

*Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I
remember. Involve me and I learn.*

— Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)



This booklet, brought to you by the American Philatelic Society, offers a brief survey of Benjamin Franklin and his accomplishments. To learn more about him, READ ON! For example, did you know?

- The Library Company (a subscription library), the Pennsylvania Hospital, the American Philosophical Society, and the University of Pennsylvania all were founded by Franklin.
- His inventions include swim fins, bifocals, a glass armonica, watertight bulkheads for ships, the lightning rod, and a more energy-efficient wood stove (the Franklin stove).
- Franklin was the first scientist to study and map the Gulf Stream, one of the factors responsible for speeding travel, shipments and mail deliveries across the ocean.

Ben Franklin, Postmaster

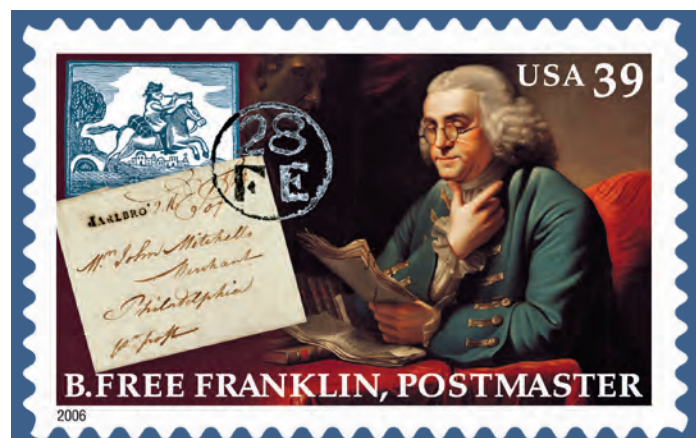
Franklin excelled in many arenas, but stamp collectors, of course, honor Franklin's postal connections: his work and his many appearances on stamps.

In 1753 he was appointed Joint Deputy Postmaster General of North America (along with William Hunter, Postmaster of Williamsburg, Virginia), to improve communications between the colonies. It was a daunting task, considering the wilderness roads that linked the settlements.

When determining routes for mail deliveries, Postmaster Franklin invented an odometer that he attached to his carriage to measure the distances.

Following his twenty-one years of service, Franklin was appointed the first American Postmaster General by the new Continental Congress in 1775.

In Philadelphia each January 17, friends of Franklin celebrate one of America's most famous historic figures, Benjamin Franklin — a man whose ideas, ideals, and accomplishments continue to influence our lives.



Cover art, from Annual Franklin Birthday Celebration, courtesy of the American Philosophical Society, www.amphilsoc.org, and graphic artist Shari Bufano

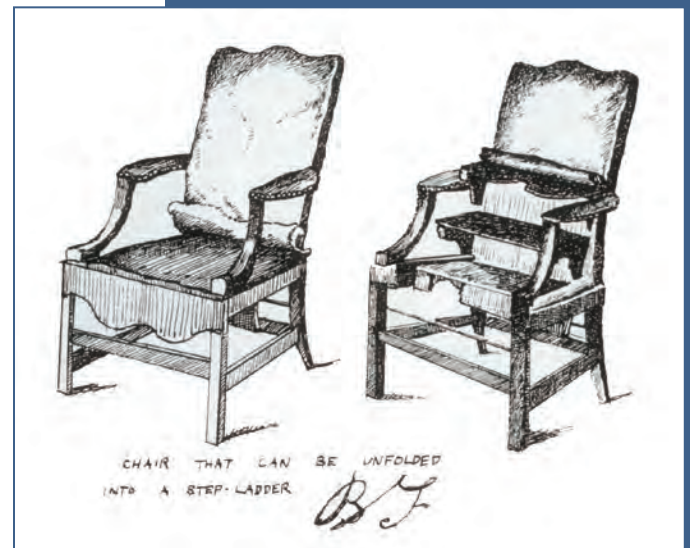
Ben Franklin, Inventor

Ben was very curious, and developed all kinds of solutions for problems. He needed two pairs of glasses: one to read with; the other to see far away. So he cut his glasses' lenses in half and put them together to make bifocals.

He invented a chair that turned into a stepladder. Another invention, the Franklin stove, proved to be more efficient in heating and for cooking in homes. His stove had a pipe that vented the smoke outside, and kept more heat inside.

Ben made a musical instrument of glass disks, called an armonica. It was played by rubbing wet fingers against the disks.

