

# OBITER DICTUM

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 6  
JANUARY 1, 2006

---

## LIBRARY HOURS



The library will be closed on January 1 and 2 for New Year's and on January 16 in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. From January 3 to January 8, the library will operate on intersession hours, 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., seven days a week. The regular schedule will resume on January 9.

For details, check the Legal Research Center web site at <http://www.sandiego.edu/lrc/about/hours.php>.

---

## BEN'S BIG BASH



Franklin living  
history presenter  
Archbold

Benjamin Franklin impersonator Ralph Archbold will have a busy schedule this month as institutions around the nation celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> birthday of the statesman. He has a gig at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, <http://www.fi.edu>, which is hosting a birthday celebration on January 14, and another at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, <http://americanhistory.si.edu>, on January 21, where Archbold will demonstrate some of Franklin's science experiments. For a glimpse of Archbold's Franklin interpretation, as well as biographies, articles, and a visit to the Franklin print shop, visit "The Electric Ben Franklin" at <http://www.ushistory.org/franklin/index.htm>.

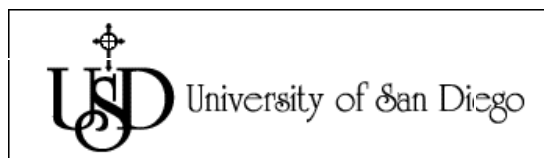
Franklin was born in Boston on January 17, 1706, and ran away to Philadelphia in 1723 following a dispute with his brother James over the printing of James's newspaper.

Among the civic contributions for which Franklin is remembered is the formation, along with his fellow members of the Junto philosophical society, of the Library Company of Philadelphia. Under the motto "To support the common good is divine," 50 initial subscribers invested 40 shillings each to purchase the original collection and pledged an additional 10 shillings annually for collection maintenance and development.

Many, but not all, of the earliest books in the Library's collection were

---

The newsletter section of OBITER DICTUM may be found at <http://www.sandiego.edu/lrc/catalogs/news.php>



---

*"If you would not be forgotten, As soon as you are dead and rotten,  
Either write things worthy of reading, Or do things worth the writing."*

- Poor Richard's Almanack, 1738

## BASH (cont.)

either religious or educational tomes. There was also an interest in politics, philosophy and business. Benjamin Franklin and others donated a number of works including *A Collection of Several Pieces* by John Locke and *Plutarch's Morals*. Franklin also donated his copy of *Merchants Mappe of Commerce*. The books were kept in the librarian's lodgings.

The library was open Saturday afternoons. Members could borrow books freely; non-members could also borrow books if they put up a surety, something of value that could be sold if the book was not returned. Beginning in the 1740's, several other American cities also began forming their own libraries. Franklin felt that "these Libraries have improved the general Conversation of Americans, made the common Tradesman and Farmers as intelligent as most Gentlemen from other Countries, and perhaps have contributed in some Degree to the Stand so generally made throughout the Colonies in Defence of their Privileges."

Philadelphia itself spawned new libraries including the Union Library founded in 1746 which had been incorporated from the smaller Association and Amicable Libraries. In 1769, the Union merged with the Library Company. In 1787, the Library Company offered delegates to the Constitutional Convention use of the library. Thus, Philadelphia's Library Company was also the first Library of Congress.

The LRC collection includes the following works about Franklin:

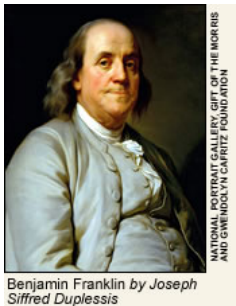
JOHN WILLIAM DRAPER, LIFE OF FRANKLIN/E302.6 .F8 D66

WILLARD STERNE RANDALL, A LITTLE REVENGE: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND HIS SON/E302.6 .F8 R18 1984

JAMES A. SAPPENFIELD, A SWEET INSTRUCTION: FRANKLIN'S JOURNALISM AS A LITERARY APPRENTICESHIP/E302.6 .F8 S33

GORDON S. WOOD, THE AMERICANIZATION OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN/E302.6 .F8 W84 2004

The LRC microforms collection contains the 10-volume set THE WORKS OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: CONTAINING SEVERAL POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL TRACTS NOT INCLUDED IN ANY FORMER EDITION, AND MANY LETTERS OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED, WITH NOTES AND A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, found at K46 .N5 26303-26366.



Benjamin Franklin by Joseph Siffred Duplessis

---

The newsletter section of OBITER DICTUM may be found at <http://www.sandiego.edu/lrc/catalogs/news.php>

