



**BENJAMIN
FRANKLIN
HOUSE**

36 Craven Street, London

Events Calendar 2021

	<p>Franklin's Young Inventors Virtual Science Club Alternating Tuesdays (4.30pm) and Saturdays (11.30am) throughout the spring and summer term</p> <p>Franklin's Young Inventors is our science club for aspiring scientists in Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14). Participants discover the investigations carried out by Benjamin Franklin and his British friends and try their hand on a number of practical experiments.</p> <p>Franklin's Young Inventors is made possible with generous support from the US Embassy London and the DAR Walter Hines Page Chapter. Click here for more information and to book</p>
	<p>Live History Classes for Kids on Georgian Britain Every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 3pm throughout the spring and summer term</p> <p>Join our virtual history classes to learn about key aspects of the Georgian period, the time when Benjamin Franklin lived in London. Together we will uncover the past and develop historical skills!</p> <p>Suitable or KS2-3 (ages 7-14) Click here for more information and to book</p>
	<p>Family Day: Georgian Easter Celebration! Thursday 1 April, 3pm-3.30pm BST</p> <p>Join us to learn all about how the Georgians celebrated Easter. Participants will even find out how to make their own Easter bonnets!</p> <p>Suitable ages 5-11 To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org</p>



Live History Class: Discover Georgian Ceramics

Tuesday 8 April, 3pm-3.30pm BST

For this special holiday edition of our Live History Class series, we are delighted to welcome Anya Anamovic from Newington Green Meeting House to introduce us to 18th century ceramics and demonstrate how we can make our own pinch pots!

Suitable for KS2-3 (ages 7-14)

To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Franklin in Portraits: Benjamin West

Thursday 15 April, 12pm EST/5pm BST

This portrait commemorates Benjamin Franklin's famous kite and key experiment and the invention of the lightning rod but was painted after Franklin's death in 1790. It was originally meant to be part of a larger piece for the Philadelphia Hospital, an institution founded by Franklin. West met Franklin when he was in London as the second president of the Royal Academy of Arts.

Register [here](#)

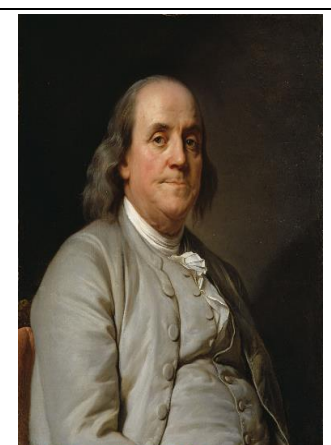


Ben's Digital Book Club: White Fury by Christer Petley

Wednesday 21 April, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Join us for the April instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. Author Christer Petley will discuss his book, White Fury, which tells the story of influential sugar planter Simon Taylor and his role as a slaveholder.

Register [here](#)



House Talk: Benjamin Franklin and the Art of Diplomacy by Dr Márcia Balisciano

Wednesday 28 April, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Printer, philosopher, author, scientist and inventor. These are among the guises of the famous Dr. Franklin. But Benjamin Franklin House Director, Dr. Márcia Balisciano, will argue his role as a diplomat was among his most important and lasting contributions. She will trace the beginnings of his diplomatic career in Philadelphia, to his presiding over the first de facto American embassy at 36 Craven Street, before leading at the French Court and building consensus, toward the end of his life, at the Constitutional Convention. **Register [here](#)**



Virtual Talk: Scotland and the American Revolution

Monday 17 May, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Join us for a talk by Jim Ambuske, PhD, lead at the Washington Library's Center for Digital History at George Washington's Mount Vernon. He is currently at work on a book about emigration from Scotland in the era of the American Revolution as well as a chapter on Scottish loyalism during the American Revolution for a volume to be published by University of Edinburgh Press.

Register [here](#)



Ben's Digital Book Club: Fanny Burney: Her Life by Kate Chisholm

Wednesday 19 May, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Join us for the May instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. Kate Chisholm will discuss her book about Fanny Burney, a writer and diarist who witnessed both the madness of George III and the young Queen Victoria's coronation.

Register [here](#)



Franklin in Portraits: David Martin

May, Date and Time TBC

This portrait of Benjamin Franklin was commissioned by Robert Alexander of the firm of William Alexander & Sons, in Edinburgh. It is meant to represent Benjamin Franklin as an Enlightenment figure and English gentleman. It is also one of the rare portraits done during his time in London while he was living at 36 Craven Street (Benjamin Franklin House).

