

## First Quarter 2010



From left to right: Talented soprano Judith Charron to perform at a benefit concert for the House on 17 May; Priscilla Mensah of London's Burntwood School will be the UK representative at the Benjamin Franklin Summer Institute after winning our debate contest with the US Embassy; spring comes to Craven Street; children enjoy a workshop on the Craven Street bones

*"It is confidently asserted, that this Afternoon, the Weather being wet, the great Person a little chilly, and no body at home to find fault with the Expençe of Fuel, he was indulg'd with a Fire in his Chamber"* – Benjamin Franklin, The Craven Street Gazette, 1770

Greetings,

Franklin's charming [Craven Street Gazette](#) was among the topics we covered in first quarter 2010 events. In a March lecture, I highlighted things that can be gleaned from the Gazette about London community life in the eighteenth century, including dining and domestic chores, wet weather, eating and shopping, as well as details about the House including references to chests of drawers, faulty locks, an easy chair and a little square table, fires in the chambers, and uneven floors which we still have today!

We have a number of great [events](#) planned for the weeks and months ahead – see below, including details of our musical spring and early summer with a [benefit concert](#) for Benjamin Franklin House featuring soprano Judith Charron on 17 May, a [string quartet](#) playing a score attributed to Franklin, organised by our Craven Street neighbours, Concordia Foundation on 3 June and House historian, Lady Joan Reid, on Franklin and music on 8 July. Please join us for one or all.

In February, we were honoured to receive a [Sanford Education Award](#) from the Heritage Education Trust presented by Britain's Prince Edward, recognising the excellence of our educational work.

Finally, we were deeply saddened by the loss of one of our most important champions at the close of last year, Robert H. Smith, for whom our Scholarship Centre is named. He was a great man who exemplified Franklin's belief in the importance of civic and personal responsibility. His encouragement, and support through the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation, helped us open to the public and since, has enabled us reach key milestones, including over 35,000 visitors to the Historical Experience, and more than 11,000 school children served through the Student Science Centre and outreach activities. We are committed to realising his belief in our potential.

## Education

\*Benjamin Franklin House co-hosted a student debate on global citizenship with the US Embassy London on 24 March 2010. One lucky student, Priscilla Mensah of London's Burntwood School, was chosen as the UK delegate to the Benjamin Franklin Summer Institute. This month-long gathering in North Carolina each July allows young people from the US and other parts of the world to explore global issues.

\*Education Manager Sally Brewer ventures across London with Ben's Traveling Suitcase and in the quarter, among other schools, visited TESIS in Surrey; St Thomas School in Clapham; and Poplar Primary School in Merton to share Craven Street related science and invention.

\*National Science & Engineering Week took place in March with special activities at the House in honour of Franklin the science innovator. Visitors enjoyed a free open day discovering his studies of water and movement, as well as some of the House's architectural and archaeological secrets.

\*Plans got underway in the quarter for the launch in May of our new Sister Schools programme which will link children from one of our partner London schools, Surrey Square Junior School with the Benjamin Franklin School of the Bronx (P.S.55)

\*To find out more about educational visits (each Tuesday the House is closed to the public and only open to local schools) email [Education@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Education@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

## Events

*included*

\*Poor Richard's Almanack: How Franklin Perfected the Genre, 25 January: Sally James, House Administrator, discussed how Franklin created a best seller by updating a tried and true literary form.

\*English National Ballet Workshop – Polly's Pastimes, 16 February: a collaborative workshop with the English National Ballet brought the social whirl of Georgian London to life, including fashion, music and of course, dance.

\*Lady Reid Lecture – Franklin in Portraiture, 10 March: during his long years in London, Franklin sat for many portraits including the famous likeness painted by David Martin in 1766, commissioned by Scottish merchant and Franklin friend, Robert Alexander. The talk looked at what this portrait and others of the period 'said' about Franklin and encompassed Franklin's connection to 18th century London art, including as a member of the Royal Society of Arts, Commerce and Manufacture.

\*Benjamin Franklin House Literary Prize Reception – 2009 Professional Writer winner, 16 March. Heather Parker read her [prize winning essay](#) to those gathered at Craven Street in celebration of her achievement.

