

# MEET MRS. REESE

Mrs. Rebecca Ramsay Reese was instrumental in the successful restoration of Gadsby's Tavern Museum. The American Legion Post #24 purchased the buildings just before the Great Depression, making it challenging to raise money. Passionate about historic preservation, Mrs. Reese used her connections, including with the Colonial Dames, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Alexandria Garden Club, to raise money and donations of time, supplies, and antique furnishings.

Overseeing the interior restoration of the taverns on behalf of the Legion, she was committed to historical accuracy. She often wrote Milton Grigg, an architect best known for his restoration work at Colonial Williamsburg and Monticello, for advice. Her daughter remembers Mrs. Reese walking the two blocks between home and the museum multiple times a day to personally oversee the work.

Her efforts extended beyond Gadsby's Tavern Museum, preserving many other historic buildings in Old Town: the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, Ramsey House (now the Visitor's Center), Christ Church, and the Old Presbyterian Meeting House. Her advocacy efforts resulted in the creation of the Old and Historic Alexandria District in 1946, which codified protections for historic buildings by the Board of Architectural Review. Mrs. Reese, recognized as a prominent local preservationist, served on the Board of Architectural Review from 1946 until she died in 1955.



*Mrs. Reese in her colonial-revival gown for the 1932 recreation of the Birthnight Ball.*