

either following the performance or via e-mail: ray@rayflynt.com.

I am grateful to the Board of Directors of The Colonial Players, Inc. for the opportunity to publicly present this enhanced reading, and want to express my appreciation to Beth Terranova for championing the project. My thanks to Wes Bedsworth, Andrea Elward, Frank Florentine, and Kaelynn Miller for their assistance with the production.

Finally, since I'm sure you'd like to know how his story ends, a few words about Franklin's death. He was afflicted with empyema, a condition involving the formation of pus on the lung. He had been bedridden, but one day rallied and was able to get out of bed. When his daughter then suggested he would recover and live many years, Franklin replied, "I hope not." When he died, 20,000 people attended his funeral (the population of Philadelphia was less than 30,000), and all 32 of Philadelphia's clergy led the procession to the cemetery.

-Ray Flynt

Production Staff

Beth Terranova (*Producer*) - Having spent six delightful months in Benjamin Franklin's company when she directed *1776* earlier this year, it is a pleasure for Beth to be visiting once again with her old friend as the orchestrator for a relaxing evening in his home. Beth's work at CP has included producing, directing, stage managing, set and costume designing, and acting. Beth is a 4-time Washington Area Theater Community Honors (WATCH) nominee, winning Outstanding Director for *Hauptmann*. Beth serves as Production Director on CP's Board of Directors.

Andrea L. Elward (*Costume Designer*) - Looking to work on another aspect of production, Drea took on the challenge of costume design for *1776* and is pleased to return to dress one of our most famous founding fathers. Active in the local theater community for over 30 years, Drea has appeared in the Ruby Griffith Award- winning productions of *Enter the Guardsman* with CP and *Mame* with 2nd Star Productions. Other credits include featured roles in *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Assassins*, *Anything Goes*, *Annie*, *Me and My Girl*, *Chicago*, and *A Chorus Line*. In her spare time,

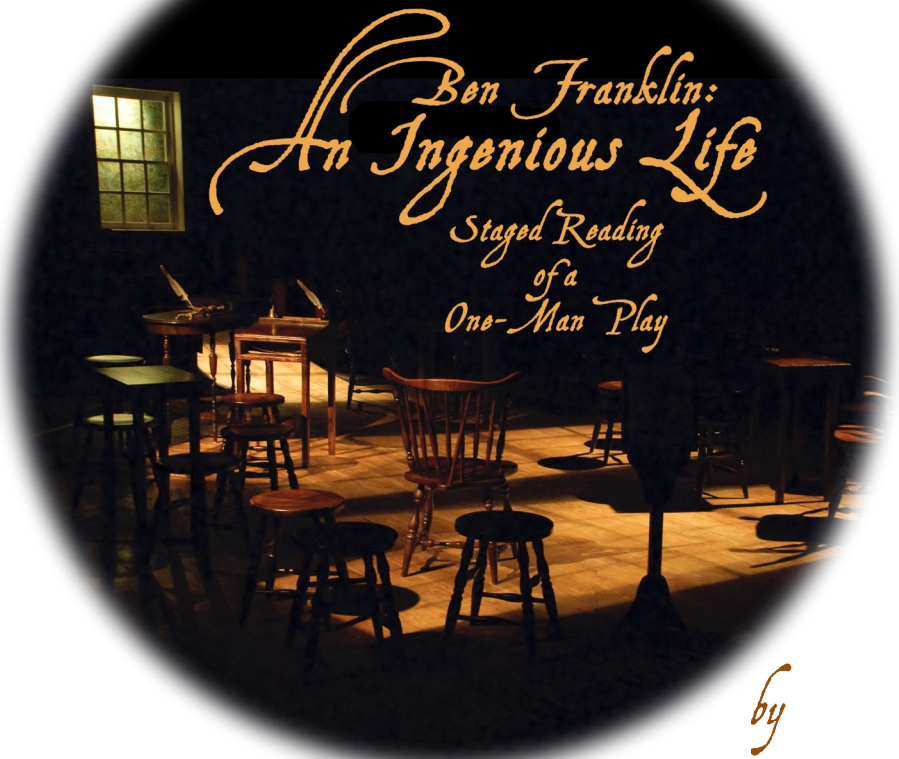
Drea can be found singing with the best rocked-up R&B Soul band in town, "JoyRide."

