

2019 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 734

Commending William M. Kelso.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 23, 2019
Agreed to by the Senate, January 25, 2019

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 25th anniversary of William M. Kelso leading the archaeological investigation and research project at Historic Jamestowne that vastly increased the body of knowledge about the early history of the beginnings of this nation; and

WHEREAS, a deeply respected scholar, William "Bill" M. Kelso had previously served as commissioner of archaeology for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission and director of field archaeology for Colonial Williamsburg, Monticello, and Poplar Forest; and

WHEREAS, Bill Kelso joined the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, now Preservation Virginia, in 1993, to guide the association's plans to find and study the archaeological remains of 1607 James Fort in preparation for the historic commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the landing at Jamestown; and

WHEREAS, Bill Kelso and his team defied the prevailing belief that the site of James Fort had been lost to erosion due to its proximity to the James River, and quickly unearthed enough evidence of 17th century artifacts and soil-stained evidence of the palisade and earthfast structures to announce in 1996 that James Fort had been found; and

WHEREAS, the monumental discoveries led by Bill Kelso continued a multi-year excavation that revealed footprints of palisade walls, bulwarks, and earthfast structures, as well as more than two million artifacts which greatly enhanced the educational programs and events for the historic 400th commemoration of the landing at Jamestown; and

WHEREAS, in addition to finding the 1607 Fort and associated structures, Bill Kelso and his team uncovered the 1608 church, which served as the wedding site for Pocahontas and John Rolfe, as well as the graves of four prominent early leaders of the Jamestown colony; and

WHEREAS, now the emeritus director of archaeology and research at Preservation Virginia, Bill Kelso has overseen program interpretation at Historic Jamestowne and worked in conjunction with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to seek recognition for the Historic Triangle of Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown; and

WHEREAS, a sought-after lecturer, Bill Kelso has been presented with many awards and accolades for his groundbreaking work, and in 2012, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II presented him with the Honorary Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE), one of Great Britain's highest honors; and

WHEREAS, Bill Kelso's visionary work is expanding the understanding of the nation's origins, providing historians with insights into the opening chapters of American history, the establishment of the first representative assembly in North America, and the interactions between the English settlers and Virginia Indians; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend William M. Kelso on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his excavation of the Jamestown Settlement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to William M. Kelso as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his pivotal work to preserve the history and heritage of the Commonwealth and the United States.

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