



Following in Franklin's Footsteps

Visit several of our historic sites and experience the life of Benjamin Franklin in the places he knew best!



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
engraved after a 1779 portrait
by Duplessis. Collections of
Independence National
Historical Park.

To help you have the most enjoyable visit possible; here are a few **helpful hints**:

- **First, get a “Building Hours” card with this packet. Several of the sites you will visit have changing hours and are closed on some days.**
- Get your **free** timed tickets to Independence Hall. This will help you to better plan out the rest of your day. (Available in the Independence Visitor Center near where you picked up this packet.)
- Be aware that you will have to go through a visual bag check at the entrance of the Liberty Bell and at the corner of 5th and Chestnut Streets for Independence Square. If you do not have a bag you will move quickly through the line.
- Since our sites are located in a busy city, please be extra careful when crossing the streets. Watch your step: some of the pavements are uneven, just like they were in the 18th century!
- Some of the structures that you will visit are nearly 300 years old. Please take care to insure that your children’s children will also be able to visit these sites and learn about the life of Benjamin Franklin in the future.

Ready? Let’s go! You’ll begin at **Franklin Court**, where Benjamin Franklin lived and worked in Philadelphia. Head east on Market Street as you exit the Independence Visitor Center.

On the way to *Franklin Court*, begin your historical conversation by asking your group:

- What do you already know about Benjamin Franklin?
- Franklin was born in 1706. About how many years ago was he born?
- In what city was Franklin born? (Did you guess Philadelphia? Many people do, but Franklin was actually born in Boston and came to Philadelphia when he was 17. Soon after his arrival, he met his future wife, Deborah Read).
- Benjamin Franklin always loved using words to persuade, to make people think, to entertain people, and to make people laugh. Franklin really understood that words are powerful! What job do you think Franklin had when he was old enough to work? At what age do you think Franklin started working at this job?

(Franklin was working at age 12 in Boston as an **apprentice printer** to his brother. By 1729, at age 23, Franklin owned his own newspaper right here in Philadelphia, called *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. He was so successful as a printer that he was able to retire at the age of 42.)



Stop #1: The Printing Office

322 Market Street

(South side of Market St. between 4th and 3rd Streets)

Stop here to see the method Benjamin Franklin used to print newspapers. Franklin's wife, Deborah, worked with him in both his printing office and post office. At that time, it was common for businesses to be run out of the home, and women often helped run the business and run the house. Franklin considered Deborah to be a great help to him in his work.

Think about it! Ask about it! Talk about it!

- How long would it take to print one newspaper?
- Were only men allowed to be printers, or were there any printers who were women?

- Who printed the first Declaration of Independence that had the signers' names on it?
- What was the *circulation* of Franklin's newspaper?
- Ask to see the "type". How long do you think it would take you to put together a sentence using these letters?
- What is an almanac? Take a look at *Poor Richard's Almanac*.
- What sections of a modern newspaper did Franklin also use?

Stop #2: Fragments of Franklin Court 318 Market Street

Benjamin Franklin was always interested in comfort and safety, and is well known for finding ways of helping everyone in the community. He helped start and was a member of the first fire company in the nation, right here on Market Street. He built the houses here at 316, 318, and 322 Market Street to rent to others, and he had them built with fire safety in mind. He also started the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire.

Archeological excavations began at Franklin Court nearly fifty years ago and continued until 1974. Through archeology, over 30,000 *artifacts* dating from the late 1600s up to the 1900s have been recovered and recorded at Franklin Court, including everything from two-handled jugs to Coke bottles. Today you can see some of these objects up close by visiting the museum at 318 Market St. or you can walk around the courtyard and look into the *excavation units* (pits).

Be a History Detective! Look around you, observe, and learn!

- Near the bottom of the steps, look straight up. You'll find four *chimney flues*. These were used all the time, and having separate flues for each floor is much safer than one flue.
- Look up at the ceiling. You will see a trap door. How was this used and why? (People could open this door and use water to put out *embers* [hot ashes] and prevent the spread of fire from a neighboring rooftop. Rooftops were made of wood, and fires could spread quickly.)
- What did Franklin have placed on both sides of the *floor joists* (the large beams across the ceiling)? (Horsehair plaster was placed there to slow the spread of fire.)
- 318 Market Street has *archeological* displays. What is the study of archeology? What do archeologists do?
- What can you learn by studying the artifacts *excavated* from Franklin Court? What specific objects can you find in the display that can help you to learn about daily life in the 18th century?

