

Benjamin Franklin House

From: Benjamin Franklin House [info@benjaminfranklinhouse.org]
Sent: 23 December 2008 11:11
To: 'Benjamin Franklin House'
Subject: Benjamin Franklin House eGazette 2008 - 4th Quarter
Attachments: FranklinOrnament5F-A4paper.pdf



From left: Benjamin Franklin's portrait by a student at London's Mount School, part of our ongoing exhibition of children's art; 36 Craven Street dressed for the holidays; Sir Robert Worcester moderates a sold-out US Presidential Debate between the heads of Democrats and Republicans Aboard

Benjamin Franklin House eGazette 2008 – 4th Quarter

"You may imagine that I begin to grow happy in my Prospects. I should be quite so, if I could see Peace & Good Will restored between our Countries; for I enjoy Health, Competence, Friends & Reputation; Peace is the only Ingredient wanting to my Felicity" - Benjamin Franklin to Polly Hewson, 1782

Greetings,

In the ties Franklin maintained with English friends despite the war that divided them, he fostered the 'special relationship' between America and Britain that remains today. This is evident in his 1782 letter to Polly Hewson, his landlady's daughter, to whom he was a second father during his many years at Craven Street. For him peace was a prerequisite for happiness, as it is for us today.

Indeed, in this festive season we hope for peace and good will, and for you, like Franklin, health, competence, friends and reputation...and an ornament. Attached for printing, cutting out, and putting together, is a ornament of Craven Street designed by a Friend of the House!

As 2008 draws to a close, we have much to be thankful for, as detailed in this summary of news from the final quarter of the year.

Education

*Each Tuesday the House is open free of charge to school groups, many from London's poorest neighbourhoods. We are now fully booked with educational visits through March 2009!

*The Sir Bob Reid School Science Fund, in honour of our former Chairman's passion for education, recognises excellence in science teaching. In December, a gift of £250 was awarded to Surrey Square School in support of their Musical Science Fair. Like Franklin who invented the glass armonica at Craven Street - which became a favourite for Mozart and Beethoven, among others - pupils explored the science and technology of instruments and devised their own musical creations!

*We welcomed children from across London on 12 December for an afternoon of festive fun during our Family Holiday Party. Participants heard Georgian stories, made crafts, and took home holiday treats!

*In the quarter, after three years of excellent service, we said goodbye to our Education Manager, Ana Doria Buchan, who will return home to her native Portugal. Ana has done an outstanding job in developing our educational offerings, evidenced by over 3500 children engaged at the House on our weekly Student Free Day since opening, with an equivalent number served through extensive outreach programmes, including Ben's Traveling Suitcase!

*We are pleased to welcome Rob Taylor as our new Education Manager. Rob was born and raised in Canada and holds a Bachelor's degree in primary education and history. For the last five years he has taught in London's inner city, serving most recently for three years at Princess May Primary School in Hackney, where in addition to core duties, he devised and implemented a two-year extra-curricular drama programme!

*Upcoming special educational activities include in February a Storytelling Saturday, and an educational open house each morning during 'half term' or winter vacation! Find out more, email Rob@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org!

Events

* On 29 October 2008 in association with the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library, we hosted a US presidential debate between the Chairs of Republicans Abroad and Democrats Abroad; Sir Robert Worcester, founder of opinion research firm MORI, was in the chair as representatives from the two parties sparred on the merits of their respective candidates!

* Among the many in-house events in the quarter, Franklin expert and Benjamin Franklin House Governor Joan Reid discussed Franklin and espionage. Her next talk will be on Franklin and the Constitution, *25 March 2009 at 6:30pm*; £5; £3 Friends and concessions; to book email info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org!

* The Inventive Events Series, inspired by Benjamin Franklin's innovation and love of laughter and music began in December:

-3 December - The Comedy Experiment featured Nik Coppin, Andrew O'Neill, Tony Law and Mike Manera testing their Franklin wit. The event was recommended in Time Out and featured on the 24 Hour Museum website. The next Comedy Night is *18 February 2009 at 7:30pm* so mark your diaries now

-6 December - Bands at Ben's showcased two acoustic bands including the Melting Ice Caps

-12 December - Cabaret Night highlighted the singing of Katherine Sharratt, one of the actresses who plays Polly on the Historical Experience

*William Hewson and the Craven Street Bones runs until the end of December. The exhibition features remains from the in-House anatomy school established by William Hewson (Polly Hewson's husband) discovered in the basement during conservation!

