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Subject: Benjamin Franklin House - Countdown to Opening - 3 Months to Go!
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Left: Scholarship Centre - before conservation, April 2005
Right: Scholarship Centre - nearly finished, October 2005

Dear Friends,

In a 1788 letter, Benjamin Franklin said to an old friend, "...The growing felicity of mankind, from the improvements in... the conveniences of common living, by the invention and acquisition of new and useful utensils and instruments...I have sometimes almost wished it had been my destiny to be born two or three centuries hence. For invention and improvement are prolific, and beget more of their kind. The present progress is rapid. Many of great importance, now unthought of, will...be produced; and then I might not only enjoy their advantages, but have my curiosity gratified in knowing what they are to be."

Of historical figures, Benjamin Franklin is among the most noted for design and innovation. He was at turns inventor and perfecter of others' ideas. He was motivated by curiosity and a desire to explore how things might be improved for him and others. Not unlike the speakers at the 2005 Annual Symposium held on 27 October, Benjamin Franklin: Design and Innovation, who push the boundaries of what's possible in history and heritage; science and invention; and architectural, interiors and product design. Read on for a re-cap of their thought-provoking comments at this year's Symposium sponsored by the International Herald Tribune and Atlantic Worldwide Movers.

Also in this heady month we have moved to within three weeks of finishing conservation: walls, doors, panelling, ceilings, floors, fireplaces have all be reinstated and brought back to their 18th century condition. We now move forward with...final design and build of the hands-on Franklin science Student Science Centre; recording of the script and production of the visual track for the 'museum as theatre' Historical Experience; networking for the Scholarship Centre; production of the video for the introductory Seminar Room; and installation of the required technology that will be harmonised within our 1730s Grade I building. ([Click here to see a movie clip of the offerings at Benjamin Franklin House](#). Please allow a few minutes for this excellent piece, put together by team member Michael De Guzman, to load.)

***US Challenge Met**

We were within \$22,000 of reaching the US \$100,000 Challenge set for us by our largest US donor when long-time supporter Rick Sapp, through the Sapp Family Foundation, came to our rescue with a pledge for the balance. The exceedingly generous initiator of the Challenge (who prefers to remain anonymous) was so pleased, he increased the matched amount to £100,000, nearly doubling the value of the award. We could not be more grateful to all donors who helped make this possible including the IEEE Foundation; Lutron Technologies (in-kind); Milliken Carpets (in-kind); and the US Embassy.

Our next task is raising funds to repay the fixed interest loan provided by the Architectural Heritage Fund (£275,000 which has eased project cash flow) and seeding a hoped-for £1 million Benjamin Franklin House Endowment to secure the building and its aims for the future. To find out more, please contact us at BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com. Benjamin Franklin House is a registered UK charity and Benjamin Franklin House Foundation is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organisation.

***2005 Symposium Recap**

Over 70 people gathered at the Royal Society of Arts, where Franklin was first international member, for a stimulating

discussion on design and innovation that would certainly have interested old Ben who said, "When truth and error have fair play, the former is always an overmatch for the latter." (See below for images from the reception following the formal proceedings).

Panel - Cutting Edge Science: Is Nanotechnology it?

This enlightening discussion was led by the Founder of the UK's famous polling agency MORI, Professor Sir Robert Worcester. The panel consisted of Professor Ron Lawes, Chairman, Microtechnology and Nanotechnology Professional Network and Professor Roger W. Whatmore ScD FEng FIM3, Professor of Engineering Nanotechnology and Head of Advanced Materials at Cranfield University. They explained that there is a difference between bottom-up nanotechnology that looks at building things nanoparticle by nanoparticle to create new materials, while in the top-down approach, research begins with existing applications and continues from there. Among the fruits of nanotechnology, they shared, will be new solar and hydrogen cells to generate low-cost, environmentally-friendly energy sources.

Address - Dr. Page Talbott, Associate Director and Chief Curator, "Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World" Page, with the US Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary (established by Congress), showed in animation and slides, how this major exhibition - opening on 14 December at the new US Constitution Center in Philadelphia and traveling throughout the US and beyond, will blend artifacts and interactives in order to convey a sense of the richness of Ben Franklin and why he matters - then and now. One section of the exhibition will feature items that Franklin had during his years in London set against a recreated backdrop of 36 Craven Street!

Panel - Design Today: What's Innovative in Buildings, Interiors & Products

The panel, chaired by Lester Korzilius, Director of Ellis Williams Architects, featured erudite speakers, Eva Jiricna CBE RA, Principal of Eva Jiricna Architects (EJA); William Mitchell, Design Director of 4C Design; and Bea Sennewald, Senior Vice President, HDR Architecture. Eva discussed the art in architecture, one that requires a fine balancing between the need for mass production and our yearning for attractive and liveable design. William explained how new processes in casting are making product design cheaper and quicker than ever before. He urged a closer collaboration between designers and consumers; as he noted our mobile phones do 100 things but we only use them for two. Bea noted technology is revolutionising architectural practice - it is becoming increasingly common, she said, to build with lasers sans paper drawings. In her field - creating laboratories - she said the challenge is to design spaces which protect people while also protecting samples.

Address - Lady Joan Reid, Benjamin Franklin Historian and Governor, 'Inventor Imperfect? Benjamin Franklin's Stove' Lady Reid, who melds humour and scholarship, offered Franklin as inventor - endlessly curious, great at trial and error, most often advancing someone else's designs! She discussed Franklin's famous stoves (one was found in his laboratory in the House during conservation work). Franklin's stoves were designed to generate more heat with less fuel and limit pollution and the idea was quite popular. The only problem, she revealed, was that the stoves did not always work. Nevertheless, those who came after Franklin, took his designs further and there are many in existence today.

Opening Gala

Tuesday, 17 January 2005; 7:30 pm, Banqueting House, Whitehall, London

We are nearly sold-out so don't forget to book if you want to reserve a place/table. HSBC has generously signed on as a sponsor and we are seeking others. To find out more, contact BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com.

Thank you for your inspiring support. I look forward to sharing the latest progress next month.

With all best wishes,

Márcia

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If you do not wish to receive these briefings, email BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com

2005 Symposium: Benjamin Franklin Design and Innovation



Left: Sir Bob Reid, Chairman; Dr. Márcia Balisciano, Director; and Martin Rivers, Vice President of Atlantic Worldwide Movers
Centre: Benjamin Franklin House Project Administrator Rowena Tee and Education Officer Ana Doria Buchan
Right: Governor Lady Reid; Craven Street neighbour Rod McManigal; Dick Keigher; and Governor/project management team leader Anne Keigher