



THE FALLS CHURCH EPISCOPAL

– presents –

Hunt for History!

1. Colonial America

The brick church was completed 1769, seven years before the United States declared independence from England. It replaced a wooden church that had fallen into disrepair. The brick church was designed by James Wren and built with the skilled hands of enslaved people, who were long overlooked in our church's history, but were commemorated in 2016 with a plaque honoring their contributions to the building of our sacred space.

Can you find the sidewalk plaques honoring Wren and the long-overlooked laborers?

2. Worn, faintly marked gravestones from the 1700s

These four rough-hewn gravestones from the late 18th century predate any of the other gravestones. The graves and stones were moved here in the mid-20th century to clear the site for George Mason High School, 1.7 miles northwest of the church. Among them are some graves likely of the Trammell family. John Trammell provided the two acres of land on which on which both the original wooden church and the later brick church were built.

Can you find these tiny stones with worn, faint markings?

3. Declaring independence

When America declared its independence from England, copies of the Declaration of Independence were distributed throughout the 13 colonies and read widely at community gatherings. It is believed that the Declaration of Independence was read on a certain set of steps that still exist.

Can you find the stairs? (Hint: The sun shines most on these steps.)

4. A Revolutionary War veteran

Simon Sommers (1747–1836) was a Revolutionary War veteran and is the only known soldier from that conflict buried here. Sommers, his wife, and other relatives were originally buried in a family plot on their property and were later reinterred here.

Can you find Simon Sommers' final resting place?

5. The oldest gravestone original to this site

John Carolin (1764–1803) has the oldest gravestone in the churchyard original to this site. Rounded indentations in the headstone likely resulted from musket balls fired by soldiers quartered here during the Civil War.

Can you find John Carolin's headstone?

6. The Mason family plot

The Falls Church graveyard is the final resting place for several relatives of George Mason. George Mason served on the Truro Parish Vestry, was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, and was the primary drafter of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. The Virginia Declaration of Rights was an important source for James Madison's Federal Bill of Rights.

Where are the Masons buried?

7. Memorial to a member of the Fairfax family

Henry Fairfax (1804–1847), second son of Thomas Fairfax, ninth Lord Fairfax, financed the restoration of the church in the 1830s and 1840s. A graduate of West Point, he organized a volunteer regiment when the Mexican War broke out, and died in Saltillo, Mexico. The inscription on this marker is copied from the text of a lost plaque reported by a Civil War correspondent in Harper's Weekly of August 31, 1861.

Can you find the Henry Fairfax memorial?

8. The Scott sisters, Confederate spies

America and Artemesia Scott were two sisters who were Confederate spies. In 1841, at ages twenty-one (America) and eighteen (Artemesia), both sisters were arrested for spying. After their capture they were imprisoned but survived and lived long afterwards. Because they could not imagine being separated, they are buried close to each other.

Can you find the graves of the Scott sisters?

9. Ball-Dulany family plot

Dulany is the largest family plot in the graveyard. The Balls were relatives of George Washington's mother, Mary Ball Washington. Of particular interest are the graves of Daniel **Dulany** (1780–1848), whose barn may have been used during the War of 1812 to store gunpowder to prevent its capture by the British when they attacked Washington, D.C., and Mottrom **Dulany** Ball (1835–1887), a Confederate soldier who later served as U.S. District Attorney in the Territory of Alaska.

Can you find the Ball-Dulany family plot?

10. Marking both sides of the Civil War

Two markers commemorate both Union and Confederate soldiers, known and unknown, buried on the grounds in unmarked graves during the Civil War.

Can you find those markers? (Hint: They are close together).

11. American Graffiti

The bricks of the external walls of the historic church building contain carved graffiti made by Civil War soldiers and possibly by others and at other times. Some are names, and some are letters, presumed to be the initials of the carvers. Most of the markings are found on the South side of the building.

Can you find any graffiti? Write down your favorite name or initials. _____

12. An activist against slavery and for racial justice

Anti-slavery activist John D. Read (1812–1864) was a lay minister of Columbia Baptist Church. Before and during the Civil War, Read and his daughter Betsy helped run a school for free and enslaved African Americans in Falls Church. He was a member of the interracial Falls Church Home Guard, a militia of Union loyalists organized to protect villagers during the Civil War. Accused of being a Union spy by “Mosby’s Rangers,” under Confederate Colonel John Singleton Mosby, Read and his black companion Jacob Jackson were kidnapped, shot execution style, and left for dead on October 18, 1864. Jackson survived but Read succumbed.

Where is John Read buried?

13. Interracial Falls Church Home Guard members

The George Ives family plot is marked by a small obelisk. Brothers George and Ruben Ives were members of the interracial Falls Church Home Guard, a militia of Union loyalists organized to protect villagers during the Civil War. Comprised of un-enlisted men and boys, the Falls Church Home Guard included an equal number of blacks and whites who were issued weapons, kept watch, and alerted the town to approaching Confederate troops.

Where is George Ives buried?

14. After the Civil War – what a circus

The Bailey family plot contains members of the Bailey family, who ran a circus that would ultimately become known as the Barnum and Bailey Circus. The headstone at Henry L. Bailey’s grave is the tallest monument in The Falls Church cemetery.

Where is Henry Bailey’s grave?

15. Memorial Garden and Chapel

In 1976, a Memorial Garden was established at the East end of the North yard for the burial of cremated remains. Its entrance is marked by a large stone. The people whose remains are buried here are memorialized with brass nameplates inside a large frame mounted on the wall in the nearby cloister. (The cloister is the arched, covered, walkway alongside the garden).

Can you find the memorial stone marking the entrance to the Memorial Garden?

16. Memorial Chapel and plants

The plants in the Memorial Garden consist of a wide variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers. The small, brick Memorial Chapel, redesigned in 2004 from a utility building, provides a space for small worship gatherings, Bible study, or private reflection. The Memorial Chapel's unusual window is one of its unique features.

Can you find the Memorial Chapel and its special window?

17. The Oldest Tree

The oldest tree on the grounds is a huge White Oak, located in the South yard. It may be referred to as a "witness tree," a tree that has been alive long enough to have "witnessed" many historic events. Based on measurements of its trunk, this tree is estimated to be older than the brick church, so it has "seen" the Revolutionary and Civil Wars as well as the War of 1812 and other important events through to our modern times.

Can you find the oldest tree? (Hint: It is very hard to miss!)

18. Marking our history – the National Register plaque

Somewhere on the façade of the Historic Church building is a brand-new bronze plaque designating the brick church as listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The plaque was carefully installed in 2019 as part of our celebration of the 250th anniversary of the completion of the historic building. The first services were held to celebrate Christmas of 1769.

Can you find the National Register plaque?

19. Marking our history – the Falls Church City plaque

Also on the façade of the historic church building is a bronze plaque placed by the Falls Church Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) to indicate the church is a Falls Church City historic site, HR001, for Historic Register number 1. This plaque bears an image of the West doorway of the church. Falls Church City uses this image as its seal. You will find it on firetrucks and other official City property.

Can you find the Falls Church VPIS historic plaque? (Hint: It is on the same wall as the NRHP plaque, but you will have to take a walk!)