Among his many inventions, Ben also counts swim fins, an alternative alphabet, watertight bulkheads for ships, and the lightning rod!



Ben Franklin, Scientist

Ben was fascinated by the mysteries of science. Most people know about his experiment with the kite, the key and lightning, where he was the first to scientifically prove the similarity between sparks (electrical charges) made in labs and parlor games, and the electrical charge carried by lightning bolts. In earlier experiments he tried to demonstrate the effect of an electrical charge on a turkey; instead he knocked himself out with the electrical current.

But Ben did so much more than investigate the properties of electricity. During his years in London, where he represented the American colonies, he conducted all kinds of scientific experiments at his 36 West Craven Street laboratory. His important experiments included the "smoothing" of water with oil, measuring canal depths and their implication, studying weather, and the effects of the Gulf Stream. He also sent seeds home, and thus introduced new trees and vegetation to the colonies.



Ben Franklin, Printer

At the age of 12, Ben Franklin became an apprentice at his brother James' printing shop. Each morning he would get up early, dress in a coarse shirt, leather pants, and wool socks, and then start a long day of work. His chores included sweeping his brother's printing shop, tending the fire in the fireplace, running errands, sorting and setting type for the printing press, and inking and running the press. He helped his brother write, edit, and publish a new newspaper, the *New England Courant*.

Later Ben worked in a Print Shop in London, where he earned the nickname "Water-American," because he liked to drink water!

As an adult Ben returned to Philadelphia, where he opened his own print shop. He wrote and published books, newspapers like *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, pamphlets, and *Poor Richard's Almanack*. Ben's printing business was so successful that he loaned money to other young printers, partnering with them to set up print shops in other colonies; then he shared their profits.





Ben Franklin, Statesman

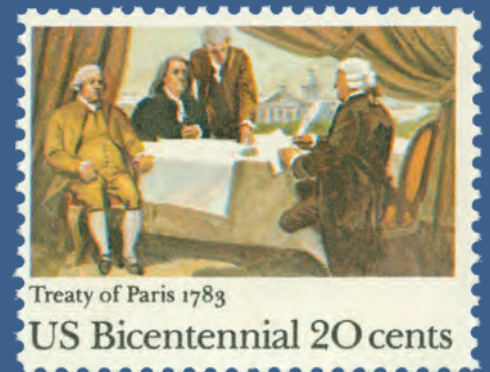
During the Revolutionary War, Ben was elected by the Pennsylvania Assembly to be its delegate to the Second Continental Congress.

He helped draft the Declaration of Independence, and was one of its signers.

He served as a statesman, negotiating with British army leaders, and pleading for independence with England's king.

He also sought France's support for the American Patriots during the Revolution. He, John Adams, and John Jay negotiated peace with Great Britain, and on September 3, 1783, they signed the Treaty of Paris.

When he returned home to America, he became governor of Pennsylvania and helped write and edit the Constitution of the United States.



Ben Franklin, Mathematician

When Ben first studied math as a child, he did not do very well. "I failed in arithmetic and made no progress," he reported. Later he read and studied books on the subject and learned to love mathematics. He enjoyed creating magic squares — large squares subdivided into smaller squares. Each small square had a number inside. Whenever someone added the numbers in any horizontal or vertical rows, the totals were the same. Sometimes the totals for the diagonal rows were the same, too. Just like magic!

A 10x10 magic square grid with numbers. The numbers are arranged in a pattern that is symmetric across both diagonals. The grid is as follows:

52	61	4	13	20	29	36	45
14	3	62	51	46	35	30	19
53	60	5	12	21	28	37	44
11	6	59	54	43	38	27	22
55	58	7	10	23	26	39	42
9	8	57	56	41	40	25	24
50	63	2	15	18	31	34	47
16	1	64	49	48	33	32	17

Ben Franklin, Reader

Ben learned to read when he was 3 years old. Some books suggest he taught himself; others say his mother taught him to read.

Reading was his favorite pastime! Ben began by reading the Bible and books of ministers' sermons. Later while he was working as a printing apprentice for his brother James, he asked for a small food allowance. He spent only half his money for food, eating "no more than a biscuit, a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry-cook's and a glass of water." Ben saved the rest of his money to buy books. Because books were very expensive, he sometimes borrowed books from booksellers. He would read books through much of the night, and then return them in the morning.

