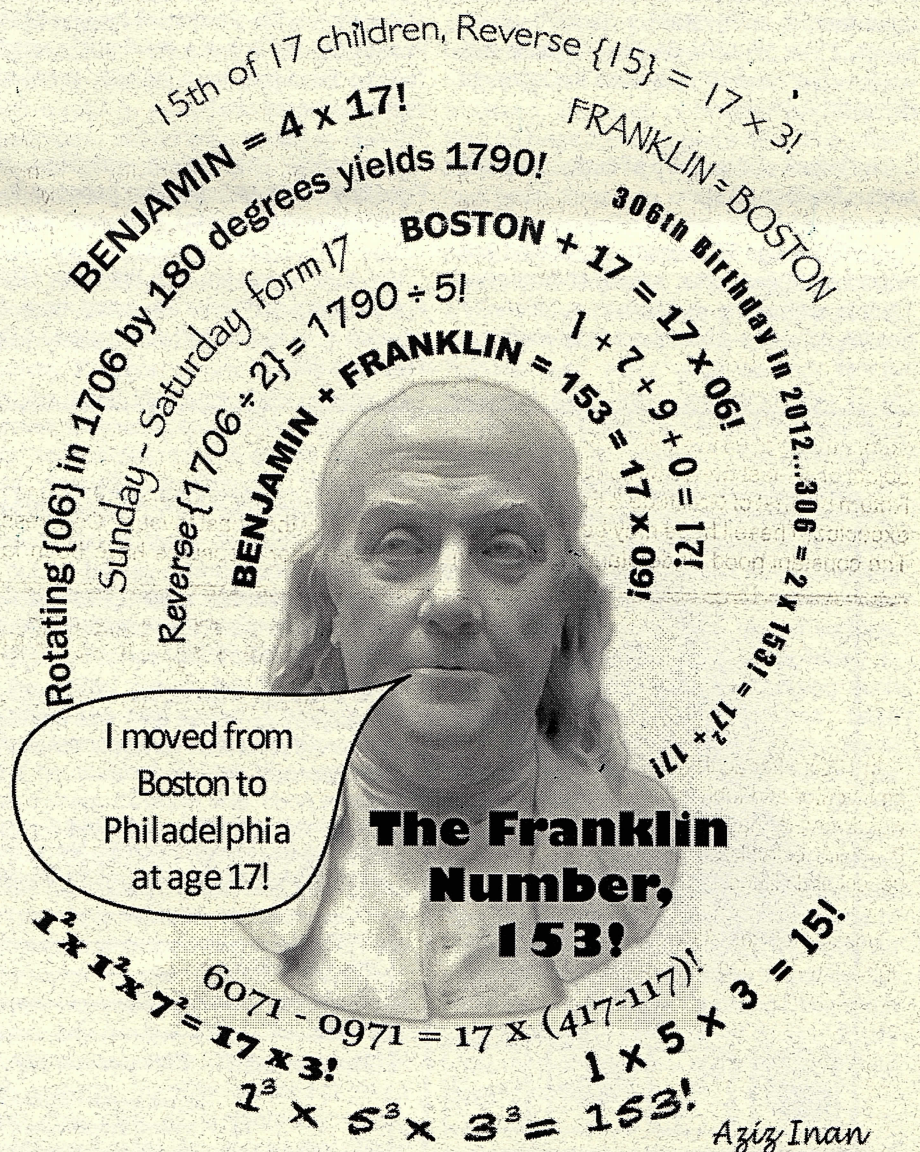
Assigning $A=1, B=2, \dots$, and $Z=26$ to the letters of the English alphabet, the letters of "Benjamin" and "Franklin" each add up to 68 (which is 4×17) and 85 (5×17) and surprisingly enough, their difference yield is 17! The letters of Franklin's full name "Benjamin Franklin" sum up to 153 (9×17) where the product of the digits of 153 is 15 (15th child!).

The "Franklin number" 153 can be obtained from Franklin's death year 1790

by splitting 1790 in the middle into 17 and 90 and then multiplying reverse of 90 (which is 09) with 17! As an aside, there are two fascinating connections between Franklin's birth and death years. First is a geometric one: by rotating the rightmost two digits of 1706 as a whole by 180 degrees around its central axis that is perpendicular to the plane of the paper, year 1706 can be transformed into 1790! Second: five times the reverse of half of 1706 (which is 853) amazingly yields 1790!

