Title: Ben Franklin’s Neighbors and Friends

Submitted by Vince Profy

Grade level: Upper Middle to High School

Introduction: What was it like to live in Colonial Philadelphia? How did people interact? Where did they meet? During the years leading up to the Revolution, Benjamin Franklin emerged as one of the city’s leading citizen. This lesson is an opportunity to learn about some of Franklin’s neighbors and friends and what is was like to live in Colonial Philadelphia.

Materials:

Maps of Colonial Philadelphia – see Andrew Dury map of Philadelphia 1776

Biographical handouts

Procedure:

1) Ask students what they think it may have been like in Philadelphia during the colonial period before the American Revolution in 1776. Consider businesses, housing, entertainment, religion, transportation. Do they know any people that lived in Philadelphia at that time? (A good resource for teachers is Sam Bass Warner’s *The Private City*, Part 1, the eighteenth century town; high school students could read the chapter.) Bring the discussion to Benjamin Franklin as one of the most famous Philadelphians during this period.
2) Give students a copy of the Dury map of Philadelphia in 1776. The population of the city was about 25,000 people. Notice how almost all development is close to the Delaware River. What are some of the sites or places that can be identified? Some are labeled (State House, Market, Quaker Meeting House); others we can imagine, private houses, taverns, shops (many on the first floor room of a residence). Do any of the sites/places exist today?

Have students create a list of places where Franklin may have had contact with his friends and neighbors. For instance:

- State House Building
- Christ’s Church
- Arch Street Meetinghouse
- Market Street stalls
- Franklin’s Print Shop
- Franklin’s house
- City Tavern
- Southeast Square (today it’s Franklin Square)
- Northeast Square (today it’s Washington Square)
- One of the many docks

3) Explain to students that they are going to meet one of Franklin’s friends or neighbors. Give each student a short biography – the biography should not include references to Franklin. There are many possible characters. Biographies of ten colonial Philadelphians are included.

- Anthony Benezet
- John Bartram
- Benjamin Chew
- James Logan
- Isaac Norris
- Israel Pemberton
- Samuel Powell
- Hugh Roberts
- Betsy Ross
- Benjamin Rush
Additional names

William Smith (President of the College of Pennsylvania)
Joseph Galloway (Delegate to Continental Congress, loyalist, lawyer, member of Pennsylvania Assembly)
John Hughes (Stamp Act Collector, friend of Franklin)
William Allen (merchant, loyalist, Mayor, Chief Justice)
Andrew Bradford (printer)
Richard Allen (minister, founder of Bethel AME)
William White (Bishop, rector of Christ Church)
Sir William Keith (colonial Governor of PA)
Thomas Penn (son of William)

Students should be given time to read the biography.

4) Students should research the life of Benjamin Franklin and answer the following types of questions: What kind of contact might this person have had with Benjamin Franklin? Where might they have met? What was the nature of their relationship? What was life like in Colonial Philadelphia (i.e. What might they eat or drink? What kind of houses? Sanitation? Entertainment?).

There are many books and websites available to research the life of Franklin and life in Colonial Philadelphia.

5) Students should write a short story or dialogue describing the contact between Benjamin Franklin and the individual they have researched.

Guidelines for the research:

1) The incident can be factual (a real event) or fictional (but it must be plausible – i.e. based on Franklin’s life).
2) The incident should be set in one of more sites (places) in Colonial Philadelphia. Residences are mentioned for some characters and in some cases they may be public buildings today with websites.
3) The incident should include additional information and details about life in Colonial Philadelphia.
4) Length can be determined based on age and of student’s academic ability.

6) Students read their story to class and/or publish a booklet of all stories – “The Friends and Neighbors of Benjamin Franklin.”
Four months after the Declaration of Independence was adopted, Andrew Dury published this detailed map in London. A chart of Delaware Bay shows the location of the city and its approaches from the sea.

Anthony Benezet was born in France in 1713. His family were Huguenots - French protestants - who had been suffering increasing persecution. When Benezet was two years old, they emigrated to London, where he received an education suitable for the son of a prosperous family of merchants. London proved to be a temporary home. In 1731, when Benezet was seventeen years of age, the family emigrated once more, this time to Philadelphia. Here Benezet joined the Society of Friends, or Quakers. His early attempts at a career in trade were unsuccessful and, in 1739, he started as schoolteacher at Germantown. Three years later, he moved to a position at the famous Friends' English School of Philadelphia (now the William Penn Charter School) where he was noted both for being a fine teacher, and for his dislike of the severe discipline then common. In 1750, in addition to his day duties, he set up an evening class for slave children which he ran from his own home. In 1754, he left the Friends' English School to set up one of his own exclusively for girls - the first public girls' school in America. He was dogged by ill health, however, and was not able to maintain an uninterrupted career. Nevertheless, he continued to teach slave children from home until 1770 when, with the support of the Society of Friends, he set up the Negro School at Philadelphia. He subsequently taught at both of these school almost until his death.