Register your interest [here](#)



Virtual Talk: Sarah Pomeroy

Monday 24 May, 12pm ET/5pm BST

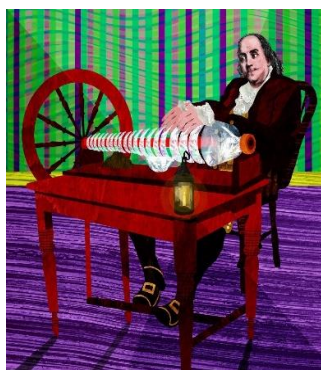
Join us for a presentation by our inaugural Lady Joan Reid Children's Author in Residence, Professor Sarah B. Pomeroy, who will discuss her book for young adults, *Benjamin Franklin, Swimmer* (American Philosophical Society Press 2021), inspired by Franklin's love of swimming, and one of his first inventions, swimming fins!

Register [here](#)



Science on Stage
May, Date and Time TBC

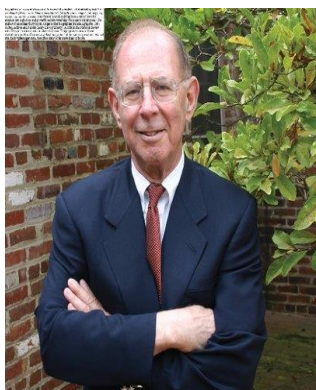
Held in partnership with The Royal Institution, children will learn about Franklin's amazing discoveries and those of other important scientists throughout history. The event will feature exciting demonstrations!



Live History Class: Discover Georgian Music
Thursday 3 June, 3pm-3.30pm

Did you know Benjamin Franklin was a keen musician? Learn all about 18th century music and Franklin's invention of the glass armonica before creating your own musical instrument.

Suitable for **KS2-3 (ages 7-14)**
To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Ben's Digital Book Club: Thomas Paine and the Clarion Call for American Independence by Harlow Giles Unger
Wednesday 9 June, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Join us for the June instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. Writer Harlow Giles Unger will discuss his book which chronicles how Thomas Paine became the most widely read political writer of his generation.

Register [here](#)



Benjamin Franklin and the Lightning Rod
Thursday 10 June, 12pm ET/5pm BST

To celebrate the anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's famous kite and key experiment, join Benjamin Franklin House in partnership with Christ Church Philadelphia, Franklin's parish church, for a transatlantic panel discussion on the lightning rod and why it was one of the greatest inventions of the 18th century.

Register [here](#)



Silence Dogood: The Story Behind Benjamin Franklin's Infamous Pen Name

Thursday 24 June, 12pm ET/5pm BST

In 1722, at the age of just 16, Benjamin Franklin adopted the persona of Silence Dogood, an elderly widow, in order to publish something in his brother's newspaper. The 14 letters which followed, filled with satirical wit, were extremely popular with New England Courant readers and are an early indication of Franklin's brilliance. Join Education Manager, Eleanor Hamblen, for an exploration of the works of Silence Dogood! **Register [here](#)**



American Independence Day

Sunday 4 July, 1pm

Join us for a special celebration of Independence Day with Benjamin Franklin House!

As a founder of the United States, Franklin was the only statesman to have signed all four documents that created a new nation, including the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Paris, and The Constitution. The first of these was signed on 4 July 1776. **Register interest [here](#)**



Ben's Digital Book Club: Past and Prologue by Michael D. Hattem

Wednesday 7 July, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Join us for the July instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club. Michael D. Hattem will discuss his book, Past and Prologue: Politics and Memory in the American Revolution, which illustrates how the colonists changing understanding of their British and colonial histories shaped the politics of the American Revolution and the origins of American national identity. **Register [here](#)**



House Talk: The Life of Polly

Thursday 15 July, 12pm ET/5pm BST

Polly Stevenson Hewson was the daughter of Benjamin Franklin's landlady at 36 Craven Street. A surrogate daughter to Franklin, they had an enduring friendship that remained even after he left London in 1775. In fact, all Polly's descendants became American thanks to Franklin as House Operations Manager, Caitlin Hoffman, will reveal. Discover how this little-known, yet important figure in Franklin's life, is central to our Historical Experience.

Register [here](#)



Family Day: Bones in the Basement

Saturday 17 July, Time TBC

To celebrate the Festival of Archaeology, become an archaeologist for the morning and help uncover the history of Benjamin Franklin House.

Most suitable for ages 8-11, although younger siblings are welcome to join

To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Family Day: Children's Summer Fete

Saturday 24 July, Location and Time TBC

Our annual Summer Fete, in collaboration with special guests from the world of heritage, will include activities for all the family.

