President's Message

By Lee E. Knepp

2011 will be a busy and productive year for The Friends of Franklin. Planning continues for a reunion of Benjamin Franklin descendants to be hosted at Philadelphia the weekend of June 4, for a symposium and fall tour, also at Philadelphia, the weekend of September 16, 2011, and for several other opportunities of more informal gatherings.

Please note current officers and board members listed elsewhere in this edition of the Franklin Gazette. All are to be commended for their willingness to serve on your board of directors and participate in the several board meetings during the course of a year.

As your president, I would like to offer my personal appreciation to several board members and volunteers who are assisting in projects.

Board member Frank Batchelor with former president Roy Goodman, current president Lee Knepp, and executive director Kathy DeLuca have been advising Stuart Batchelor in a concerted effort to enlist corporate sponsors to provide a sounder financial foundation for The Friends of Franklin.

Board member Blaine McCormick of the Hankamer School of Business at Baylor University continues to develop Franklin webinars through Baylor University and is in the process of designing a webinar series to be offered by The Friends of Franklin. Pamela Hartsock of Washington excels in researching, selecting and submitting the Franklin Brainbuilders available to all members through internet/email.

Franklin descendant Kari “Ted” Molin, now of Wilmington Trust, chairs the upcoming Franklin Descendant Reunion, and member Tom Edgar of Los Angeles, also a descendant, serves as both the webmaster for the Franklin Descendant website and has been providing years of service as the FOF webmaster.

Vice President Jackson Boswell (husband of descendant Ann Castle Boswell and Scholar in Residence at the Folger Shakespeare Library in D.C.) has organized and facilitated mailings to both Franklin descendants and scholars, while board member Martin Mangold (a founding member of The FOF) of Maryland recently completed a history of The FOF and along with Roy Goodman, recommends meet-ups at various events and locations.

Board member Stuart Green, M.D. of California, author of Dear Dr. Franklin, has generously assigned the copyright privileges to us, and Kate Ohno of The Papers of Benjamin Franklin project at Yale ably assists with writing articles for and editing of our Franklin Gazette.

Charles Hargis of Michigan has proven to be a reliable and constant supplier of interesting news articles and Franklin-related tidbits for the Gazette, website, or just our edification, while Aziz Inan, PhD of the University of Portland provides math puzzles for each issue of the Gazette.

Involved in planning for the projected Friday, September 16 fall symposium are former board member Anna Coxe Toogood, Jean Wolfe of Wolfe Historic Preservation, life member Carla Mulford of Penn State, president Lee Knepp, and executive director Kathy DeLuca.

It should be of no surprise that it takes a great deal of volunteer dedication and talent to sustain and grow an organization such as The Friends of Franklin, and it is important that periodically we convey to those volunteers our genuine gratitude.
Welcome to New Editors of The Franklin Papers

This past June The Papers of Benjamin Franklin welcomed two new staff members, Associate Editor Robert (Bob) Frankel and Assistant Editor Allegra Di Bonaventura.

Allegra completed a Ph.D. in History from Yale in 2008 and a J.D. from Yale Law School in 2002, during which time she specialized in early American social history and Anglo-American legal history. Her dissertation, a history of family and slavery in New England as told through the experience of one African-American family, will be published by W.W. Norton. At the Franklin Papers, Allegra brings a particular interest in legal, family and domestic issues. She has also been working on Franklin’s correspondence with Samuel Chase and Francis Hopkinson.


Our Front Cover Image Explained

Using a childhood illustration of Benjamin Franklin from Ingri (1904-1980) and Edgar (1898-1986) Parin d'Aulaire's juvenile biography, Benjamin Franklin (Doubleday, 1950), Aziz Inan from the University of Portland created the palindrome picture to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Franklin's only palindrome birthday* in his lifetime which occurred on January 17, 1711 (1-17-1711), when he turned five years old.