From at least the 1750s, Benezet became a firm opponent of slavery. His campaign, very much a solitary one at first, took two forms. Firstly, he worked to convince his Quaker brethren in Philadelphia that slave-owning was not consistent with Christian doctrine. Secondly, he wrote and published at his own expense a number of anti-slavery tracts and pamphlets. Benezet also founded the first anti-slavery society, the Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage which after his death was organized as Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. Benezet did not live to see anti-slavery become a powerful force, either in Britain or America. He died in 1784, and is buried in the Friends' Burial Ground, Philadelphia.
BENJAMIN CHEW

Benjamin Chew was born in Maryland, but his Quaker father soon moved the family to Philadelphia. After receiving a classical education and then studying law with Andrew Hamilton in Philadelphia, young Chew travelled to London to continue his legal studies at the Middle Temple. While abroad he made many important connections that advanced his career down the road; most important among his new ties were those to the proprietary Penn family.

When he returned to America in 1744, Benjamin Chew settled in Delaware, where he established a successful law practice. Additionally he was elected Kent County representative to the Assembly of the Lower Counties, serving as speaker of that body from 1753 to 1757.

In 1754 Chew moved to Philadelphia and again established a thriving law practice. During this period, Chew represented the interests of the Penn family, and like them, left his Quaker faith to join the Church of England. As early as 1755 he was made both Recorder of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Attorney General. Over the years, the Penns appointed Chew to a variety of other public offices, including Register-General (in 1765) and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania (in 1774, following in the footsteps of William Allen).

Chew was also a friend of George Washington and John Adams, and as relations between Great Britain and the colonies began to sour, he was at first an outspoken advocate for the colonies. Nonetheless, Chew believed protest and reform were the solution to the problems with Parliament, and when the Declaration of Independence was adopted, Chew was not among its supporters. Chew lost almost all of his Pennsylvania positions at the beginning of the Revolutionary War, retaining only the post of Register-General until 1777. In that year, due to his lack of support for the revolution and his close ties to the Crown, Chew was arrested for treason and paroled to Union Iron Works in New Jersey. Shortly after his arrest, his Germantown mansion "Cliveden" was occupied by the British and damaged by fighting during the Battle of Germantown.
For over a decade after he was freed and returned to Philadelphia in 1778, Chew stayed out of private legal practice and continued to be politically active only on the Philadelphia Common Council. With the 1790 adoption of a more conservative Pennsylvania constitution, Governor Thomas Mifflin in 1791 appointed Chew to the High Court of Errors and Appeals, a post he held until 1806. He lived his remaining four years outside the public light.

Benjamin Chew was elected a trustee of the Academy and College of Philadelphia (the origins of the University of Pennsylvania) in 1757 and continued as such until 1791. He was not named a trustee of the University of the State of Pennsylvania, as Penn was organized by the new state government in 1779; nor was he included on the Board of Trustees created by the 1791 union of the College and the University of the State of Pennsylvania. His son Benjamin Chew, Jr., (1758-1844) A.B. 1775, would serve, however, as a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania from 1810 until his death in 1844.

From: http://www.archives.upenn.edu/people/1700s/chew_ben.html
BENJAMIN RUSH

Benjamin Rush, eminent physician, writer, educator, humanitarian, is as interesting a figure as one could find in the formation of the United States. A wildly popular and much loved man, he was nonetheless a fallible character. He was born in December of 1745 in Byberry, Pennsylvania, some twelve miles from Philadelphia. His father died when Benjamin was six, and his mother placed him in the care of his maternal uncle Dr. Finley who became his teacher and advisor for many years. In 1759 he attended the College of Philadelphia, where he ultimately attained a Bachelor of Arts degree. He continued his education with a Dr. Redman of Philadelphia for four years and then crossed the Atlantic to attend to an M.D. at Edinburgh. He spent several years in Europe studying and practicing medicine, French, Italian, Spanish, and science. He returned in 1769, opened a private practice in Philadelphia, and was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the College of Philadelphia.

