

THE RESEARCHER

David Heiby

PUBLIC HISTORIAN • FOUNDER, GRAVESTONE STORIES

David Heiby is the researcher who built the registry. As Superintendent of the Presbyterian Cemetery & Columbarium for more than a decade and founder of Gravestone Stories, he has documented Alexandria's historic burial grounds — including the more than 35,000 burials of the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex — and produced the most comprehensive accounting of Revolutionary War burials in Alexandria ever assembled.

The 162-patriot registry, published in 2026, is a research foundation for Alexandria's America 250 commemoration. In 2024, David led the team that rediscovered the lost grave of Colonel George Gilpin — one of Washington's six honorary pallbearers — using ground-penetrating radar.

ROLES & RECOGNITION

- ◆ Superintendent, Presbyterian Cemetery & Columbarium
- ◆ Treasurer, Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation
- ◆ Treasurer, Alexandria Historical Society
- ◆ Alexandria America 250 Committee Member
- ◆ History Columnist, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ◆ Research cited by the Library of Virginia, Wikipedia & the City of Alexandria
- ◆ Featured in AARP • Emerging Civil War • Alexandria Times



Dedication at the grave of the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolution, Old Presbyterian Meeting House — February 22, 1928

"You put humanity and a sense of sanctity in your stories."

RECENT TOUR PARTICIPANT

ABOUT

GRAVESTONE STORIES

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

Gravestone Stories is a public history project dedicated to researching, preserving, and sharing the stories of those buried within Alexandria's historic cemeteries — particularly those forgotten or overlooked by mainstream history.

EXPLORE THE RESEARCH

- ◆ **The Revolutionary War Registry** — 162 documented patriots, searchable online
- ◆ **400+ Burial Biographies** — original primary-source research
- ◆ **80+ Research Articles** — in-depth essays and discoveries
- ◆ **5 Interactive Maps** — explore Alexandria's cemeteries digitally
- ◆ **E-Book Editions** — curated PDF editions of the research
- ◆ **Free Guides & Brochures** — gravestonestories.com/free-guides
- ◆ **Walking Tours** — seasonal public and private tours at gravestonestories.com/tours



"More forgotten American history than anywhere else — finally told in the voices of those who lived it."

GRAVESTONE STORIES

Left: Dr. James Craik's stone, Old Presbyterian Meeting House burial ground

VISIT THE DIGITAL MUSEUM

gravestonestories.com

dave@gravestonestories.com

(703) 869-0872

© David Heiby / Gravestone Stories

A GRAVESTONE STORIES RESEARCH PROJECT

Among the Founders

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR PATRIOTS
BURIED IN ALEXANDRIA

Meet Washington's neighbors, physicians, pallbearers, and the men and women who built a nation — and never left.



Research cited by the **Library of Virginia**, **Wikipedia** & the **City of Alexandria**



The Old Presbyterian Meeting House — one of thirteen registry burial grounds



READ THE REGISTRY

All 162 patriots, documented and searchable at gravestonestories.com

ALEXANDRIA
VA250

A City of Founders

When the Revolution ended, its survivors came home — and hundreds came home to Alexandria. The city that was George Washington's hometown became the resting place for an extraordinary concentration of the men and women who helped build the American republic.

162

DOCUMENTED
PATRIOTS

13

HISTORIC BURIAL
GROUNDS

46

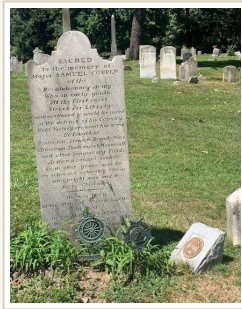
WILKES ST.
COMPLEX

These 162 patriots span every role in the founding: Continental Army officers who fought at Valley Forge and Yorktown, merchant patriots who funded the cause, physicians who saved its soldiers, and tradesmen who served in local militias.

