

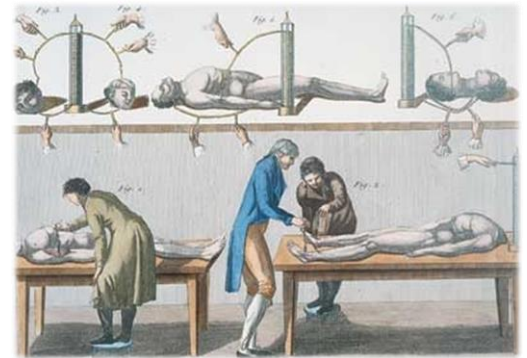
Electrical FIRE

At the turn of the 19th century the nascent study of Electrical Fluids was transforming from a titillating parlor recreation to a true form of modern science. During the time of Franklin, the shocking escapades of the Electricians were primarily forms of entertainment where “doses of electrical fluid” were shared with the audiences. Gentlemen

were challenged to kiss electrified ladies, hair was made to stand on end, and the latest electrical toys were displayed. Natural philosophers sought more practical uses of electricity and electro-physicians, like London’s Dr. James Graham, who claimed that electricity could cure all ills... and even provide a spark to one’s love life! In Italy, Alessandro Volta and Luigi Galvani sparred over the physiological effects of electricity. Volta’s Pile (the first electrical battery) had new practical applications in chemistry and



medicine where the followers of “Galvanism” felt that electric currents were the vital source of life.



The greatest proponent of this theory, Giovanni Aldini took the electro-medical experiments to the extreme, proposing that electric shocks could revive the dead. The macabre public experiments by Aldini and other “resurrectionists” would horrify audiences... and eventually inspire Mary Shelley’s famous story of the resurrected monster, *Frankenstein*.

Based on his experience as a veteran science educator and collaborator with museums and historic sites **Mr. Dean Howarth**, in his role as the Natural Philosopher, will use a collection of replica instruments and props to engage and entertain his audience by recreating some the aforementioned experiments and share the stories of the early days of Electrical Fire.