Benjamin Rush was soon beloved in the city, where he practiced extensively amongst the poor. His practice was successful, his classes were popular, and he further began to engage in writing that would prove to be of considerable importance to the emerging nation. Rush published the first American textbook on Chemistry. In 1773 he contributed editorial assays to the papers about the Patriot cause and also joined the American Philosophical Society. He was active in the Sons of Liberty in Philadelphia during that time. In June of 1776 he was elected to attend the provincial conference to send delegates to the Continental Congress. He was appointed to represent Philadelphia that year and so signed the Declaration of Independence. In 1777 he was appointed surgeon-general of the middle department of the Continental Army. This office led to some trouble for him; he was critical of the administration of the Army Medical service under Dr. William Shippen. He complained to Washington, who deferred to the Congress. Ultimately Congress upheld Shippen and Rush resigned in disgust. As the war continued and Army forces under General Washington suffered a series of defeats, Rush secretly campaigned for removal of Washington as commander in chief, and went so far as to write an anonymous letter to then Governor Patrick Henry of Virginia. He was caught in the act and confronted by Washington, at which point he bowed out of any activities related to the war.

In 1789 he wrote in Philadelphia newspapers in favor of adopting the Federal constitution. He was then elected to the Pennsylvania convention which adopted that constitution. He was appointed treasurer of the US Mint where he served from 1797 to 1813.
Rush’s teaching career and medical practice continued till the end of his life. He became the Professor of medical theory and clinical practice at the consolidated University of Pennsylvania in 1791, where he was a popular figure at the height of his influence in medicine and in social circles. He was also a social activist, a prominent advocate for the abolition of slavery, an advocate for scientific education for the masses, including women, and for public medical clinics to treat the poor.

Benjamin Rush was a regular writer, and many notes about the less well-known signers of the Declaration come from his observations on the floor of congress. Some members of congress had some harsh observations to make about Rush. He was handsome, well-spoken, a gentleman and a very attractive figure—he was also a gossip and was quick to rush to judgement about others. He was supremely confident of his own opinion and decisions, yet shallow and very unscientific in practice. His chief accomplishment as a physician was in the practice of bleeding the patient. It was said that he considered bleeding to be a cure for nearly any ailment. Even when the practice began to decline, he refused to reconsider the dangers of it. He died at the age of 68 at his home in Philadelphia, the most celebrated physician in America.

From: http://www.ushistory.org/DECLARATION/signers/rush.htm

Elizabeth Griscom — also called Betsy, was born on January 1, 1752.

Betsy went to a Friends (Quaker) public school. For eight hours a day she was taught reading, writing, and received instruction in a trade — probably sewing. After completing her schooling, Betsy's father apprenticed her to a local upholsterer. Today we think of upholsterers primarily as sofa-makers and such, but in colonial times they performed all manner of sewing jobs, including flag-making. It was at her job that Betsy fell in love with another apprentice, John Ross, who was the son of an Episcopal assistant rector at Christ Church.

Quakers frowned on inter-denominational marriages. The penalty for such unions was severe — the guilty party being "read out" of the Quaker meeting house. Getting "read out" meant being cut off emotionally and economically from both family and meeting house. One's entire history and community would be instantly dissolved. On a November night in 1773, 21-year-old Betsy eloped with John Ross. They ferried across the Delaware River to Hugg's Tavern and were married in New Jersey. Her wedding caused an irrevocable split from her family. [It is an interesting parallel to note that on their wedding certificate is the name of New Jersey's Governor, William Franklin, Benjamin Franklin's son. Three years later William would have an irrevocable split with his father because he was a Loyalist against the cause of the Revolution.]
Less than two years after their nuptials, the couple started their own upholstery business. Their decision was a bold one as competition was tough and they could not count on Betsy's Quaker circle for business. As she was "read out" of the Quaker community, on Sundays one could now find Betsy at Christ Church sitting in pew 12 with her husband. Some Sundays would find George Washington, America's new commander in chief, sitting in an adjacent pew.

**War Comes to Philadelphia**

In January 1776, a disaffected British agitator living in Philadelphia for only a short while published a pamphlet that would have a profound impact on the Colonials. Tom Paine ("These are the times that try men's souls") wrote *Common Sense* which would swell rebellious hearts and sell 120,000 copies in three months; 500,000 copies before war's end.