Many served directly with Washington — his physicians, pallbearers, business partners, and neighbors. To walk among their graves is to understand Washington not as a monument, but as a man.

WHERE THEY REST

- ◆ Presbyterian Cemetery
- ◆ Christ Church Cemetery (Wilkes St.)
- ◆ Christ Church Burial Ground (Old Town)
- ◆ Trinity Methodist Cemetery
- ◆ Methodist Protestant Cemetery
- ◆ St. Paul's Cemetery
- ◆ Penny Hill Cemetery
- ◆ Old Presbyterian Meeting House burial ground — and more



Maj. Samuel Cooper — Boston Tea Party participant, Christ Church Cemetery

Washington's Circle

SELECTED FIGURES FROM THE REGISTRY

WASHINGTON'S INNER CIRCLE

- **Col. George Gilpin** — Honorary pallbearer; grave lost 200 years, found by GPR in 2024
- **Col. Dennis Ramsay** — First to address Washington as “Mr. President”
- **Dr. James Craik** — Washington's personal physician; at his bedside when he died
- **Dr. Elisha Cullen Dick** — Read the burial service at Washington's funeral at Mount Vernon
- **John Yost** — Gunsmith who made Washington's rifle; his “I.Y.” marker hides in plain sight
- **Cavan Boa** — Washington's personal tailor; first burial at St. Mary's, 1798

FOUNDERS OF ALEXANDRIA

- **William Ramsay** — Co-founder and first Lord Mayor of Alexandria, 1749
- **John Carlyle** — Co-founder; his house was Braddock's 1755 headquarters
- **Robert Adam** — Signer of the Fairfax Resolves; Washington's merchant partner

BOSTON TEA PARTY PARTICIPANTS

- **Thomas Porter** — Participated at age 17; later a founding member of the Bank of Alexandria
- **Major Samuel Cooper** — Wrote one of four surviving first-person accounts of the event

WOMEN PATRIOTS

- **Ann Ball McCartney Ramsay** — Elected Treasurer of Alexandria; raised \$75,000+ for Washington's cause

FORGOTTEN PATRIOTS

- **John Pipsico** — Freeman of color; fought at Guilford Courthouse and Eutaw Springs
- **Joseph Harris** — Enslaved manservant of Dr. Craik; sued for and won his freedom
- **Unknown Kentucky Soldier** — Buried 1821; name, rank, and unit lost to history

HEAR THE STORIES

Lectures & Programs

David brings this research to lecture halls, chapter meetings, and classrooms — illustrated talks built on original primary-source research, adapted to your audience and schedule.

THE LECTURES

Alexandria's 162

The full story of the Revolutionary War registry — who they were, how they were found, and why they were forgotten.

Finding George Gilpin

The ground-penetrating radar search that recovered the lost grave of one of Washington's honorary pallbearers.

Dr. James Craik

Washington's personal physician and lifelong friend — from Fort Necessity to the deathbed at Mount Vernon.

Elisha Cullen Dick

The physician who read the burial service at Washington's funeral.

Patriots, Preservation and the Past

Uncovering the Mystery

52 Acres. 35,000 Lives.

The untold history buried in the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex — thirteen cemeteries, one landscape.

IDEAL FOR

- DAR, SAR, and hereditary patriotic organizations
- Heritage groups and America 250 programming
- Schools, colleges, and lifelong-learning programs
- Libraries, faith communities, and civic organizations

BOOK A LECTURE

dave@gravestonestories.com • (703) 869-0872

DAR & SAR chapters especially welcome.



Scan for talks, living history programs & scheduling details

“Went to a Presbyterian meeting. These are a set of rebellious scoundrels, nothing but political discourses instead of Religious Lectures.”

JOURNAL OF NICHOLAS CRESSWELL, AN ENGLISH LOYALIST • ALEXANDRIA • NOVEMBER 6, 1774

Prefer to walk? Public and private walking tours at gravestonestories.com/tours