



PRESS RELEASE

3 June 2009 - Benjamin Franklin House World of Possibilities Newseum Gala

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'The people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing and publishing their sentiments, therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained.' Benjamin Franklin

On 3 June 2009, Benjamin Franklin House in London and Benjamin Franklin House Foundation in New York will officially launch the World of Possibilities endowment campaign with a gala dinner at the Newseum in Washington D.C. There can be no more fitting location than this landmark new space which, like Franklin, stands for free speech and a vibrant press. The Newseum Gala is important to the future of Benjamin Franklin House in London, the world's only remaining Franklin home, aiding the long-term operational needs and exciting educational plans of this dynamic museum.

The Newseum Gala is hosted by World of Possibilities Campaign Co-chair Sir Nigel Sheinwald, British Ambassador to the United States, and Newseum founding partner Mr Robert H. Smith. Guest speaker is renowned Emmy Award winning journalist Sir David Frost, OBE, whose famous interviews with Richard Nixon in 1977 were recently featured in the Academy Award winning film, Frost/Nixon. Frost is the only person to have interviewed all seven US presidents in office between 1969 and 2008 and all seven British prime ministers serving between 1964 and 2009. He has won two Emmy Awards for The David Frost Show, two Golden Globes for Frost Over England and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1993.

Benjamin Franklin House at 36 Craven Street, London, is the only surviving home of Benjamin Franklin, one of America's, and the world's, most iconic and respected historical figures. For nearly sixteen years between 1757 and 1775, Benjamin Franklin – diplomat, writer, scientist, US Founding Father and more – lived behind its doors. By the end of the twentieth century, the 1730s Georgian building was threatened by dilapidation until rescued by a dedicated group of individuals who restored this irreplaceable Anglo-American heritage site. On January 17, 2006 – Franklin's 300th birthday – the House opened to the public for the first time as a dynamic museum and educational facility which, in celebrating Franklin's London years, brings to life history, scientific innovation, politics and diplomacy.

The \$8 million World of Possibilities endowment campaign is co-chaired by the US Ambassador to Britain (formerly, Robert Tuttle) and the British Ambassador to the US, Sir Nigel Sheinwald, with the support of an Advisory Group of Congressional and Parliamentary members and an Educational Panel of scholars. The endowment will allow the continued development of the House and its many offerings.

ENDS

Notes to editors

- The World of Possibilities Gala takes place on Wednesday 3 June 2009 at the Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC 20001, with a cocktail reception beginning at 7pm and dinner from 8 - 10pm. The dress code is black tie, and valet parking will be available.. Ticket prices start at \$500, and can be purchased from the Benjamin Franklin House Foundation at www.BFHFoundation.org or 212-372-0989.
- Benjamin Franklin House is located at 36 Craven Street, London, WC2N 5NF, England. The House is open to the public daily, except Tuesdays, when it is open free of charge to education groups. Since opening for Franklin's 300th birthday in 2006, the House has welcomed more than 25,000 visitors from both sides of the Atlantic. More information, and an image archive, can be found at www.BenjaminFranklinHouse.org