- Have you found Franklin's *sedan chair* yet? You can sit in it and try it out. It is a *reproduction*, and not Franklin's original chair. That's why you are allowed to touch it and sit in it!
- As you journey throughout the park today, look for *fire marks*. These are metal plaques attached to the outside of buildings that show that the owner has paid for their *fire insurance* (Fire insurance protected you if your house was burned down by giving you enough money to build a new house.) Fire marks had symbols on them to show which fire insurance company you had paid for your insurance policy. See how many of these fire marks you can find on buildings as you walk around the park today. How many different kinds did you find?

Stop #3 Underground Museum at Franklin Court

- Can you find the musical instrument called the *glass armonica* that Franklin invented?
- Find two of Franklin's inventions. How did they help make people's lives better? Do we still use any of these inventions today?
- Franklin was not a physician, but people called him "Doctor" because he received honorary degrees from universities in England. He received a Master of Arts degree from Harvard, can you find it?



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN painted by David Rent Etter after Charles Willson Peale after David Martin around 1835. Collections of Independence National Historical Park.



BRIGHT IDEA!! Franklin Movie

If you don't have tickets for Independence Hall, stay longer at the Underground Museum and watch the 22 minute movie about Benjamin Franklin's life.

Stop #4 Life in Franklin's Day Whalebone Alley and Harmony Lane

18th Century Philadelphia

- Leave Franklin Court and go south down the alley toward Chestnut Street. When you look across Chestnut St, you will see Whalebone Alley, where you are going next. However, for your own safety, do not jaywalk. Please cross at the corner with the traffic light. Thank you!
- In the 18th century, some women wore *corsets*, which were sort of like a girdle. There was a shop on this street that made corsets using whalebones.



BRIGHT IDEA!! Visit Carpenters' Hall

The second building on your right is Carpenters' Hall where the First Continental Congress met in 1774. Benjamin Franklin was in England at the time and did not attend. However, in December 1775 after his return to Philadelphia, he slipped into Carpenters' Hall on three different nights to have secret meetings with a French agent. He was trying to get the French government to help the colonies in their revolution against Great Britain. It worked!

- Continue walking and notice a large gully in the grass on your left. This is the location of Dock Creek, a *tidal creek* that flows in and out of the Delaware River, although it's buried now. In Franklin's day, everyone would throw their trash and their waste into this *basin*. Keep in mind that there were no sewer systems back then. Dock Creek was full of stinking *refuse*, and Franklin spent a great deal of time trying to better the *sanitation* in the city. Just imagine the smell!

- At the end of Whalebone Alley, go right on Harmony Lane. Directly behind you was once the Harmony Fire Company, and on your right was the tannery. Do you know what a tannery is? (A tannery is the series of shops that process cattle to make fine leather goods.) This process smelled awful and really stunk up the neighborhood. Where do you think the cattle remains ended up? (Yes...Dock Creek!)
- The last brick home on your left is where Dolley Madison once lived before she married James Madison. Her name then was Dolley Todd. A few of her younger siblings lived with her along with her two young sons and a law clerk that assisted her husband, lawyer John Todd. John ran his law practice from an office on the first floor of their home. Look around the side and back of the house. What do you think the backyard looked like in the early 1790s when the Todds lived there? (This house was built in 1775, so Franklin would have been familiar with it. However, Benjamin Franklin died in 1790 and so he was not alive when the Todds actually lived there.)

Stop #5 **The Second Bank of the United States** (South side of Chestnut St. between 4th and 5th Streets)

- This building houses the largest collection of original 18th century American portraits in the world.
- Students need to be very careful when moving through the galleries. Students must be accompanied at all times by a responsible adult.
- Find the portrait of Benjamin Franklin. This is a 19th century copy of the original, which hangs in the White House. The painting depicts Franklin as a man of status performing scholarly duties. The bust behind Franklin in the painting is that of English scientist Sir Isaac Newton. Notice the other paintings close to Franklin's portrait. They are businessmen and scientists, like Franklin.



BRIGHT IDEA!!

Visit Christ Church

(Located on 2nd St. above Market St.)

Franklin owned a *pew* at Christ Church, and he made sure that his daughter Sally worshipped there. Sally loved to read and enjoyed playing the *glass armonica*. Do you remember seeing the glass armonica when you were in the Underground Museum? During the American Revolution, Sally raised money to support the Continental Army, and supervised the sewing of 2,200 shirts for American soldiers. The church's steeple, financed by a lottery organized by Benjamin Franklin, was the tallest structure in the colonies for 83 years.

Stop #6 **The Liberty Bell Center**

Enter on 6th Street between Market and Chestnut Streets.

