

2016 MIASLA STUDENT HONOR AND MERIT AWARD WINNERS

Michigan State University landscape architecture students Nick Blok and Cameron Robinson received the Michigan ASLA Student Honor award. Cresha Wee and Mike Hou received the ASLA Student Merit award. The awards are given to students who demonstrate the highest level of academic scholarship and accomplishments in skills related to the art and technology of landscape architecture.

LandTEXTURE

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Winter 2017

FIRST CLASS: Emma Genevieve Gillette, the First Lady of Michigan State Parks and Natural Areas

Lawrence Falardeau

2016 marks the 100th anniversary of Emma Genevieve Gillette's enrollment at Michigan Agricultural College, now Michigan State University. Gillette was to become the first and only woman graduate in the college's first landscape architecture class of 1920.

Distinguished landscape architect and Michigan conservationist E. Genevieve Gillette was born in Lansing on May 19, 1898. Gillette credited her life-long passion for nature to her childhood upbringing on a farm outside of Lansing, and to her father's endearing love of the outdoors. While at college, Gillette would develop a friendship with classmate P.J. Hoffmaster, who became Michigan's first superintendent of state parks. This friendship and professional relationship would last a lifetime.

Gillette made a life's work of exploring and preserving precious natural settings that then became available to the traveling public. In 1920, she began her landscape architecture career working in Chicago with noted "Prairie Style" landscape architect Jens Jensen. Jensen's

naturalistic designs included the Edsel & Eleanor Ford Family Estate at Haven Hill, now preserved within Southeast Michigan's Highland State Recreation Area.

After returning to Michigan in 1924 at Jensen's encouragement to help create a state park system, Gillette established and maintained a landscape architecture practice in Ann Arbor. At the same time, she volunteered her services to P.J. Hoffmaster documenting Michigan's natural heritage for potential park sites. She would continue her volunteer activity throughout her life, becoming one of the "First Friends" of the developing system.

Over the decades, Gillette's career supported efforts to raise awareness of Michigan's natural wonders and their value to society. In addition to creating parks and designated natural areas, she established important conservation groups, gained funding for Michigan State Parks, and even advised President Lyndon and Ladybird Johnson on recreation and nature.



Emma Genevieve Gillette

The story of green infrastructure in Southeast Michigan and beyond starts with P.J. Hoffmaster's request for volunteer site research efforts from Gillette and the Michigan Botanical Club. Gillette also facilitated an advisory collaboration between Hoffmaster and Jensen, who was

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Gillette's career supported efforts to raise awareness of Michigan's natural wonders and their value to society.

(Emma Genevieve Gillete, continued from page 1)

active in establishing state park systems in Indiana and Illinois. The three together reinforced Hoffmaster's vision for a ring of recreation lands around Detroit to serve the needs of a burgeoning post-World War II population within an urbanizing Detroit metropolitan region.

Through her relationship with Jens Jensen and the Ford Family, in the early 1940s Gillette fostered the transfer of the former 2,500 acre Edsel & Eleanor Ford Family Estate at Haven Hill to the Michigan Department of Conservation (now MDNR) as a starting point for southeast Michigan's State Park and Natural Area System. After the estate became a state park, Gillette and the Michigan Botanical Club continued documenting the park's unique attributes and established the Haven Hill Ecology Trail for nature study and interpretation. The trail committee became the foundation of the State Natural Area Advisory Council, documenting significant natural areas throughout the state for 20 years. The Haven Hill Natural Preserve, designated a State Natural Area and named a National Natural Landmark by the National Park Service, is one of the finest examples of its biological communities in the region.

The Friends of Highland Recreation Area and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks Division are honoring Gillette's legacy with the establishment of a site interpretive marker. The potential for a youth and family outdoor mentoring program is currently being explored as well.

Genevieve Gillette's purpose and passion live on today, 100 years after first stepping onto the campus of Michigan

Agricultural College (Michigan State University). She has received numerous honors and recognitions, including the Distinguished Alumni Award from Michigan State University, induction into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame, a star on the Michigan Walk of Fame, a Michigan Botanical Club Distinguished Service Award, a Michigan Recreation and Park Association Special Award, and the Genevieve Gillette Visitor Center and Nature Association at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park.

To this day, E. Genevieve Gillette remains a credit to the school and the profession she chose. She is a shining example for every woman, man, and child who values, respects, and seeks to steward Michigan's exceptional natural environment.