*On 12 December Benjamin Franklin House joined fellow attractions - as part of the Small Historic Houses group which we established last year - in celebrating Christmas at Dr Johnson's House. The event raised funds for a new website for the group!

*Chairman John Studzinski will host a dinner at the House in celebration of Franklin's 303rd birthday on 13 January; the theme will be Franklin and the media. Find out more: email Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org!

*Watch for news of a talk by Dr. Dave Wang on Franklin and the Great Wall of China in April!

Benjamin Franklin House Foundation

*Plans for a new Sister Schools initiative in collaboration with Benjamin Franklin House Foundation in the US- www.bfhfoundation.org - are taking shape. We hope to launch the pilot in the first part of next year, linking students from our London partner schools with their counterparts in America to share information about themselves, their cultures, and studies. The programme will be a testament to Franklin's belief in international understanding and engagement!

Support for the House

* In the quarter, we attained the 2008 Operational Challenge Grant given to us by our amazing supporter, Mr. Robert H. Smith, for whom the Scholarship Centre is named. To help us with the cost of operating the House each year (£250,000), Mr. Smith donated \$100,000 (£) when we had raised \$200,000 (£133,000) from other sources. He will be offering the House an operational challenge for 2009 and pledged to help with a number of other initiatives, including longer-term plans for a new visitors centre in the courtyard!

*In the last quarter Benjamin Franklin House was fortunate to receive grants from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Foundation, The Wellcome Trust, and the City of London Archaeology Trust!

*On 10 December the "Quiet Phase" of our World of Possibilities endowment campaign launched with an event at the residence of the British Embassy's Deputy Head of Mission in Washington, DC, at which prospects were introduced to the House, the Foundation and the campaign. This will be followed by a formal launch at a gala planned for June 2009 at the Newseum in Washington, as well as a gala dinner in London before the close of next year. The Advisory Group now comprises 16 senators and congressmen and women, along with 16 members of Britain's House of Lords and House of Commons. An Educational Panel are lending their support as well, including Roy Goodman of the Franklin-founded American Philosophical Society and Professor Edmund Morgan of Yale University. To find out more email Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org!

*Please support Benjamin Franklin House at no cost when shopping online with over 600 popular retailers, including Amazon, and many more: <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/benjaminfranklin>. You can also raise funds for the House when you search the Web with easysearch: <http://benjaminfranklin.easysearch.org.uk>!

2008 Benjamin Franklin House Literary Prize

And the winner is.... Anthony Casanova took first prize in the 2008 Benjamin Franklin House Literary Prize for young writers. Commenting on the theme of ethical journalism he explored journalistic objectivity, noting "the heart of journalistic ethics lies...in what is done with...information before it reaches the public, what information is being obtained and how." Read his essay and that of second prize finisher James Tanner on the [Telegraph online](#). Their prizes will be awarded at the House in January!

Benjamin Franklin House in the News

*The History Channel visited the House in December to film a segment for a special airing next year on the Secrets of the Founding Fathers!

*Benjamin Franklin House featured in the Conservative History Journal; the House was deemed "well worth a visit"; [read more!](#)

*Laura Porter from AboutLondon.com offered a [positive review](#) of her visit to the House in October!

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After the Revolution, Polly Hewson moved to Philadelphia to raise her children near Franklin. When rain prevented her from visiting him one afternoon in 1787 she wrote, "American skies are as variable as the English, so I shall give up the expectation of finding anything constant in either Hemisphere except a few Friendships and I hope among them will ever be that between you and your affectionate [Polly]."

Thank you for your friendship this year and best wishes for 2009,

Márcia

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Happy Holidays from all of us at Benjamin Franklin House!

*Hire Benjamin Franklin House for your events in the New Year; contact Sarah Chaney, Marketing and Development Manager at Sarah@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org

*Become a Friend of Benjamin Franklin House with a gift of £25; contact Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org