Frank Florentine (*Lighting*) - Frank has an extensive background in lighting design from ballet to museums to special events to show caves. He was lighting designer for 25 years for the Smithsonian Institution National Air and Space Museum facilities in Washington, D.C. and near Dulles International Airport. Frank has been involved and sharing his extensive talents with CP since 2012 designing lights for shows and helping with many other technical projects!

Wes Bedsworth (*Sound/Playbill*) - Wes has been involved with more than 30 different productions at Colonial Players since he joined CP in 2007. He is a 3-time WATCH award nominee and 1-time winner for sound design of CP productions. Wes serves as Operations Director on the CP Board, Technical Director on the Production Team, and as one of the CP Webmasters. He works as a senior systems engineer in Washington, D.C., and also sings in two different choirs at his church.

The Colonial Players

presents



by
Ray Flynt

August 16 and 18, 2013



*The
Colonial
Players*

108 East Street • Annapolis, MD 21401
Telephone: 410-268-7373

— thecolonialplayers.org —

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Time and Place

Visit with Ben Franklin in his Philadelphia home during the 1780's, where his facile musings and imagination take us to Boston, New York, London and Paris, in addition to Philadelphia.

There will be one ten-minute intermission between the Acts.

You are invited to stay for a talk back with the author, moderated by Beth Terranova, following the performance.

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The Cast

Ray Flynt (*Ben Franklin*) Ray most recently appeared on Colonial Players' stage as Ben Franklin in 1776, which marked the third time he had played that role. Ray is a veteran of more than 60 community theater productions, including Pippin at Colonial Players and The Pirates of Penzance at 2nd Star. In addition to Franklin, his favorite roles include Tony in *The Most Happy Fella* and Father Farley in *Mass*



Appeal. Ray is the CEO of Travelers Aid International based in Washington, DC. He is a member of Mystery Writers of America and the author of Brad Frame mysteries as well as the political thriller, *Kisses of an Enemy*. Opening chapters and short stories are available online at www.rayflynt.com. Love to Rebecca!

About the Play

Twenty years ago, after having had the opportunity to see live performances of Hal Holbrook's *Mark Twain Tonight*, *Give 'em Hell Harry* (Truman), and *The Belle of Amherst*, the one-woman play based on the life of Emily Dickinson, I thought that Ben Franklin would make a great subject for a one-man play. At that point in my life I had already played the role of Franklin in two productions of 1776. While Franklin is one of the most recognizable figures in our nation's history, the depth and breadth of his success and the diversity of his civic and scientific contributions are unprecedented. As I researched Franklin's life, whatever I thought I knew about him only scratched the surface.

He was born on January 17, 1706 and died at the age of 84 on April 17, 1790. The principle source materials for this play are Franklin's own words found in his posthumously-published autobiography (which detailed his life through 1757) and numerous letters and articles he wrote.

Franklin was a printer, businessman, scientist, author, philosopher, political theorist, politician, statesman, postmaster, inventor, and diplomat - in short, he led an ingenious life. I expected to write a play that would illuminate his life, but the more I researched, I was astounded at how many of his observations about life, politics, war, religion and education are just as relevant today.

My biggest challenge was editing. Not only decisions about what to include and in what sequence, but ensuring that the rich language of the 18th Century would be accessible to a 21st Century audience. I'm sure Ben Franklin would have trouble using Twitter. The language of his time was dense, what might be called flowery. For example, in describing efforts to improve his writing abilities he used "perspicuity." Not a word in common use today and I changed it to "clarity." Another example, the play includes "The Speech of Miss Polly Baker," a story which Franklin published in The Pennsylvania Gazette about a woman prosecuted in Connecticut for having a bastard child. As re-created in the play, you get the essence of what Franklin was trying to accomplish, however the printed "speech" of Polly Baker was four times longer! Similar edits occurred throughout.

Ninety-five percent of the play consists of Franklin's own words. In the later years of life his daughter, Sarah Bache, who he called Sally, lived with him and took care of him. I have "imagined" a few conversations between him and his daughter, which help add context to the play's location. And I've incorporated references and/or quotes of prominent persons from Franklin's lifetime, such as Alexander Pope, Thomas Paine, Voltaire, and Mozart. This is a work in progress, and I welcome your feedback

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