

Dear Friends,

In September 1770, Benjamin Franklin wrote his delightful Craven Street Gazette to the amusement of Polly Hewson (child of his landlady, Margaret Stevenson).

During his London residence and beyond, Polly was as a daughter to him and she is thus a central figure in the Historical Experience, the exciting drama that will tell the story of Franklin in London when Benjamin Franklin House opens to the public next January, in time for Ben,s 300th birthday.

The Craven Street Gazette does not fail to charm today. It begins: „This Morning Queen Margaret set out for Rochester. Immediately on...departure, the whole street was in tears - from a heavy shower of rain. It is whispered that the new family administration which took place on her Majesty's departure, promises, like all other new administrations, to govern much better than the old one. We hear that the great person (so called from his enormous size)Σis grievously affected at the late changes, and could hardly be comforted this morning, tho' the new ministry promised him a roasted shoulder of mutton, and potatoes, for his dinner.

As the pictures above show, things are coming together as opening draws nigh, now less than four months away! In the photo of the Scholarship Centre (at the top of the House) ^ which, with a set of the Franklin Papers, will be a retreat for researchers and others ^ you can find a ceiling where there were once open rafters ^ and a raft of pigeons. All fireplaces are now restored, and panelling conservation, wiring and electrics, flooring, cooling and heating are nearing completion. Patrick Baty, Britain,s leading expert on historic paint finishes, has been working with the Project Management Team on recreating Franklin,s glazes, which will provide the walls with an 18th century lustre.

Our conservation efforts reflect those humorously described by Franklin in the Craven Street Gazette 235 years ago: „A project has been under consideration of government, to take the opportunity of her Majesty's absence, for doing a thing she was always averse to, viz. fixing a new lock on the street door, or getting a key made to the old one; it being found extremely inconvenient, that one or other of the great officers of state, should, whenever the maid goes out for a ha'pworth of sand or a pint of porter, be obliged to attend the door to let her in again. But opinion, being divided, which of the two expedients to adopt, the project is for the present laid aside.

*** Important Events**

**Annual Symposium ^ Benjamin Franklin Design and Innovation
Thursday, 27 October 2005; 5:30 pm for 6 pm; dinner immediately
following; Royal Society of Arts, London**

Don't miss our annual Symposium, „Benjamin Franklin: Design and Innovation.%o
Using Franklin as a design innovator ^ from lightning rods to the glass armonica ^

experts, including from the Royal Designers for Industry, the American Institute of Architects and the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, will explore cutting-edge design in science, architecture and heritage. RSVP:

BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com

Opening Gala

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

If you have not already done so, please register for the Gala by forwarding your cheque to reserve your place(s)/table. For more information email:

BenjaminFranklinHouse@msn.com <<mailto:BenjaminFranklinHuse@msn.com>>

*** Spotlight: David O. Brownwood, President, Benjamin Franklin House Foundation**

We have benefited over many years from the support of David Brownwood, President of Benjamin Franklin House Foundation, the 501 (c) (3) organization which allows US donors to make tax-exempt contributions to aid the project.

David has been a leading partner with Cravath, Swaine & Moore for nearly thirty years. Early in his legal career he was a law lecturer at the University of Khartoum, Sudan and the Kenya Institute of Administration. He was a Fighter Pilot and an Air Defense Command Pilot for the United States Air Force Reserve and the Massachusetts Air National Guard. He has been National Chair of the Harvard Law School Fund; President of the Board of Governors of Stanford Associates; and a member of the National Advisory Board of Outward Bound.

He has served on the Board of Stanford U.K. Trust and Harvard University,s Committee on University Resources and is President of the Royal Oak Foundation. He holds a BA from Stanford University and an LLB from Harvard Law School, where he was on the Editorial Board of the Harvard Law Review.

David is fantastically supported in the work of the Benjamin Franklin House Foundation by other members of the Benjamin Franklin House Foundation Board, including **Treasurer Karen McArdle** and **Secretary Lisa Michalski**.

*** News**

Fundraising

We are very grateful to Britain's Architectural Heritage Fund for this month dispersing a low, fixed interest loan to the project of £275,000. This eases our cash flow as we receive our grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in arrears after submission of paid invoices.

In support of the \$100,000 US Challenge we have received documentation from US electrics specialist, **Lutron**, demonstrating their in-kind support on wiring and lighting in the House totals approximately \$20,000. We have just \$35,000 to

raise from US sources to meet the \$100,000 total that will net an additional \$100,000 from our leading US donor.

Contracts Signed

We have agreed a contract for final designs, build and installation of the Student Science Centre with **Screenhouse Productions**. Their innovative concept for the Student Science Centre (featuring the Medical History Room based around the Craven Street bones; the Demonstration Room where students will reproduce scientific experiments from Franklin,s London years; and the Discovery Room which juxtaposes 18th and 21st science and technology) was rigorously tested with teachers and children. Screenhouse will also be developing the video wall for the introductory Seminar Room in the basement.

And after a competitive tender process we have selected **Sysco** to handle multimedia installation. The group, with experience in museum installations, will oversee the sensitive integration of the technology that will bring the Historical Experience to life, serve the Student Science Centre and the Scholarship Centre, and our office needs. It is not a small challenge given the limited space behind panelling for running cables; moreover, because of the House,s Grade I status, there can be no nails or similar in walls and many ceilings. Franklin, the so-called Father of Electricity, I believe, would have relished the challenge, he did after all say he was born 200 years too soon and that something would be made of his pioneering investigations. In addition to Board member **Graham Nixon**, the team at **Can Factory**, serve as advisors on our multimedia and technology needs.

New Project Administrator

Joining indispensable **Michael De Guzman**, our Benjamin Franklin House coordinator, photographer, and more, is new team member **Rowena Tee**. Rowena, a recent graduate with an honours BA in Art History from the University of East Anglia, brings a love of museums to her busy work with Benjamin Franklin House. Chances are if you call ^ we are still located at 30 Craven Street thanks to the kind hospitality of our neighbours **Mina and Rod McManigal** while building works continue (though our phone number remains the same: +44 20 7930 9121) ^ Ro will be the person who answers. She has previously interned with Britain,s Henry Moore Foundation and organised an exhibition at London,s Mall Galleries. She has lived in Malaysia and was formerly head of her university,s lacrosse squad! During her studies she earned a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver Medal.

Press

Watch for stories about Benjamin Franklin House in American Heritage Magazine and the UK,s Museums and Heritage Magazine before the close of this

year. Feel free to pass along any suggestions for garnering press attention.

In another September, Ben, working to foster agreement on a constitution for the young United States, imparted some wisdom to fellow delegates of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, with which I shall close: „Having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information, or fuller consideration, to change opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise. It is therefore that the older I grow, the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment, and to pay more respect to the judgment of others.‰

With all best wishes,

Márcia