Ben liked to read all kinds of books, including books on navigation, arithmetic, English grammar, philosophy, religion, and health.

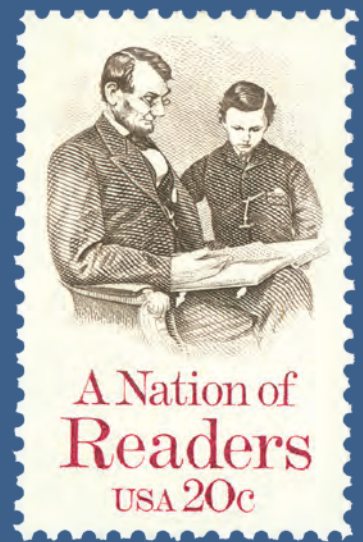
In 1731 he invited others who shared his love of reading to form a subscription library. Member fees paid for the library's initial purchase of books, and yearly fees covered the purchase of new books to expand the library's collection.

Ben Franklin, Athlete

Ben Franklin was a strong, athletic young man. In his early years, he read a book on swimming and after studying the pictures, taught himself to swim. At the age of 9, he combined two of his favorite activities, swimming and kite flying. Ben says, "I found that lying on my back and holding the stick in my hands, I was drawn across the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner...."

He was tall — 5'10" — and had rounded shoulders and muscular arms, developed no doubt from his printing work. In fact, he was known for his great strength and his ability to carry heavy printing type!

Ben, who liked to exercise year-round, also liked to walk around the rooms of his home. He even kept count of the number of circuits he had made!



Where in the World Is Ben? Franklin on Postage Stamps

Franklin is one of the leading figures on U.S. stamps. He first appeared on a 5-cent U.S. stamp in July 1847. That stamp paid for delivery of a letter carried under 300 miles. Since then, his likeness has appeared on more than 100 U.S. stamps and many foreign issues. Only President George Washington has appeared on more U.S. stamps.

At least 50 countries have issued postage stamps picturing Benjamin Franklin. The U.S. issues listed below come from the 2002 Scott Specialized Catalogue of U.S. Stamps and Covers; the worldwide listing, compiled by Paul Partington and Dr. Udo Skladny, is from <http://www.philately.com/philately/biographies.htm>

United States Scott 1, 3, 5-5A, 6-8A, 9, 18-24, 38, 40, 46, 63, 71, 81, 85, 86, 92, 100, 102, 110, 112, 123, 133-134, 145, 156, 167, 182, 192, 206, 212, 219, 246-247, 264, 279, 300, 314, 316, 318, 331, 343, 348, 352, 357, 374, 383, 385, 387, 390, 392, 414-423, 431-440, 470-478, 497, 508-518, 523-524, 547, 552, 575, 578, 581, 594, 596-597, 604, 632, 658, 669, 803, 1030, 1073, 1393D, 1690, 3139.

Aitutaki 124; 124b; 126d; Ajman (M)1246; Antigua 901; Argentina 660; Bangladesh 114a; Barbados 442; 683; Barbuda 8632; (M)261; 264; 281; 284; Belize 585; 585c; Bulgaria 950; Burundi C246-247; C248-249; C249a; Cameroun C229; Canada 691; Canal Zone 4; 71; 100; 118; J15; Chad C185; Central Africa 367; Chile 721; Colombia 846; 846b; Cook Island 445; 448; 450; 910; 912; C21; C22a; Costa Rica C681; Cuba 221; C150; Equatorial Guinea (M)1257; France 814; 1480; Fujeira (M)450; Great Britain 785; Grenada 631; 1555; C30; Guatemala C603; C608; C608a; Guinea-Bissau (M)454; Ireland 391-392; 392a; Liberia 300; 705-6; 932; C54-56; Madagascar C139; Nicaragua 986-987; Niue 245; 285; 515; B26; B28; B41; B41e; Pakistan 409; Paraguay (M) 2430; 2696; Philippines 213; 226; 250; 259; 270; 275; 283; 289C; 299; 349; C12; C45; O14; Puerto Rico 210; 210a; 215; Romania 1122; 2609; Russia 1875; Samoa 429; 432a; San Marino 266-270; Seychelles 379; Sweden 1453; Togo C272; C273a; C281; C282a; Tonga 378; Turkey 1259-1260; Turks & Caicos 661; Upper Volta 353-354; Uruguay 943; Zaire 1009.