Genevieve Gillette's Legacy

Highland State Recreation Area
Michigan Natural Areas Council
Haven Hill Nature Preserve
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness Area
Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
Ludington State Park
Michigan Wildflower Association
Wilderness State Park
Hartwick Pines State Park
Michigan Parks Association
Thompson's Harbor State Park
Huron-Clinton Metropark Authority
Michigan Horticultural Society



Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
P.J. Hoffmaster State Park

If you would like to contribute and/or learn more regarding volunteer efforts by The Friends of Highland Recreation Area to "Tell the Story and Honor The Legacy" of Genevieve Gillette and Haven Hill, please contact:

Web Site: fohravolunteers.org

Phone: 248-787-1750

email: fohravolunteer@gmail.com

Speaker & presentation available upon request



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dr. Scott G. Witter, Director SPDC

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

This year has brought many wonderful things for us all. We had another amazingly successful study abroad trip and are preparing for the next one. The students from across SPDC came together and built a Tiny House during the spring semester that has been named Sparty's Cabin. The cabin will be on display at each home football game starting with the BYU game, and then it will be auctioned off at the end of 2016. Dr. Pat Crawford and Dr. George Berghorn served as the faculty advisors for this build project. For more information, please go to: <http://www.canr.msu.edu/spartyscabin>.

After six years of dedicated service as the LA Program Leader, Dr. Trish Machemer has stepped down. She has done a great job of working with the LA faculty to keep our curriculum and accreditation materials current, plus serving our students and the Landscape Architecture Alumni and Advisory Board. We owe her a great deal of thanks for all of her hard work.

Karen Russcher has agreed to serve as the new interim Program Leader. She has hit the ground running, and she and the faculty will be preparing our accreditation self-study for completion during fall semester 2017.

I would like to thank Robert Chipman, Stephen Troost, and Pamela Blough for the service they have provided to the Alumni Board. They have worked hard to offer new opportunities for our students and the LA program over their terms. They are remarkable alumni.

Deb Cooper will complete her term as Board President, and Scott Reinholt will take over as the Board's leader, in January 2017. Deb has been a great colleague and friend to us all; we look forward to her final year on the Board as Past President. Paul Weinberg was elected treasurer, Cheryl Zuellig will be the new secretary, and Michael Rein will serve as Vice-President. We are excited to work with each of them.

Dr. Rob Dalton has joined the faculty for this academic year as an Assistant Professor. He is teaching, writing articles, and submitting grant proposals with Dr. Crawford. He has brought great energy to the Program.

This is also a big year for me. I have decided to step down as director of the school at the end of 2016. I have served as the director for nine years and chaired two other departments for an additional eight years. As of this fall, I have had the privilege of studying and working at MSU for 37 years, and I plan to retire at the end of 2017. Our deans are currently working to identify an interim director for the upcoming year while a national search is being conducted for the new director.

It has been wonderful getting to know many of you in addition to working with such a great group of faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

Go Green!

Sparty's Cabin ribbon cutting ceremony





Many of the folks I have encountered along the way have a depth of experience, talent, passion, and commitment to the MSU Landscape Architecture Program that is extraordinary.

LAAAB President Deb Cooper

President's Message

Deb Cooper

For the past six years I have had the delight of serving on the MSU Landscape Architecture Alumni and Advisory Board as a board member for three years, vice president for one year, president for two years, and I will round out my term as past president for one additional year. This has been one of the most gratifying periods of my career. The Board has provided an unparalleled opportunity for me to build lasting relationships with fellow board members, faculty, students, and staff at MSU. This is truly an experience that gives back as much as you put into it, and I would not hesitate to recommend that all alumni consider it at some point in their careers.

Many of the folks I have encountered along the way have a depth of experience, talent, passion, and commitment to the MSU Landscape Architecture Program that is extraordinary. Some come to us with many years of experience working with the program, and others are just getting their feet wet, looking to renew their involvement with a program that offers so many of us such fond memories. This has opened my eyes to the wealth of opportunities for engaging in the education of our young professionals and to explore, learn from, and reconnect with my peers. Not only has it been fun to help connect all these folks through our events, but after 40 years of working with young professionals, I firmly believe that one of the most impressionable times in a career is the period in college and immediately thereafter, as new practitioners explore the profession, gain an understanding

of what it means to be a landscape architect, and discover how many different avenues there are to practice landscape architecture. What better way to expose them to all of this than to provide access to all of you, the many alumni of our LA program at MSU?

As an inaugural member of the Board, I have witnessed the development of an evolving mission and agenda: starting from scratch outlining what we wanted to accomplish, the resources needed, and the organizational structure that could sustain our mission; learning the ropes within the University structure, and our role within the partnership of faculty, staff, and students; and stepping back to regain the perspective of being a student. I will miss this experience and this responsibility, and I intend to maintain the connections I have made.