Also, if one splits the Franklin number 153 into numbers 1 and 53, $1 + 53 = 54$ where 54 equals the difference between 17

Continued on p. 8



and its reverse, 71. In addition, if one splits 153 as 15 and 3, the reverse of 15 divided with 3 also yields 17. Also, as an aside, 153 is a very special number because the sum of third powers of its digits give back 153!

The product of the nonzero digits of Franklin's death date 4171790 equals 1764 = 42×42 where $42 + 42 = 84$, his death age. Note that 1764, when he turned 58, was the only perfect square year that occurred in Franklin's lifetime, and 58 reverse is 85 which contains five 17's.

Franklin also had a perfect cube year in his life, 1728, which equals $12 \times 12 \times 12$. If 1728 is split into 17 and 28, the sum of the reverses of these two numbers yields 153, the Franklin number! Also, 17 and 28 add up to 45, the reverse of which is $54 = 71 - 17$.

If Franklin's death age 84 is split as 4 and 8, 4^8 plus 8^4 yields 17×8^4 . Also, 84 equal 4×21 where 4 and 21 differ by 17. Franklin's ages from 1 to 84 add up to 3570 which equals 210×17 . Also, 84 plus 17 yields 101 which correspond to the sum of the letters of city of "Philadelphia"!

The letters of Franklin's birth city, "Boston" add up to 85 (5×17)!

In 1723 at age 17, Franklin left Boston and moved to Philadelphia; note that if number 1723 is split in the middle into numbers 17 and 23, $17 \times 17 + 23 \times 23 = 818$ where $8 + 1 + 8 = 17$.

The letters of "Pennsylvania Gazette" owned and published by Franklin add up to 269 where $2 + 6 + 9 = 17$!

Franklin had only one palindrome year in his life which was year 1771 which consists of numbers 17 and its reverse 71 put together side by side.

Franklin's full birthday in year 1776 (when the Declaration of Independence was signed by the Founding Fathers) is also divisible by 17: $1171776 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 17 \times 359$; in addition, the sum of these numbers equals $391 = 17 \times 23$. Notice that numbers 17 and 23 put side-by-side represents the year when Franklin turned 17. Franklin had four more birthdays in his life divisible by 17 which occurred in 1708, 1725, 1742 and 1759.

Note that this year (2011) April 17 was the 221st anniversary of Franklin's death where $221 = 13 \times 17$ and next year January 17 will be Franklin's 306th birthday where $306 = 17 \times 18$! Interestingly enough, 221 equals the sum of the numbers corresponding to the letters of the phrase "Declaration of Independence". In addition, 306 is twice the Franklin number 153 so Franklin's next birthday number is indeed a special one!

Amazingly, 2011 which coincides with Franklin's 305th birthday also happens to be the 305th prime number!

I'm sure these are not the only 17's in Franklin's life and there are many more. And now it is your turn to find other hidden 17's in Franklin's life!

Perhaps news of Franklin's letter made its way back to the Cologan family, for in the early 1780s a friendship developed between a branch of the family that was spending time in France and the American minister to the French court. On June 12, 1781, a Mr. and Mrs. Cologan accepted an invitation to dine with Franklin. The couple was likely John and Anne-Rose Cologan, the brother and sister-in-law of Tomás Cologan. John Cologan had been educated in France and met his bride there before moving to London, where a branch of the family wine exporting business was established. The couple seems to have spent a good deal of time in Paris, where they met Franklin, and the surviving correspondence suggests a close relationship. Mrs. Cologan asked in one note that Franklin write a letter of recommendation for a merchant who was about to leave London with a cargo that he planned to trade for wines at Tenerife. The wines were destined for Franklin's home city of Philadelphia and other American ports. This may have been part of her husband's scheme to export canary wine to the United States. On May 11, 1783, Mrs. Cologan wrote to Franklin that she was terribly sorry not to have been able to breakfast with him. She loves him with all her heart, and begs him to accept some bottles of Canary wine from the family vineyard. Some of the bottles are made from vidonia grapes and the rest from malvasia. She hopes that Franklin will find them to his taste.



"No better relation than a faithful friend."

—Benjamin Franklin

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Benjamin Franklin and His Canary Island History

By Carlos Cologan Soriano

The Canary Islands, located off the western coast of Morocco, were for centuries the usual port-of-call for European voyages to other continents. Many famous travelers visited the islands to study their natural history and discovered that the islands were strategically important for furnishing supplies on the long voyages to Africa, America, or the South Seas.