However, the city was fractured in its loyalties. Many still felt themselves citizens of Britain. Others were ardent revolutionaries heeding a call to arms.

Betsy and John Ross keenly felt the impact of the war. Fabrics needed for business were becoming hard to come by. Business was slow. John joined the Pennsylvania militia. While guarding an ammunition cache in mid-January 1776, John Ross was mortally wounded in an explosion. Though his young wife tried to nurse him back to health he died on the 21st and was buried in Christ Church cemetery.

In late May or early June of 1776, according to legend, Betsy had a meeting with the Committee of Three: George Washington, George Ross, and Robert Morris, which led to the sewing of the first flag. Although there is no record of the meeting, Betsy's relatives claim that she told the story of the meeting. It has become a treasured legend in American history.

After becoming widowed, Betsy returned to the Quaker fold, in a way. Quakers are pacifists and forbidden from bearing arms. This led to a schism in their ranks. When Free, or Fighting Quakers — who supported the war effort — banded together, Betsy joined them. (The Free Quaker Meeting House, which still stands a few blocks from the Betsy Ross House, was built in 1783, after the war was over.)

Betsy would be married again in June 1777, this time to sea captain Joseph Ashburn in a ceremony performed at Old Swedes Church in Philadelphia.

During the winter of 1777, Betsy's home was forcibly shared with British soldiers whose army occupied Philadelphia. Meanwhile the Continental Army was suffering that most historic winter at Valley Forge.

Betsy and Joseph had two daughters (Zillah, who died in her youth, and Elizabeth). On a trip to the West Indies to procure war supplies for the Revolutionary cause, Captain Ashburn was
After the War

Betsy learned of her husband's death from her old friend, John Claypoole, another sailor imprisoned at the brutal Old Mill. In May of 1783, Betsy was married for the third time, the ceremony performed at Christ Church. Her new husband was none other than old friend John Claypoole. Betsy convinced her new husband to abandon the life of the sea and find landlubbing employment. Claypoole initially worked in her upholstery business and then at the U.S. Customs House in Philadelphia. The couple had five daughters (Clarissa Sidney, Susannah, Rachel, Jane, and Harriet, who died at nine months).

Betsy's signature from the roster at the Free Quaker Meeting House, Philadelphia

After the birth of their second daughter, the family moved to bigger quarters on Second Street in what was then Philadelphia's Mercantile District. Claypoole passed on in 1817 after years of ill health and Betsy never remarried. She continued working until 1827 bringing many of her immediate family into the business with her. After retiring, she went to live with her married daughter Susannah Satterthwaite in the then-remote suburb of Abington, PA, to the north of Philadelphia.

In 1834, there were only two Free Quakers still attending the Meeting House. It was agreed by Betsy and Samuel Wetherill's son John Price Wetherill that the usefulness of their beloved Meeting House had come to an end. At that last meeting, Betsy watched as the door was locked, symbolizing the end of an era.

Betsy died on January 30, 1836, at the age of 84.

Adapted from: http://www.ushistory.org/betsy/flaglife.html
Hugh Roberts

Hugh Roberts, a Quaker merchant and philanthropist served two terms in the Pennsylvania Assembly as a representative of Philadelphia. Roberts is best remembered as one of the leading figures behind the abolition movement among Friends. Born on 4 July 1706, Roberts was the only son of a prosperous merchant and one-term mayor of the city. Following in the footsteps of his father, Roberts also entered into trade, beginning by 1734 as a shopkeeper at the Sign of the Tobacco Pipe on Second Street. In 1741, the year his father died, he relocated his store to his father’s residence on High Street near Third Street. There he remained until 1752 when he moved a final time a store in Church alley directly behind his Market Street property. While Roberts sold a variety of merchandise, he specialized in tobacco and iron products. By the 1750s he was frequently described as an ironmonger since he sold such iron and hardware items as anvils, scythes, iron pots, nails, hinges, locks and tin plates.

Roberts was successful enough to lend money and to invest in real estate. He purchased 60 acres in 1743 near Frankford Creek which most likely became the site of a country home he began building there in 1765. Roberts became associated with a group of men who shared similar backgrounds and attitudes with himself, and who became enormously active in a variety of civic activities. These philanthropic activists labored for three decades prior to the Revolution to improve Philadelphia’s social, cultural and economic life and in the process created one of the leading centers of intellectual and cultural activity in the British Empire. He died in 1786.