Our Board remains committed to recruiting the very best board members we can to provide a rich and diverse group of individuals to move this forward for future generations. Many of our board members completing their initial terms have agreed to reappointment, taking on executive committee roles that extend their terms, and returning to the Board. This is testimony to the gift of the experience. So as I end my tenure on the Board (at least for now), I would like to reach out to all of you and first recognize past Board members, and second ask that all of you consider engaging with the MSU Landscape Architecture Alumni and Advisory Board to enrich the student, faculty, and your own professional experience.

PAST BOARD MEMBERS

- Bob Ford, Past President, Inaugural and Founding Board Member
- Ken Polakowski, Past Vice President, Inaugural Board Member
- Don Fox, Past Secretary, Inaugural Board Member
- Lori Mullins, Past Treasurer, Inaugural Board Member
- Pam Blough, Past Treasurer, Inaugural Board Member
- Steve Troost, Past Secretary, Inaugural Board Member
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- Dave Tobar, Inaugural Board Member
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- Barbara Faga, Inaugural Board Member
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- Laurlyn Harmon

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

- Scott Reinholt, President
- Mike Rein, Vice President/President Elect
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- Cheryl Zuellig, Secretary
- Paul Weinberg, Treasurer
- John Campbell, Inaugural Board Member
- Kent Anderson, Inaugural Board Member
- Ken Weikal, Inaugural Board Member
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- Monica Schwanitz
- Dave Yocca
- Tim Gerrits
- Liz Dafoe
- Tim Britain
- Dave Wilber

We look for individuals with a strong desire to give back to the student experience and who offer a diverse point of view and experience base to the Board discussion. This really has been a blast! Contact Scott Reinholt (scottr@landscapeforms.com) or Mike Rein (reinm@umich.edu) for board opportunities.

FIREWISE Demonstration Garden: Cadillac, Michigan



Garden gazebo and viewing area

Jon Bryan Burley, Ph.D., FASLA

Planners, designers, and citizens are interested in how site design can mitigate the effects of landscape hazards. I have studied various aspects of landscape hazards, publishing research papers and winning awards for this work. Wildfires are one form of landscape hazard in which good site design practices can reduce damage. In Michigan, there are actually between 8,000 and 10,000 wildfires each year, damaging 100 to 200 structures yearly. Several years ago, I began work on this topic with Mark F. Hansen from Michigan State University Extension, Michael R. Penskar from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and Dr. Tom Fernandez from Michigan State University's horticulture department. With the Kettunen Center near Cadillac, Michigan, operated by the Michigan 4-H Foundation, we designed and constructed a firewise demonstration garden in the Kettunen Center's arboretum.

As an academic, one has to be careful about what types of professional projects upon which one works. Normally, research projects and teaching are my primary activities. If someone approaches me about doing professional work, even though I still maintain my professional license of almost 38 years, I recommend most potential projects to the many fine firms in Michigan who are in business to perform professional planning and design. I learned long ago, before coming to Michigan State University, that sometimes it was not wise for taxpayer-funded academics to compete for projects. I witnessed a quite destructive and combative situation for some academic architects at another university who ran an office through a university

setting and consequently encountered political trouble. So I let practitioners do planning and design projects, and I teach and do research. I think it is a good dividing line. However, I might consider a project if it is associated with my institution, it is educational, there are no funds for designer fees, and the project is not large. This was the case with the firewise landscape at the Kettunen Center.

We visited the site, and I led the team through a design process in which the team debated the merits of three different concepts I had developed. I find that it often works best to have the clients engaged in the design through decision making, and for me not to be too wedded to any one design or idea. This helps to keep me open and flexible to ideas while the client is active in the creation of the design, and I become a facilitator of their wishes. The final design was based loosely upon a spatial organization of representational leaves or feathers (planting beds) around a viewing area (the gazebo).

Site construction (earthwork and plant materials) was initiated through the volunteer activities of the MSU Horticulture Club. Materials and construction of the gazebo-like structure were financed with a small grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and completed by arrangements with contractors who worked through the Kettunen Center. After two years of work, an opening ceremony took place in 2010.

I thought the team worked really well together. It was a great pleasure to work with such professional and thoughtful people, demonstrating

how collaboration and teamwork can generate a meaningful solution with focus and quality. When I am asked to lecture about landscape hazards in Introduction to Landscape Architecture, I use the material from the firewise project as an educational tool to help students visualize and understand the process of initiating and completing a project. Sometimes I also show this project to students in my beginning design course, especially the part about generating meaningful design alternatives and how to be flexible as a designer.