Some renowned scientists and seamen set foot on the "Fortunate Islands" and spread the word to the rest of the world about what they found. Benjamin Franklin became involved in issues regarding the Canaries during the American Revolution, while he was American ambassador at the French court. His first introduction to the hurdles he was to face in the job related to the Canaries was a particularly complex maritime dispute.

In July, 1778, Graciano Sieulanne, a Frenchman established in Tenerife, was preparing for the arrival of a ship on its way to Martinique. The ship turned out to be the *Revenge*, commanded by an American, Captain Gustavus Conyngham. The shipping agent in Santa Cruz de Tenerife was Enrique Casalón, then French consul in the archipelago. The *Revenge* was a privateer, purchased in Dunkirk in 1777 by William Hodge, an agent of the American commissioners in France, Franklin and Silas Deane. The ship carried documents from Congress that permitted the capture of enemy ships and their cargoes. Without these documents the actions of privateers would have been considered piracy.

On April 19, 1778, on his approach to the island of La Palma, Conyngham decided to capture the merchantman, *Countess of Mouton*, known in the islands as *El Sueco*. She had sailed out of London under the Swedish flag. Conyngham boarded her and removed some of her cargo and he was denounced by an English sailor. Unaware that the authorities had been alerted, Conyngham moored next to the other ship. Tomás Cologan Valois, a prominent local merchant of Irish origin and principal in the wine exporting firm of Cologan y Hixos (with branches in England as well as the Canaries), who was a leader in cementing the trade between the Canaries, European, and American ports, was the charterer of the Swedish ship and owner of the cargo.

On June 9, he wrote to the commander-in-chief of the Islands, Eugenio Fernández de Alvarado, Marquis of Tavalosos, about the removal of the cargo. The commander responded that he had reprimanded Conyngham and given orders prohibiting the departure of the American corsair. He had been informed of an English warship off the coast, and assured Cologan that it was unlikely that the *Revenge* would attempt to slip away with its prize under the circumstances. Cologan again pressed the official to arrest the captured ship, listing all the crimes committed by the privateer. Swearing Cologan to secrecy, Alvarado sent an order to Cologan to arrest the ship and put him in charge of delivering that order to the port commander. Alvarado subsequently received a report that the American privateer had hoisted the French flag in an attempt to avoid arrest. Conyngham proposed to the French consul to escort the captured ship to Martinique, but he was forced to flee at the arrival of an armed ship sent by the governor of La Palma, and the captured ship was arrested. Sieulanne protested, claiming that the captured ship was French property (he said he was part owner) and he demanded damages from Cologan due to a delayed departure, who had engineered the arrest. Cologan swore that he had no part in the delay; the intent of the governor's order was to arrest Captain Conyngham for piracy and confiscate the goods he had seized. According to Cologan, the cargo mostly belonged to the inhabitants of the Canaries, all of them Spanish subjects. This put an entirely different complexion on the matter, since technically Spain was an ally of France, and both nations were at war with Britain. France had a treaty of alliance with the United States, but Spain had not recognized the new nation. Conyngham's claim to the cargo would only have been good if he could prove that the cargo was British owned. Cologan was soon involved in another conflict with Conyngham. By May 31, 1778, his ship had taken a Swedish brig, the *Henrica Sophia*, which had also sailed from London to Tenerife. Its hold was full of British goods, and according to a declaration of the crew of the American privateer, although Conyngham was instructed "not to Insult any Neutral Flag," the ship was captured because the cargo was plainly British property. Franklin had tried to guard against this kind of problem by telling Conyngham that he should take the bills of

lading from captured ships and send them to the American commissioners in France, where they could be checked against merchants' accounts, thus preventing any "impositions" against neutral nations.