Adapted from: Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania edited by Craig Horle.
In 1701 Isaac Norris was born in Philadelphia, the son of Isaac Norris, a well-to-do Quaker merchant and original participant in William Penn's "holy experiment." Isaac was educated at the Friends' School in Philadelphia, and went abroad in 1722 and 1734-1735. After he finished his schooling, Norris managed the family business on behalf of his ailing father until the latter's death in 1735. At that time Isaac became a senior partner. Four years later he married Sarah Logan, the eldest daughter of James Logan.

Like his father before him, Norris entered into politics at an early age. In 1727 he was elected to the Philadelphia common council, and from there he moved to the provincial Assembly. In 1742 he moved out of his house in the city proper, and resettled in his family's estate, "Fairhill" in the Northern Liberties section of Philadelphia county. The next year he retired from business to devote himself to politics full time. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly for most of the rest of his life, serving as its Speaker from 1751 until 1764.

In the Assembly, Norris played a key and acrimonious role as the leader of the old Quaker faction. Over the course of the 18th century the Quakers fast became a minority in Pennsylvania. To counteract the political fallout of the change in demographics, Norris led the charge in gerrymandering and other underhanded tactics to retain a Quaker majority in the assembly. Norris and other Quakers wanted the Penn family to pay taxes on their immense land holdings and, as pacifists, were against the appropriation of public money for military use during the French and Indian War. He was thus a fierce opponent of the Penn family. Ultimately, Norris retired due to poor health and died shortly thereafter. His death proved his value to the Quaker faction, in that his passing marked the end of the Quaker's strong influence in Pennsylvania's politics.

Isaac Norris served as a trustee of the College and Academy of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania) from 1751 until his resignation in 1755.

From: http://www.archives.upenn.edu/people/1700s/norris_isaac.html
A wealthy, liberal patron of many of Philadelphia's public institutions, Israel Pemberton was known as the “King of the Quakers” for his role as a leader of the meetings of the Friends. A prominent businessman as well as a devout Quaker, Pemberton was one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Hospital. He and his brothers were among several of the Quakers arrested and banished to Virginia in 1777 for their pacifist principles.

JAMES LOGAN (1674-1751)

James Logan was 25 years old when he traveled to Pennsylvania as a Secretary to the William Penn. He remained an agent for Penn after the colony’s founder returned to England. Logan has active in Pennsylvania politics. He became a leader in the conservative Quaker party and held a variety of offices in the provincial government. By the early 1700s, Logan was one of the best know people in Philadelphia. In addition to his political life, Logan ran a very successful fur-trading business and become one of the wealthiest men in the colonies. In about 1730 he built Stenton, a 300 acre plantation in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. Penn had instructed Logan to maintain good relations with the Native Americans and Iroquois leaders frequently visited Stenton. Although he was a member of the Quaker party, he supported military defense of the colony. Logan was also a scholar gentleman. At Stenton he created one of the largest and finest libraries in North America where he entertained other gentlemen interested in books and learning. He had a special interest in science, mathematics and optics. One of the unusual questions he explored was the reproductive life of corn. He corresponded with a variety of European scientists, scholars, and book dealers and wrote a number of scientific papers. Logan served as a trustee for the college of Philadelphia, later the University of Pennsylvania. His name survives as Logan Circle on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the name of a school, railroad station and section of the city. His library eventually became part of the Library Company of Philadelphia.
John Bartram, Botanist

Despite the loss of his parents and a rather limited formal education, John Bartram quickly became a person of consequence in his community. His circle of friends contained many of the leading citizens of Philadelphia. Bartram was a farmer by profession, but his interests went well beyond commercial agriculture. Exactly when John Bartram acquired his great interest in botany is unclear. In a letter to Peter Collinson of 1764, Bartram states: “I had always since ten years old, a great inclination to plants, and knew all that I once observed by sight, though not their proper names, having no person nor books to instruct me.”(4) In a biographical sketch of his father published in 1804, William Bartram said that John’s interests had grown from his use of herb medicines in treating neighbors too poor to afford, or not able to travel to, Philadelphia doctors.(5) Certainly, John’s frequent references to the medicinal qualities of certain plants gives support to this claim. The most frequently quoted explanation of Bartram’s conversion to botany, however, is from Crevecoeur’s account of a visit with John Bartram published in The Letters of An American Farmer, 1782. In this account, John pauses from his plowing long enough to observe a daisy growing wild in his field: “What a shame, said my mind, that thee shouldst have employed so many years in tilling the earth and destroying so many flowers and plants, without being acquainted with their structures and uses.”(6)

However his interests were first awakened, John Bartram began his botanical exploration and collection at about the time of his first wife’s death from an unidentified epidemic in 1727.

