



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
RICHMOND

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## Official Release of Virginia House of Delegates New Searchable Website of All Members

- Nearly 10,000 records now available in one place at <https://history.house.virginia.gov> –
- Helps mark 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of America’s Ongoing Experiment in Self-Government –

**STATE CAPITOL, RICHMOND, VA** – Debuted in January 2019 at the start of the Regular Session, the House Clerk’s Office today released the completed iteration of its ambitious, multi-year project to record and share biographical sketches and legislative service information on the 9,700+ men and women who have served as Burgesses or Delegates since 1619. **DOME** (**D**atabase of **H**ouse **M**embers) is a testament to the first and oldest continuously elected English-speaking representative lawmaking body in the Western Hemisphere. Since its announcement earlier this year, **DOME**’s functionality is now available on mobile devices, contains expanded content and includes enhanced overall navigation.

Four centuries ago today, April 18, 1619, George Yeardley arrived in Jamestown and assumed the position of deputy governor. Governor Yeardley would preside over the first convening of the General Assembly months later on July 30, 1619. “It is not only apt but fantastically fitting,” noted House Clerk G. Paul Nardo, “formally to officially launch this new educational resource 400 years to the day representative democracy began taking shape in North America. I hope **DOME** increases public understanding of this venerable institution, its leaders and our individual members, and ultimately affords users the opportunity to make connections with our past in order to help shape a better future for our entire Commonwealth.”

**DOME is organized into four categories: 1) Burgesses and Delegates; 2) Speakers and Clerks; 3) Legislative Sessions and Committees; and 4) State Capitol Locations.** The first and second categories offer a wide array of personal, legislative and historical information on current and former House members as well as the institution’s chief presiding officers (Speakers) and the body’s chief administrators (Clerks). Searchable features include last names, session years and localities or districts represented by member as well as such further details as an individual member’s years of service. The third category provides a chronology of legislative floor sessions over 400 years and lists leadership roles of members and their committee assignments. The final category describes the various meeting locations at which the body has assembled, beginning with the church at Historic Jamestowne Island, through the Colonial Capitol in Williamsburg and ending at the present seat of government since 1788 atop Shockoe Hill in Richmond.

Because of the vast amount of potential information for many historical figures and yet sparseness of detail available for others, the new searchable website contains a feedback mechanism (via email) which encourages user interaction. Thus, **DOME** is designed as a living research tool and encourages the public to help write the ongoing history of the historic House of Delegates and those who have been elected to serve in it by sharing what they may know from their own research or family archives.

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