Every year people visit the Kettunen Arboretum, enjoying educational settings about butterfly gardens, growing Christmas trees, and creating firewise environments. What I really like is the integration of new knowledge about fire-resistant plants and building materials that are studied at the university. With the assistance of state government, federal government, students, and institutions, we produce something meaningful concerning the understanding and protection of the environment, both built and natural. This is how it is supposed to work, and MSU is a place where this happens frequently, across many departments and for many scholars.

Before becoming an academic, I had worked upon approximately 1/2 billion dollars in planning and design projects. But now, I am getting close to retirement and the firewise project at the Kettunen Center may be the last professional project with which I will be involved. Compared to the big projects of my past, the Kettunen project is small, but because it serves the people of Michigan, it is a nice project with which to conclude a career.

SPDC Builds SPARTY'S CABIN

Patricia Crawford, Ph.D. and Rohit Menon.



Walls going up with Tom Lyons leading the front porch installation.



Hanbing Liang (right) and Stephanie Onwenu (left) constructing window shutters.

A trending concept in the US and abroad is “tiny homes,” with a focus on living simply and leaving behind smaller footprints. The tiny home movement reflects lifestyle choices such as living in smaller places and keeping possessions to a minimum, in order to unlock the necessary time and resources for desirable experiences. Students and faculty across all four School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC) majors came together to build Sparty’s Cabin: a 177 square foot tiny home built on a custom-made trailer for mobility and flexibility. The Cabin includes a porch, living area, kitchen, bathroom, and loft bedroom. The cabin took shape over a six-week period inside the MSU Surplus Store and Recycling Center, allowing for work through the March and April Michigan weather. A collaborative, self-motivated, and hands-on learning experience led to the successful completion of the build.

In the fall of 2015, a core group of students approached me with the idea of building a tiny home on campus. This initial conversation gained momentum and support from a wide range of donors, professionals, and MSU administration and management. Through the dedication of the 60-person volunteer crew, the cabin was completed on schedule. The tiny home was officially opened at a ribbon cutting ceremony on Earth Day, April 22, 2016 by President Lou Anna K. Simon and Provost June Pierce Youatt.

The experience improved confidence in the design students as professionals. “I now know the whole process, and know what to do,” says Hanbing Liang, a student in the dual degree BLA/MED program. She also worked with “MSU Shadows,” an Urban Wood program in the department of Forestry, to produce

the door, ladder, kitchen shelves, and counter. Hanbing never wasted a second on her shifts. While building Sparty’s Cabin, she learned from professionals, professors, and people from different disciplines. “They value different things, and view problems differently,” she said. “Curiosity is what kept me going. I knew that after all this was done I was going to be proud of what we built.” On the build, she operated power tools under the watchful eye of faculty, and helped install insulation. “I didn’t realize how important management was before this experience, because a lot of people showed up and it was really hard to divide up work,” she said reflectively. She has also participated in presentations that spread the word about Sparty’s Cabin and introduced the concept of tiny homes to other people. Understanding how to work with a variety of disciplines was the key takeaway for Hanbing and many of the other student volunteers.

Dr Robert Dalton’s expertise supported the tiny home project both on and off site. “It’s quite fun working with the other majors. We definitely have our own ways to approach problem solving and our own ways of speaking. Luckily, the students who come out on site are the hardest working and most open-minded. After all, they are here volunteering to augment their classroom learning. It makes it so much easier when that type of attitude comes to the work site, because they genuinely want to learn from each other.” When asked about his key takeaways, Dr. Dalton responded by saying, “It has been amazing seeing



In true LA fashion, an all-night work crew to get the interior and exterior wall coverings installed for the ribbon cutting.



MSU Surplus lifting the loft onto the first floor framing on a snowing spring day in Michigan.



Hanbing Liang installing the shutters.



Dr. Rob Dalton and PhD in PDC student Sirle Salmistu installing the tongue deck for the mini-split compressor.

Dr. Crawford at the build site. She is there with the student volunteers every day leading by example. She teaches me so much about teaching because she is so patient, calm, and flexible to allow students to build. She takes on the hardest tasks and allows each student to work on something that matches and enhances their skill set." Stephanie Onwenu, a senior in the landscape architecture program, said, "One my life goals is to build my first home, so I learned a lot on this project from Dr. Crawford and will definitely use it in the future." She said the project was a great way to meet people from different programs in the department, and to have the opportunity to learn and work with them.

