



### **Holiday Greetings from Benjamin Franklin House,**

**As you will read below, it has been a positive year for Benjamin Franklin's only surviving home. We have now had more than 33,000 visitors since opening; served nearly 5000 children in the Student Science Centre, and reached an equivalent number through outreach activities, including Ben's Traveling Suitcase brought to local schools; and this year held some 40 thought-provoking events!**

**We hope you might consider an end of year donation to support Benjamin Franklin House. We have done well to make our operating budget (£250,000 in 2009 which we will hold constant for 2010), but we start the New Year with a blank slate in the face of still challenging economic conditions. We have a matching pledge if we can raise £30,000 (\$50,000). Please consider making a contribution - every gift helps advance our public and educational mission!**

**You can give online at**

**<http://www.eventinternet.com/benjaminfranklinhouse/content/donations/index.asp> or send a cheque to Benjamin Franklin House, 36 Craven Street, WC2N 5NF. US donors should visit [Benjamin Franklin House Foundation's](#) secure giving site.**

**Thank you for your support,**

**Márcia and the Board and staff of Benjamin Franklin House**

---

December 2009



Benjamin Franklin House Christmas ornament available [online](#); guests engage with Polly, Franklin's Craven Street 'daughter,' following the Historical Experience; Hogarth image from a lecture by Sarah Chaney on quacks and 18th century medicine

*"My dear Child, A happy New Year to you, and all Friends" - Benjamin Franklin to wife Deborah, 1756*

Greetings of the season,

In the 4th quarter, we reached a milestone of 33,000 visitors to 36 Craven Street since opening on Benjamin Franklin's 300th birthday in 2006, most likely a greater number than those who visited in the nearly 275 years since the House was first built! Our visitor numbers were up nearly 50% over 2008 this year, the result of many factors including increasing awareness of the House and its offerings.

We continued to provide love and care to the 1730s building, with brickwork repair and repainting of the front exterior. Our conservation specialists, Holden Conservation, who assisted with restoring the building, carried out the work. The House is looking especially smart and festive this Christmas!

The quality of submissions to this year's 2009 Benjamin Franklin House Literary Prize, with partner The Telegraph, was exceptionally high. We asked young writers (under the age of 25) and professional writers to provide their own response to the Franklin quote, "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain

a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." Our Literary Prize panel chose Nicola Simpson as the first place Young Writers winner, and Heather Parker as the first place Professional Writers winner. You can read their essays [here](#).

Read on for more news!

## **Education**

\*The first pilot of our Benjamin Franklin House Sister Schools initiative will launch in March linking Surrey Square Junior School in Southwark, London with the Benjamin Franklin School of the Bronx, New York. For four weeks, American and British children will participate in activities based on Franklin's years in London, with collaboration through technology he would have loved: a web-based portal on the House website for their podcasts, art work, stories, and more. Through the Benjamin Franklin House Facebook group, they will be able to keep in touch with one another and what happens at the House. Central to the program is an examination of Franklin's role as both American founding father and international statesman, with each week devoted to key themes, citizenship and responsibility; liberty and justice; conflict resolution and diplomacy; and science and innovation.

\*Education Manager Sally Brewer ventures across London with Ben's Traveling Suitcase and in the quarter visited Poplar Primary School in Merton; Hatcham Temple Grove School in Newcross; and Clapham and Streatham Junior Department in Streatham Hill to share Craven Street related science and invention.

\*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**

\*Among other events in the quarter, Sarah Chaney uncovered the helpful and rueful cures of eighteenth century medicine in her lecture entitled 'A Caution to the Unwary, Quacks in 18th Century London;' all were left feeling grateful for modern medical practice.

\*Thanksgiving at Benjamin Franklin House welcomed local and visiting university students to a special showing of the Historical Experience and a reception

\*Democratic Diplomacy was the last in our 2009 Breakfast Series featuring an impressive number of parliamentary leaders, including a former Foreign Secretary, Lord Chancellor, Attorney General, and Defence Secretary, along with key press and think tank contacts

\*At the start of the climate talks in Copenhagen in December, House scholar, Lady Joan Reid, explored how Franklin's 18th century thinking on science relates to climate change

\*We celebrated the festive season with our Craven Street neighbours and friends; guests enjoyed a glass or two of our homemade mulled wine as well as a great British tradition, mince pies

## **Upcoming Events**

\*Poor Richard's Almanack: How Franklin Perfected the Genre; 25 January, 1pm; Sally James, the House Administrator, will discuss how Franklin created a best seller by updating a tried and true literary form; £5/3.50 Friends and concessions

\*Reception in association with Chevening, country home of the UK Foreign Secretary, in Franklin's Parlour, featuring a letter he wrote from that very room in honour of William Pitt, the Elder; £10/£8 Friends and concessions

\*For Museums and Galleries at Night Month, Benjamin Franklin House will be running special late night events on 15 and 16 May including a lecture on the Craven Street bones

\*Musical Soiree at Benjamin Franklin House in association with the Concordia Foundation, 3 June; we will be hosting a lyrical evening at the House in keeping with Franklin's love of music; details to follow in the New Year

\*Watch for news of Lady Joan Reid's 2010 lecture series on Franklin in London featuring talks in February, April, September, and November

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 Peter Cundhill Foundation and the TASIS School; we also are working to meet a 2010 operational challenge grant given to the House by supporter, Robert H. Smith; we have just \$50,000 more to raise. 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 this year 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 early 2010 we will be submitting 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**

\*The 'blue' plaque on Benjamin Franklin House (ours is actually a bronze scroll) features in the new book 'Lived in London: Blue Plaques and the Stories Behind Them' edited by Emily Cole; read a review of the book here at the [The Guardian online!](#)

\*The BBC's In Our Time Radio 4 show will feature Melvyn Bragg on Benjamin Franklin and the Royal Society recorded in Franklin's Parlour; to air in the New Year!

\*We are a partner behind [London Shh](#), with some of London's small historic houses, a collaboration aimed at raising greater awareness of these often hidden gems; the official launch of the group was covered in Country & Life magazine and Museums Journal!

\*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!)

Thank you as always for your continued interest and support. Wishing "all friends" in the words of Franklin, a very Happy New Year,

Márcia

Dr. Márcia Balisciano, Director  
Benjamin Franklin House  
36 Craven Street  
London WC2N 5NF  
Telephone +44(0)207 839 2006  
[Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](mailto:Director@BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

[www.BenjaminFranklinHouse.org](http://www.BenjaminFranklinHouse.org)

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