FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 26, 2014
Contact: Meg McSweeney
(215)801-8876
mcsweeney@dlar.org

Photographs available.
Telephone interviews with lecturers can be arranged.

David Library Launches Spring Lecture Series

* 
Local historian Larry Kidder speaks about NJ Militia
March 20

WASHINGTON CROSSING, PA -- The David Library of the American Revolution launches its spring lecture series on Thursday, March 20 at 7:30 with “New Jersey Militiamen and Their Families at War: ‘A People Harassed and Exhausted,’” a talk by Larry Kidder, who taught history at The Hun School in Princeton for 32 years. The lecture is admission free, and open to the public, as are the subsequent three lectures offered in the series. David Library lectures are held in Stone Hall at the David Library, 1201 River Road (Rt. 32) in Washington Crossing, PA, 1.3 mi. from the Washington Crossing Bridge. Reservations are strongly encouraged and can be made by calling (215)493-6776 ext. 100, or by sending an email to rsvp@dlar.org.

The lecture will draw from Kidder’s new book, “A People Harassed and Exhausted: The Story of the New Jersey Militia Regiment in the American Revolution.” Kidder explains, “During the colonial period and then the American Revolution, by law, every man between the ages of 16 and 50 in New Jersey was required to enroll in his local militia company. These companies were expected to be a local, emergency defense force, but the nature of the Revolution in New Jersey radically expanded the scope of their duties. As a result, every man, and his family, faced the simultaneous requirements to keep a farm or business going while men of the family were frequently ordered to spend periods of time, often at critical points in the farming year, away from home to defend various parts of the state. The inadequate nature and enforcement of the militia laws meant that those men who responded consistently to militia call outs accepted, along with their families, a ‘disproportionate burden’ among New Jersey citizens who supported the Revolution.”
Much of the research for Kidder’s book was conducted at the David Library.

Larry Kidder received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Allegheny College. He served four years of active duty in the U. S. Navy, assigned to the Research and Development Unit in Vietnam, and then the destroyer USS Brownson, homeported in Newport, RI. He was a researcher and writer for the Admiral Arleigh Burke National Destroyermen’s Museum aboard the destroyer museum ship USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. in Fall River, MA. For the past 25 years Kidder has been a volunteer at Howell Living History Farm in Hopewell, NJ, which led to his first book, “The Pleasant Valley Story: A Story of Education and Community in Rural New Jersey,” winner of the 2013 Scholarship and Artistry Award presented by the Country School Association of America. “The Pleasant Valley Story” tells the story of the school house that is now part of the Howell Living History Farm, and is also a case study of rural school in central New Jersey from the early 19th century to the mid-20th century.

The other lectures in the David Library’s spring series are: “Thomas Jefferson and the Meaning of Religious Freedom” by John Ragosta, Ph. D., J.D. on Thursday, April 10 at 7:30; “Lord Dunmore: The Extraordinary Life of a Royal Governor in Revolutionary America” by James Corbett David, Ph. D. on Thursday, May 1 at 7:30; and “Devils, Cannibals, and the Ghost of General Wolf: The Visual and Material Culture of the Violent and the Macabre in the American Revolution” by Zara Anishanslin, Ph. D. on Sunday, June 1 at 3:00. David Library lectures are underwritten in part by a grant from the County of Bucks.

For further details, visit www.dlar.org.

###