Sieulanne, who had been arrested aboard the *Countess of Mouton*, informed Franklin of the outrage committed in the Canaries, claiming that his own arrest was intended as a reprisal against Conyngham, and demanding damages from the Spanish court because of the delay in sailing the captured vessel to Martinique. A few months later, the Swedish ambassador at the French court complained to the French foreign minister about the allegedly piratical activities of Conyngham. Spain also complained—this time the protest was made through Ferdinand Grand, the banker to the United States in France. According to Grand, the cargo of the *Henrica Sophia* also belonged to Cologan's firm. The prize had been sent to America, and Spain had been forced to close its ports to the American corsair because of Conyngham's conduct. Franklin wrote an informal reply to his friend Grand, who suggested that a more formal response should be made, which he would pass along to the Spanish. Franklin then wrote what was for him a relatively long letter, asserting "We have no Desire to justify him in any Irregularities he may have committed." The Americans, he said, wanted recommendations on "more effectual Provision for suppressing, punishing and preventing such Practices in future." Congress wished to avoid giving offense to neutral powers, and had every intention of observing the law of nations. Courts of admiralty were established in every state in the union for judging such matters. Privateer captains had been informed of Congress' wishes and knew "that if they transgress they shall not be allowed to claim the Protection of the States, but shall suffer such Punishment as by the Usage and Custom of Nations may be inflicted upon them." Thus, he said "the States give no Countenance to Acts of Piracy". If Conyngham is guilty, he would be punished, not just in the name of justice, but because Congress had "a strong Disposition to cultivate the Friendship of Spain." Every properly authenticated complaint would be investigated.

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Calendar of Events

July 29-Dec. 31, 2011 "We the People," the first of three exhibits from "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness: American Art from the Yale University Art Gallery, which highlights paintings, decorative arts, coins and medals, historic prints and photographs that create a picture of the new nation as it fought to define itself. It includes the ionic John Trumbull painting depicting the signing of the Declaration of Independence in which an image of Franklin is included. Yale University Art Gallery, 1111 Chapel St., New Haven, Conn.

January 20, 2012 Celebration of Benjamin Franklin, Founder! Philadelphia, PA. Morning seminar, procession to Franklin's grave and luncheon. See www.ushistory.org/Celebration for more information.

"Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World" Traveling exhibit:

September 2, 2011- January 8, 2012, Gerald Ford Museum, Grand Rapids, MI

February 10 – May 6, 2012, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Reading Franklin



Shai Afsai, "The Sage, the Prince & the Rabbi," *Philaethes* (summer, 2011), 101-28. Afsai writes on the same topic as appeared in the winter 2010/2011 issue of the *Gazette*, the influence of Franklin's *Autobiography* on the writings of Rabbi Menahem Mendel Lefin.

Kenneth Lawing Penegar, *The Political Trial of Benjamin Franklin* (Algora Publishing, spring 2011). The publisher's web site compares Franklin's involvement in revealing the contents of Massachusetts Royal governor Thomas Hutchinson's letters on America and his own subsequent excoriation by Alexander Wedderburn to "a Wikileaks for 1772". Penegar, an emeritus professor of law, spent a year in Britain doing research in the archives. Dr. John R. Vile says that "drawing from his own legal background, Penegar deftly blends his discussion of personalities and events into a narrative that will entertain general readers while providing nuances that scholars...will appreciate."

David Waldstreicher, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Benjamin Franklin* (August, 2011). This new 560-page volume of essays provides a comprehensive survey of the great man's life, work, and legacy from accomplished scholars and emerging experts. It is divided into sections en-

titled Biography, Benjamin Franklin and the Eighteenth Century, Franklin, Writer and Thinker, and Franklin, Categories of Inquiry. The essays are too numerous to list here, but examples include Sheila Skemp on "The Making of a Patriot," Benjamin Carp's "Benjamin Franklin and the American Revolution," William Pencak on "Poor Richard's Almanac," and Leonard Sadosky's take on "Benjamin Franklin and International Relations".

Forthcoming

Tom Fitzgerald, *Poor Richard's Lament* (Hobblebush Books, Jan. 17, 2012). From the publisher's web site: "Benjamin Franklin has been confined to a private apartment in the Plantation of the Unrepentant for the past two hundred-odd years and has recently received notice that his petition for final processing has at last been approved. ... Ben appears before a panel of examiners in the Celestial Court of Petitions to make his case before three former arch-adversaries: John Adams, Alexander Wedderburn, and Reverend William Smith. By the end of Ben's examination, ... [he] fully expects the abyss. Instead, he's invited to bear witness to what has become of America in ... two-plus centuries. His odyssey ... begins ... at Boston... and ends ... at his gravesite in Philadelphia."