(There are no public restrooms available in the building. You may want to use the restrooms on the corner of 5th and Chestnut Sts. or at the visitor center before entering the Liberty Bell Center)

- When the Liberty Bell was originally ordered from England in 1751, no one called it "the Liberty Bell". What would Franklin have called this bell? (The State House Bell)
- At almost the same time that the Bell was arriving from England, a newly-elected lawmaker was also arriving at the Pennsylvania State House. Who was this new lawmaker? (Yes, it was Benjamin Franklin!)
- The first set of exhibits on your left contain two old letters. Can you find Franklin's name in them? Why is he named? What is he helping to buy?



"The Old State House Bell" sheet music written by Moeser and Weiland, published by Stayman & Brothers in 1855. Collections of Independence National Historical Park.

- How did Benjamin Franklin know when it was time for him to go to work at the State House? (He heard the ringing of the bell.) From how far away do you think the ringing of the Bell could be heard? (The sound of the bell probably carried for about two square miles, or from the Schuylkill to the Delaware River)
- The Liberty Bell was used as a powerful symbol by the *abolitionists* (a group of people who worked to end slavery). Benjamin Franklin had once owned enslaved Africans, but later in life he opposed slavery and became the president of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.



BRIGHT IDEA!!

Experience Independence Square!

(You must pass through security to enter the Square.)

If you don't have tickets for Independence Hall, visit the other buildings on Independence Square. **Congress Hall, Old City Hall, and the Great Essentials Exhibit in the West Wing** are all historically significant places to visit, and you don't need a ticket to get in! Rangers there will explain the importance of the buildings.

The **American Philosophical Society** has one building on Independence Square and one across 5th Street. The nation's oldest scholarly society, APS was founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743 "to promote useful knowledge." The APS has rotating exhibits. Visit one or both buildings to see various treasures relating to many of the founding fathers, including Franklin himself. Please limit your group to a maximum of 15 people at a time when visiting the APS exhibits.

Stop #7 Independence Hall 30 minutes (not including security check)

TIMED TICKETS REQUIRED from the Independence Visitor Center

This is a ranger-led program that will include the most historically important room in the nation!

Enter on the corner of 5th and Chestnut Streets.

Please arrive 30 minutes before your Independence Hall tour to gain entrance to Independence Square.

- As you start your tour of Independence Hall, you will begin in the East Wing. Look for Benjamin Franklin in the painting at the back of the room. What important event is happening in this painting?
- Despite his advanced age and frailty, when he was President of Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council, (like the governor) Dr. Franklin's office was on the second floor of the building. He was sometimes carried in by prisoners from the Walnut Street Prison in a contraption known as a *sedan chair*. (Do you remember the sedan chair from Franklin Court?)
- What did Benjamin Franklin say on the last day of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 about the chair with the sun carving on it? Was he really talking about the chair and the sun, or was he talking about something more? What did he mean?
- One of the last public matters to engage Benjamin Franklin was an effort to end slavery. Franklin died on April 17, 1790 and is buried in Christ Church Burial Ground (you can visit it at 5th and Arch Streets), where 20,000 mourners attended his funeral (about half of Philadelphia's total population at that time!).



BRIGHT IDEA!!

Visit the National Constitution Center! (5th and Arch Streets)

You can visit the National Constitution Center to learn more about the United States Constitution, which Benjamin Franklin helped create. Look for the statue of Franklin in Signer's Hall.

For more information about the National Constitution Center's operating hours and admission fees, ask at the Independence Visitor Center; or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.



Independence Park Institute

We hope you have enjoyed following in Franklin's footsteps during your visit to Independence National Historical Park! If you would like information about other educational programs visit www.independenceparkinstitute.com or call 215-597-2760.

If you are interested in learning even more about Benjamin Franklin, here are some suggested resources that you may enjoy. As Franklin wrote:

“Genius without education is like silver in the mine.”

Web Resources

Franklin Court: Franklin's Life

http://www.nps.gov/inde/Franklin_Court/Pages/franklinprinter.html

Franklin Court: Kids' Corner

http://www.nps.gov/inde/Franklin_Court/Pages/kids.html

Ben's Guide

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/benfranklin/>

Benjamin Franklin: Glimpses of the Man

<http://sln.fi.edu/franklin/rotten.html>

Benjamin Franklin

<http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin/>

Print Resources

Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life

by Candace Fleming

What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?

by Jean Fritz

Ben Franklin and the Magic Squares (Step into Reading, Step 4)

by Frank Murphy

How Ben Franklin Stole the Lightning

by Rosalyn Schanzer



The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

June 2007 (v. 8)