Suitable for ages 5-11

To book email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



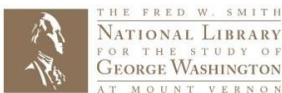
Family Day: Print this!

Tuesday 3 August, Time TBC

Did you know that Benjamin Franklin started out as printer? Join us for this fun-filled family day to learn all about 18th century printing methods and try your hand at some printing of your own!

Suitable for ages 5-11

To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Transatlantic Slavery Symposium

Monday-Friday, 9-13 August, Time TBC

In collaboration with George Washington's Mount Vernon and Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, join Benjamin Franklin House for a series of panel discussions on the connection between the 18th century transatlantic slave trade and America's founders.



Ben's Digital Book Club: A Ben of All Trades: The Most Inventive Boyhood of Benjamin Franklin by Michael J. Rosen
Wednesday 18 August, 12pm ET/5pm BST

In this month's special family edition of Ben's Book Club, we will be talking to Michael J. Rosen about his book, A Ben of All Trades: The Most Inventive Boyhood of Benjamin Franklin. This engaging biography, illustrated by Matt Tavares, reveals how Benjamin Franklin's boyhood shaped his amazingly multifaceted life.

Register [here](#)



Family Day: Strike a Pose!
Tuesday 24 August, Time TBC

Benjamin Franklin, like many important figures in history, has featured in paintings and sculpture. Children will explore our online exhibition of Franklin portraits and become artists for the morning to create their own portraits!

Suitable for children aged 5-11

To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Open House Weekend 2021
Saturday-Sunday, 4-5 September

Open House London is the capital's largest annual festival of architecture and design. This annual event allows the public to cross the threshold of many of London's most interesting buildings, including Grade I, 1730s Benjamin Franklin House. Half-hourly guided tours will take place throughout the day.



Ben's Digital Book Club: Thomas Jefferson's Idea of a University
Wednesday 15 September, 12pm ET/5pm GMT

Join us for the September instalment of Ben's Book Club. Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy will discuss his new book about Thomas Jefferson's vision for education. Andrew is an academic historian, Vice President of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello and the Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello, and also Professor of History at the University of Virginia. Register [here](#)

	<p>Robert H Smith Family Foundation Lecture October, Details forthcoming</p> <p>Our annual Robert H Smith Family Foundation Lecture in American Democracy will once again be held in partnership with the LSE Department of Government.</p>
	<p>Ben's Digital Book Club: Incomparable World by S I Martin October, Date and Time TBC</p> <p>Join us for the October instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. This month S I Martin will discuss his book which reimagines 1780s London, showcasing the untold stories of African-American soldiers grappling with their post-war freedom.</p>
	<p>Family Day: Halloween at Benjamin Franklin House Tuesday 26 October, Time TBC</p> <p>Children will meet Polly Hewson, daughter of Franklin's landlady, to hear some ghoulishly good Hallowe'en stories followed by gruesome games and crafts!</p> <p>Suitable for children aged 5-11</p> <p>To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org</p>
	<p>Frankly Speaking Debate Competition November, Date and Time TBC</p> <p>The annual Frankly Speaking Debate Competition for upper secondary school students, in collaboration with the US Embassy London, the DAR Walter Hines Pages Chapter and Bloomberg, encourages tomorrow's thinkers today. The Year 10 & 11 winner receives a tour of Parliament and the Year 12 & 13 winner joins students from across Europe and the United States at the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute in America!</p>



Ben's Digital Book Club: The Cabinet by Dr Lindsay M Chervinsky

Wednesday 3 November, 12pm ET/5pm GMT

Join us for the November instalment of Ben's Digital Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. Dr Chervinsky, Senior Fellow at the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, and Professorial Lecturer at the School of Media and Public Affairs, George Washington University, will discuss her book which reveals how George Washington created one of the most powerful bodies in the federal government. **Register [here](#)**



Thanksgiving

Thursday 25 November, Time and Location TBC

Join Benjamin Franklin House to celebrate the American holiday of Thanksgiving! Franklin, in addition to suggesting the turkey become one of America's national symbols, practised cooking it as part of his early work on electricity.

Register interest [here](#)



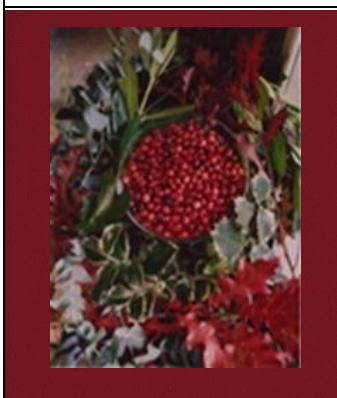
Family Day: Children's Christmas Party

Saturday 4 December, Time TBC

Children will discover the magic of the holiday – 18th century style! We'll sing along to festive classics with accompaniment on the glass armonica (the instrument Franklin invented at Craven Street), learn about Georgian traditions, and make our own decorations!