## **Upcoming Events**

*including*

\*Museums and Galleries at Night - Late Night Historical Experience; Saturday 15 May, 6.15pm/7.15pm and Sunday 16 May, 8pm/9pm. See the celebrated Historical Experience at night – live interpretation and sound and visual projection will reveal the uncertainty and excitement of Franklin's London years. £7/£5 Friends and concessions

\*Caleb Whitefoord 1734-1810 – The Man who made Peace with North America; Monday 17 May, 12.30pm. Dr David Allan, Royal Society of Arts historian and Honorary President of the William Shipley Group for RSA History will talk on Caleb Whitefoord. Free - booking required

\*Benefit Concert for Benjamin Franklin House –18th Century Music and Beyond; Monday 17 May, 7.45pm. LOCATION: Steiner Theatre, Regent's Park, London NW1 6XT. Talented young soprano Judith Charron will be joined by Paul Vialard on cello, and Andrew Robinson on piano, for an evening of 18th century music and more, including songs by Handel, Verdi, and Debussy, as well as Gluck and Donizetti, who both composed for Franklin's ingenious glass armonica. Tickets £10

\*Georgian Sports Day; Tuesday 1 June, 11am and 2pm. The summer Sports Day, aimed at 6-11 year olds, will feature 18th century games at the House – Blind Man's Buff, marbles, quoits and leapfrog. Free – Booking required

\*Musical Soiree at Benjamin Franklin House in association with the Concordia Foundation, Thursday 3 June at 7.30pm; we will be hosting a lyrical evening at the House in keeping with Franklin's love of music. A string quartet will perform the 'Benjamin Franklin Suite' said to be written by the great man himself, and other Franklin-era pieces. £20, including refreshments

\*Franklin and Iroquois Nation, Monday 28 June, 1pm. Sally Brewer, House Education Manager, will discuss the impact of the Iroquois Nation of North America on Franklin and the other US Founding Fathers. £5/3.50 Friends and concessions

To book for all events call +44 (0) 20 7839 2006 or email [Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

## **Support for the House**

\*In the last quarter, Benjamin Franklin House gratefully received grants from the Bonham Carter Trust and the Walter Hines Page Chapter of the DAR. Visit <http://www.eventinternet.com/benjaminfranklinhouse/content/donations/index.asp> to make an online donation.

\*Alongside the US Benjamin Franklin House Foundation, we launched the World of Possibilities endowment campaign in 2009 with a long-term goal of £4 million endowment to expand our educational mission and to provide the House with a more secure financial future. In February, we submitted a request to the National Endowment for the Humanities for support of the campaign; please consider getting involved, email [Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org).

\*Because the endowment is a long-term effort, we need ongoing support to maintain the House's exciting offerings. Our [Friends programme](#) is therefore essential – and growing! You can [become a Friend](#) with a gift of £25 and above and receive numerous benefits, including free entry to the House.

\*And you can aid 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!>

### **Benjamin Franklin House in the News**

\*Benjamin Franklin House received a wonderful review on the [weekend notes](#) website!

\*[Jed Crowl](#) described Benjamin Franklin House as “one of the most talked about locations in London...!”

\*Benjamin Franklin House is proud to be a member of [London Shh...](#) alongside some of London's finest small historic houses. London Shh... houses were hailed as hidden gems in ‘The Around Town’ section of [Time Out](#) in March!

\*You can follow Benjamin Franklin House on Twitter; [sign up](#) and follow us! Become one of our Facebook friends at [www.facebook.com/benjaminfranklinhouse](http://www.facebook.com/benjaminfranklinhouse)!

We had our fair share of the wet and chilly weather Franklin described in the opening quote above, but we are looking forward to bright days on Craven Street in the weeks ahead.

Thank you as always for your continued interest and support,

Márcia

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Hire Benjamin Franklin House for exceptional events;  
contact [Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

Win a pair of tickets to see Spring Storm by Tennessee Williams and Beyond The Horizon by Eugene O’Neill at The National Theatre for Monday 24 May at 7.30pm. To

enter the draw please email your name and contact telephone number to [Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Info@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org) by 18 May 2010.