

## **La Gasse Medal acceptance speech (Hugh Miller)**

I am honored to receive the La Gasse Medal from the American Society of Landscape Architects, but this is not about me. The identification and stewardship of cultural landscapes in public lands is an accomplishment from the late 1970's. This was the work of many people. Several of whom are in this room. Thanks to them and a special remembrance of Thomas J. Kane, FASLA who was the progenitor of landscape preservation in America.

Defining landscapes as cultural resources was a great start, but their stewardship and preservation are not work for ONLY a few. We must ALL be advocates for our landscape heritage. There are threats, opportunities and even "billable hours."

We need to be proactive with the iconic modern landscapes before they are neglected, altered or demolished. We can learn from these masterpieces. A focused nationwide project of Historic Americans Landscape Survey (HALS), using ASLA chapters and students to record existing conditions, could then be used to expand conversations about their values and needs. We must reach beyond the profession to include the owners and the users. If we do not speak up for these landscapes who will?

I see these special opportunities for you as advocates to define more fully the meaning of landscape preservation. For too long the standards for landscape preservation have been the domain of architectural historians and "preservationists" in the state and national preservation offices. Stewardship and management are more than restoration and maintenance. Landscapes are systems and their preservation must include solutions that embody their historic qualities in a creative process. Doctrines and prescriptions do not work. It is time to use your knowledge to speak about the dynamics of landscapes and "good old" designs adaptively used.

This new identification and documentation will add historic landscapes to the National Register of Historic Places. You will find that historic landscapes have owners who are seeking professional services to make them function as they were originally intended. It is now time to talk about rehabilitation tax credits for preserving these historic resources. The challenge is to speak and act in a way that combines preservation and management for the public good, with fiscal and emotional investments by caring owners and users. Good preservation is good business. After all, these landscapes are your heritage!

Thank you for giving me the recognition of the LaGasse Medal.

Hugh Miller