Suitable for children aged 5-11

To book, email education@benjaminfranklinhouse.org



Annual Friends and Neighbours Holiday Party

Tuesday 7 December, 1pm ET/6pm GMT

Celebrate the festive season with friends of the House and our Craven Street neighbours. In the great British holiday tradition, enjoy a mince pie and a glass – or two – of homemade mulled wine!

Register interest [here](#)



Ben's Digital Book Club: Running from Bondage by Karen Cook-Bell

Wednesday 15 December, 12pm ET/5pm GMT

Join us for the December instalment of Ben's Book Club, a monthly virtual gathering looking at themes relating to Benjamin Franklin, the 18th century, and American history. Karen Cook-Bell, Associate Professor of History at Bowie State University, will discuss her book recounting the important stories of enslaved women, who comprised one-third of all runaways, and the ways in which they fled, or attempted to flee, bondage during and after the Revolutionary War.

Register [here](#)

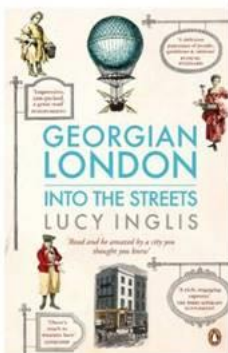
Earlier in 2021



Franklin in Portraits: Feke

Celebrate our virtual exhibition, Franklin in Portraits, a series of talks on portrayals of Benjamin Franklin in art.

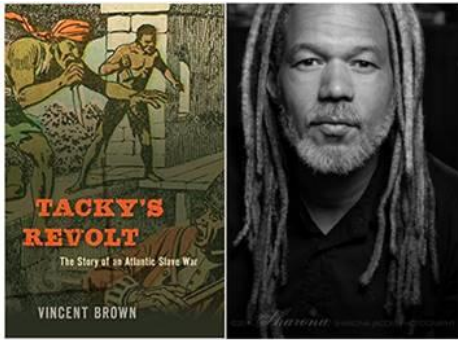
Dr George Boudreau was in conversation with Professor Zara Anishanslin, Fellow at the Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University, on the earliest known Franklin portrait by Robert Feke created circa 1738-1746. This lesser known portrait in the collection of the Harvard Art Museums marks Franklin's transition from tradesman printer to prosperous gentleman; Dr. Anishanslin discussed the significance of this early Franklin image and it's connection to 18th century portraiture. **Watch [here](#)**



Ben's Digital Book Club: Georgian London: Into the Streets by Lucy Inglis

In March, we talked to Lucy Inglis about her book Georgian London: Into the Streets, which takes readers on a tour of London's most formative age – the age of intellect, art, great ambition and fantastic ruin. Lucy Inglis is a historian and novelist, a speaker, and occasionally a television presenter and voice on radio.

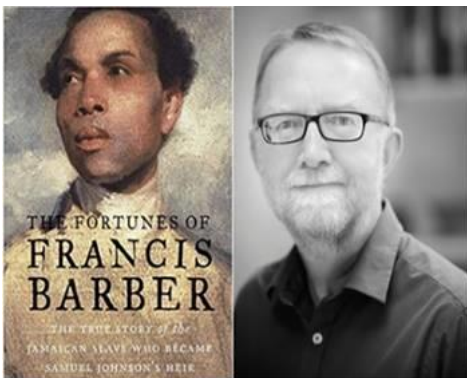
Watch the session [here](#)



Ben's Digital Book Club: Tacky's Revolt by Vincent Brown

In February, we spoke to Vincent Brown about his book *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War*, a gripping account of the largest slave revolt in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic world, an uprising that laid bare the interconnectedness of Europe, Africa, and America, shook the foundations of empire, and reshaped ideas of race and popular belonging. Vincent Brown is

Charles Warren Professor of American History and Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. **Watch the session [here](#)**



Ben's Digital Book Club: The Fortunes of Francis Barber by Michael Bundock

In January, we talked to Michael Bundock about his compelling narrative, *The Fortunes of Francis Barber*, the story of the Jamaican slave who became Samuel Johnson's heir; it chronicles a young boy's journey from the horrors of Jamaican slavery to the heart of London's literary world, and reveals the unlikely friendship that changed his life. **Watch the session [here](#)**