Franklin Tidbits

Franklin's Electrostatic Bells: One of the best known contemporary portraits of Franklin shows bells hanging behind the figure. We know that he mounted these in his house and that they were constructed so as to ring when a thunderstorm was near by. Now you can make your own electrostatic bells. Click on <http://hackaday.com/2011/06/14/turning-beer-cans-into-bells-with-35kv/>

Gift of Interest: The American Philosophical Society has acquired a tooth from Jean Starr and Allen Pergrin said to have been one of Franklin's. The tooth is mounted in gold, and was mentioned in the 1810 will of Richard Bache, Franklin's son-in-law. It was bequeathed to Franklin's grandson William Bache, and the tooth remained in

the hands of Franklin's descendants until the recent donation.

Our Benjamin Franklin: For a view of Franklin from the other side of the Atlantic click on the July 14 entry of the London Historians' Blog: <http://londonhistorians.wordpress.com>

Post Office Associated with Franklin Is Threatened By Closing: On July 26 Joann Loviglio filed an Associated Press story revealing that the Post Office established in 1975 in the storefront that was part of Franklin's Philadelphia home (now part of Independence National Park) is among the 3,653 post offices under consideration for closing.

Eighteenth-Century English Dinner Party: During his years in England, Franklin may have experienced a party like the one that is the focus of a new exhibit at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. "English Taste: the Art of Dining in the Eighteenth Century" is at Rienzi, 1406 Kirby Dr., Houston, Texas, from Sept. 17, 2011, to Jan. 29, 2012. The curators have attempted to create "a dining room extravaganza typical of a 1760s English country house." Check out the museum's web site for a slide show: <http://www.mfah.org/exhibitions/english-taste-dining-eighteenth-century/>

Franklin and Beverages: Philadelphia-based Art in the Age has added a new or-

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ganic drink to its offerings: Rhuby. Rhuby was inspired by the rhubarb that Franklin brought from Europe. The liquor is said to be "subtly spicy, sweet, and floral."

One of Franklin's favorite beverages was Madeira wine. This fortified wine was imported to North America, but has since been overtaken by other trends in alcoholic beverages. Several Philadelphia restaurants are bucking the trend by offering the Benjamin Franklin Special Reserve Madeira, hoping to make the wine one "one of the hottest new trends." Lending credence to the popularity of the beverage is Franklin's declaration that he would prefer being immersed with his friends in a cask of Madeira to an "ordinary death". Leading the Madeira revival is the Rare Wine Co. A one-time special bottling was blended by Ricardo Freitas of Vinhos Barbeito. It is meant to evoke the "Bual" Madeira that was preferred in Philadelphia during the Colonial era. The Franklin Special Reserve will raise money for Christ Church Preservation Trust, the parish where he was a member. He is buried in the Christ Church cemetery (see photo of his grave in the Franklin and Christ Church article). The wine is made primarily of Bual, blended with Sercial, Verdelho and Malvasia grapes.

Franklin Math Puzzlers

By Aziz S. Inan, Ph.D., Electrical Engineering, University of Portland

Editor's Note: Below is the solution to the last math puzzle which appeared in the Spring Gazette and #21 a new one for you to try to solve.

Problem # 20. A person's age in 2011.

The product of numbers I and J equals a person's birth year B. The product of the leftmost and rightmost halves of B equal the sum of the reverses of numbers I and J. Determine this person's new age A in 2011 if A is ten times the difference of I and J.

The correct solution must be $I = 29$ and $J = 59$ since $17 \times 11 = (92 + 96) = 187$. Therefore, the person's birth year is 1711 and his new age in 2011 is 300. This puzzle problem is dedicated to Benjamin Franklin's friend Ebenezer Kinnersley (November 30, 1711 - July 4, 1778) on the 300th anniversary of his birthday. Kinnersley is best known today as Franklin's collaborator in his electricity experiments.)

11	101	1111
29	59	1711
39	49	1911
81	31	2511
137	23	3151
263	17	4471
627	13	8151
1901	11	20911
I	J	$B = I \times J$

(Source: Inan. Answer: 300.)
 Solution: Since $B = I \times J$ and $2011 - B = 10 \times (I - J)$, combining these two equations yields $2011 - I \times J = 10 \times (I - J)$ or $I = (2011 - 10 \times J) / (J - 10)$. The table below provides the combinations of I and J values that satisfy this equation.

Problem # 21. Secret connection between Benjamin Franklin's birthday and 1776.

The year Declaration of Independence was signed (1776) is secretly coded in Ben Franklin's birthday (1-17-1706 or simply, 1171706). Can you figure out how?

Special Thanks to Our Life Members!

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