



## Benjamin Franklin House eGazette 2008 - 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter



Above: Benjamin Franklin House inspired images by students at London's Curwen Primary School now on display

*Let not the stealing God of Sleep surprize, Nor creep in Slumbers on thy weary Eyes,  
Ere ev'ry Action of the former Day, strictly thou dost and righteously survey.  
...If Good, the Good with Peace of Mind repay, And to the secret Self with Pleasure say,  
Rejoice, my Heart, for all went well to Day. Benjamin Franklin, London 1758*

Greetings,

All has gone well throughout the first quarter of 2008. As you will see below, there have been many exciting developments including educational activities, interesting lectures, a BBC filming, and an upcoming concert!

### **Educational Outreach**

**National Science and Engineering Week 2008** took place over ten days in March, with 2,000 events throughout the UK celebrating science, engineering and technology. Benjamin Franklin House hosted a free open day as part of the festivities. Visitors explored three key Franklin demonstrations from his years at 36 Craven Street in the Student Science Centre. Because of such contributions to scientific knowledge, Benjamin Franklin House is an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers 'Milestone in Electrical Engineering and Computing' facility.

**At a January dinner to honour former Chairman, Sir Bob Reid**, we announced the launch of the Sir Bob Reid School Science Fund to provide grants to schools that have participated in the activities of Benjamin Franklin House. The first £250 prize will be awarded in the spring for costs associated with a school's visit or participation in a Benjamin Franklin House activity, or for a special project, trip, or event that will enhance pupils' engagement with science. The prize recognises excellence in science teaching by annually spotlighting an example of the successful integration of science and history which Sir Bob helped foster at Benjamin Franklin House.

**Join us for a special National Archaeology Week event on 15 July 2008.** We will be hosting a free archaeology family day encouraging visitors to become archeological investigators in order to uncover the rich history of the House and its inhabitants.

## Events

**In celebration of Franklin's 302nd birthday on 17 January 2008, Barry Sheerman MP**, Chairman of the House of Commons Select Committee on Children, Schools and Families, was guest speaker for the first Benjamin Franklin House-Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Lecture, which also marked the start of our third year as a dynamic museum and educational facility. The RSA was a fitting location given Franklin's membership and service to the organisation during his time in London. Barry's theme was the importance of engaging young people with cultural heritage, in particular, the benefits for citizenship when we make the experience of key historical figures relevant to young people today. [Read more](#); [Listen to the Podcast](#)

**In association with the Fulbright Commission**, on 21 February 2008 scholar and professor Paul Berkman, currently at the University of Cambridge, shared his work, like Franklin, to bring governments together for peaceful benefit. Dr. Berkman received a Fulbright scholarship in 2007 to plan and coordinate the Antarctic Treaty Summit, to be held in Washington, D.C., in 2009 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Antarctic Treaty.

**Lady Joan Reid, Benjamin Franklin House Governor** and the UK's foremost Franklin authority presented The Significance of Franklin's British Life on 12 March 2008. She highlighted Franklin's exciting British milieu, which included men like Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles; Sir John Pringle, the King's physician, and his publisher and botanist, Peter Collinson.

**Franklin and the Masons** was Pauline Vera Chakmakjian's theme on 18 March 2008. An independent lecturer on occidental and oriental freemasonry, Pauline discussed the roots of masonic membership and it's connection to the London guilds and men of power and learning. Franklin, along with a number of Founding Fathers, were Masons who hoped to further learning, civic contributions, and religious tolerance.

**Author Andrea Wulf** held a book launch in the House on 3 April 2008 to celebrate her latest work, *The Brother Gardeners*, which charts the obsession with gardening in the 18th century. Franklin, of course, features prominently!

## Upcoming

Mark your diaries now for these upcoming events and email [info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org) (or call +44 207 839 2006) to RSVP or gain more information:

\* 21, 22 and 28 May 2008, 6-8pm - 'Uncommon Place,' a dynamic art installation featuring the work of Michael De Guzman and other artists; free entry (at Benjamin Franklin House)

\* 29 May 2008, 6pm - 18th Century Soiree in association with the Concordia Foundation. Concordia's talented young performers, at the start of their professional careers, will entertain with period music; tickets are £30 and include a reception (at Benjamin Franklin House)

\* 19 June 2008, 6:30pm - Lady Joan Reid will discuss Benjamin Franklin and Medicine; tickets £5, £3 Friends and concessions (at Benjamin Franklin House)

\* 4 July 2008, 12 - 2pm - Fourth of July cake and bubbly; tickets £8, £5 Friends and concessions (at Benjamin Franklin House)

\* 3 September 2008, 6:30pm - Benjamin Franklin House Annual Symposium featuring Dr. Richard Horton, Editor of the Lancet, the world's number one global medical journal. Dr. Horton is the 2007 winner of the Edinburgh Medal and will speak on Benjamin Franklin and the Globalisation of Science; tickets include receptions; £8; £5 Friends and concessions (at Eccles Centre for American Studies, British Library)

\* 29 October 2008, 7pm - US Presidential Debate between the Chairs of Republicans Abroad and Democrats Abroad; Sir Robert Worcester, founder of MORI, to moderate; £8; £5 Friends and concessions (at Eccles Centre for American Studies, British Library)

### **Hire**

The BBC recently hired Benjamin Franklin House for their upcoming documentary British Style Genius. Among those who came to Craven Street was supermodel Erin O'Connor, interviewed in the stylish surroundings of Franklin's Parlour!

Don't forget - located in the heart of London, just steps from Trafalgar Square, Benjamin Franklin House is a unique venue for corporate and private events, including elegant lunches, memorable receptions, lectures, dinners and more in an exquisite 18th century setting. Contact Stephen Hains on +44 207 839 2008 or email [Stephen@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Stephen@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org) to discuss or arrange a visit.

### **Endowment Update**

With help from supporter Eleanore De Sole, and in association with the US Benjamin Franklin House Foundation, fundraising specialist James DeLorbe will be assisting with our transatlantic efforts to raise an endowment to secure the long-term future of the House and its educational aims. To find out more email [Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org).

### **Our Chairman on Benjamin Franklin**

Benjamin Franklin House Chairman John Studzinski tells Britain's The Telegraph why Franklin is his hero; to see the interview [click here](#). If you would like to record your views on Franklin for our website, please let us know! Email [info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

Franklin's couplet above shows his wit and the power of his pen. Carrying forward this tradition, we launched in March The Benjamin Franklin House Literary Prize, endowed by John Studzinski. Benjamin Franklin is one of history's great figures. While he made lasting contributions in many fields, his first passion was writing. He believed in the power of the written word to inform and stimulate debate – as the bedrock of a democratic society.

Each year a question exploring Franklin's relevance in our time will be open for interpretation in 1000-1500 words by two groups: young people and professional writers. The winner of the Young Writers Prize will receive £500 while the winner of the Professional Writers Prize will receive £1000. Judges will include young people and professional writers. Winning submissions following the 1 September deadline will be posted at [www.BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](http://www.BenjaminFranklinHouse.org).

Wishing you a wonderful spring,

Márcia

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