In the following year, John bought a small house and a hundred and seven acres of land in Kingsessing on the bank of the Schuylkill (about three miles from Philadelphia). He married his second wife, Ann Mendenhall, and began a major expansion of the house, the masonry of which he executed himself in 1729. In a five acre plot of ground between his new house and the river, John began his famous botanical garden, frequently cited as “the first in America.”(7)
In 1732, John Bartram came into correspondence with Peter Collinson, a wealthy London cloth merchant and fellow Quaker with a keen interest in botany. The contact was an auspicious one for both men. Collinson desired seeds, bulbs, and cuttings of American plants and was willing to pay for them. He benefited greatly from Bartram’s diligent field work. Bartram, in turn, received advice, encouragement, money and, best of all, a constant supply of books on the subject of natural history. Although the two men never met, they carried on a lively correspondence for more than thirty-six years until Collinson’s death in 1768. Whenever he could take time from his farming duties, usually after the fall harvest, Bartram went into the wild, collecting plants for his English patron and himself. Word of Bartram’s collecting quickly spread in Europe, and soon Collinson was acting as Bartram’s agent for a variety of other important patrons. These included Philip Miller, who wrote the popular Gardener’s Dictionary; Sir Hans Sloane, whose collections helped to form the British museum; Lord Petre, a noted plant collector; the Earls of Bute, Leicester and Lincoln; the Dukes of Argyle, Richmond, Norfolk, Marlborough and Bedford; Queen Ulrica of Sweden; and Peter Kalm, the Swedish plant explorer and student of Linnaeus. So great did the interest in American plants become, that in addition to those mentioned, Collinson was able to list more than fifty subscribers to whom Bartram supplied material. “Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778), the Swedish taxonomist responsible for developing the basis of scientific classification used today and himself a recipient of many Bartram specimens, called John “the greatest natural botanist in the world.” It is evident that many of his contemporaries agreed.

Eventually, thanks to Collinson’s persistent lobbying efforts through the Duke of Northumberland and others, Bartram’s scientific labors received official recognition and encouragement in the form of an appointment as botanist to King George III in 1765. The appointment, with its accompanying annual stipend of fifty pounds, enabled Bartram to make a long-hoped-for collecting expedition “to the Floridas, which had come under British dominion in 1763. Accompanied by his son William, John traveled through present-day North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, where he focused his primary attention on the St. Johns River near St. Augustine. [A detailed account of the fate of Bartram’s journals from this trip can be found in Francis Harper’s publication on that subject in the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, (Vol. XXXIII, Part I, December, 1942). His specimens were sent to Collinson and to the King of England.]

John’s activity after the Florida trip was somewhat curtailed by poor health, but he remained alert and productive until his death in 1777, allegedly precipitated by his
concern for the safety of the botanical garden which he considered threatened by advancing British troops. Although the exact number will probably never be known, John Bartram is believed to have been responsible for the introduction of between 150 and 200 new American plant species to Europe, from the time of his first seed shipment to Peter Collinson in 1734 until his death. (14) It was a remarkable accomplishment by any standard.

Samuel Powel (1738-1793)

Samuel Powel was the son of Samuel Powel and Mary Morris. He attended the Academy and the College of Philadelphia. As a member of one of Philadelphia’s wealthiest families, after his graduation from college he toured Europe for seven years. While in England he converted from Quakerism to Anglicanism.

In 1769, he married Elizabeth Willing, the daughter of Philadelphia mayor Charles Willing and Ann Shippen, and a sister of Philadelphia mayor and Continental Congressman Thomas Willing, the business partner of Robert Morris. The couple moved into an elegant Georgian town house on 3rd street between Spruce and Walnut. Samuel was a successful merchant and businessman and was active politically. He was Philadelphia's last mayor under the 1701 royal charter and its first mayor under the new 1789 charter. He also served as the speaker of the Pennsylvania Senate in 1792. During the Revolution, he became known as the “patriotic mayor.” Samuel and Elizabeth were known for entertaining. They became great friends of George and Martha Washington who frequently dined at the “Powel House.”

Powel was a member of the American Philosophical Society and was elected trustee at his alma mater the Academy and College of Philadelphia in 1773. When the college became united with the University of Pennsylvania he became a trustee.

He died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1793.