

The SaddleBrooke Genealogy Club members and guests received a special treat at the February 1st meeting. Our guest presenter, Karen Hall, an international and national educator and actor, entered in period custom telling of her life and love for her husband Ben Franklin. This was not the usual text book rendition or history lesson we are all familiar with but a story told from the lips of Deborah Reade who fell in love with, married, and shared his amazing life and accomplishments. She led us through his poor beginnings and rise to one of our most beloved figures in the development of America. One of 17 children, Franklin had only two years of formal education but possessed unique talents and abilities. Leaving Boston at an early age with little or nothing, he travelled to Philadelphia and received honorary degrees from Yale, Harvard and other universities. Franklin was not only a great statesman but also an inventor who developed the lightning rod and armonica. As an entrepreneur, he developed businesses including newspaper printing and also created the first volunteer fire department and fire insurance for residents. He was the first Postmaster General of Philadelphia, paved the streets, started the first lending library, the first police department, and used his newspaper to finance the first hospital in the United States. His legacy endures even today as we find ourselves repeating many of his proverbs such as “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail”. Along with these many achievements, Franklin was the great statesman and founding father who helped create and signed the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. He also educated himself to become a philanthropist, philosopher, humorist, and diplomat. All these things were achieved through curiosity and a need to help others and better his surroundings. He did these things without reward and never set up patents for his many inventions.



He and his wife, Deborah Read, spent 44 years together with 18 years on missions in England. They raised three children with Mrs. Franklin staying in Philadelphia to support him while away in England. In his declining years, he continued efforts to unite the 13 colonies into the United States of America. He never stopped caring about our country and wanting to do good for all people. Franklin died in 1790 at age 84. His funeral procession was attended by 20,000 people. To learn more about this great man visit the website mrsbenfranklin.com.

In addition to our fantastic presentation, President Carol Tabor introduced 13 guests and new members. Raffle prize winners were Bonnie Kraus and Christine Nelson.

The Club’s Volunteer Appreciation luncheon for members and guests is scheduled for March 1st. All are invited to join us on April 5th at 1:00 in the North Coyote Room at the SaddleBrooke Club House for our next regular meeting and presentation.

Submitted by:

Lydia O’Connor