Alyssa Alvarez recruited volunteers and coordinated build scheduling. Her presence was crucial to the lively, energetic atmosphere on site. While on the job, she coordinated with the professionals who installed the roof and the cabinets, faculty at SPDC who handled communications, and volunteers from the department of Horticulture, Neuroscience, and Kinesiology. "My biggest goal [at the time] was to see this through," said Alyssa. The pace at which things were moving on site meant that she had to learn quickly or hold up the team. "I learned so much about communication, how important it is to send that email, and how that can be applied through a better work ethic," she said. When asked about what she had learned, she emphasized collaboration, time management, work ethic, and a better understanding of built systems.

Kyle Goodrich, who graduated from the Construction Management program this spring, said, "I had to learn on the spot while working on tasks that I'd yet to be exposed to." Kyle was a part of the core team that met every Monday to discuss the strategy for the coming week. He recalled how, even though the team had attended workshops on tiny home construction before the build, the reality of the endeavor hit when the first batch of materials were delivered on site. He observed that the diversity of disciplinary backgrounds, coupled with passion in the team who volunteered on the build, were key to completing Sparty's Cabin on time. Ryan Daniels, a junior in the civil engineering program, said, "Perhaps the most important aspect of this project is the educational value it brings to anyone involved in the process, from planning to building." Ryan found that volunteering on the build was an opportunity to meet like-minded people, a valuable experience independent of career paths.

"It doesn't have to be a big idea in size to have an impact on the University," said President Simon at the ribbon cutting. "Small things can reflect big ideas." These words ring true about all aspects of the experience. Sparty's Cabin started with a conversation and ended with triumph. The power of collaboration was key to this triumph. Building the tiny home blended all the disciplines, making it difficult to distinguish among landscape architects, interior designers, urban planners, and construction managers because everyone was willing to help and learn together. The biggest motivation of all was making a difference in the world. Sparty's Cabin, while small in size, is evidence that the idea of thinking about lifestyle choices differently is attainable, and has been reached by Spartans.

Tiny Home: Simple Life: Strong Will.
<http://www.canr.msu.edu/spartyscabin>

President Simon and Provost Youatt join several of the build team at the Earth Day Ribbon Cutting event held in the Breslin Center.



Because I love to create spaces around a home residence, a complementary interest was sparked in creating homes that sit within the gardens I create.

Looking **BACK**

William Herman Kockler (class of 2006)

When I look back at my MSU experience, something I still think about today is our class trip to Western Europe and the many cities and gardens we visited. Along with the encouragement by our professors to develop at our own pace while working on many real world projects, the trip set me up for the success I've experienced so far professionally.

Since graduating, I've lived in Illinois, Colorado, and California. I've also had the fortune of practicing landscape architecture at a design-build capacity for the last 10 years. Getting firsthand knowledge of constructing my designs helped me think more clearly about what I needed to include in my drawings. Learning firsthand from my mistakes has made me a better designer today.

In 2010, I decided to take Mike Lins' two week graphic workshop to improve on my hand drawing skills. This workshop helped a lot with my client interactions, as people tend to understand pictures better than words. It also helped my confidence in drawing. Building on this new skill, I saw the magic in creating 3D models and delved into studying SketchUp to further my graphic presentation skills. After working on this in my free time, I eventually found a full time position in Southern California modeling senior landscape architects' designs for client presentations and design development.

In light of this new growth and my burning desire to continue school, the New School of Architecture and Design here in San Diego caught my attention. The school's unique

offering of the IPAL (Integrated Path to Architectural Licensure) program intrigued me because it combined academic study with paid professional practice, two of my favorite things.

Because I love to create spaces around a home residence, a complementary interest was sparked in creating homes that sit within the gardens I create. Looking for complete control of the design outcome, I applied and was accepted into the IPAL program beginning October 2016. I am very excited to expand on my current understanding of design. I also am looking forward to the new growth and opportunities this will bring along the way during my career as a design professional.

Go Green!



Graphic model of design concept

PIONEERS OF AMERICAN LANDSCAPE DESIGN



Bill Johnson working with students



Bill Johnson in design studio

Dean Abbott Named Pioneer of American Landscape Design

Dean Abbott has been recognized by The Cultural Landscape Foundation as a Pioneer of American Landscape Design. Born in Yonkers, New York, he earned his B.L.A. from Michigan State University in 1961 and his M.L.A. from Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1963.

Early in his career, Mr. Abbott contributed to the design of the Spanish Pavilion at the New York World's Fair while working for Zion and Breen Associates along with M. Paul Friedberg and Partners. He then taught briefly at the University of Georgia before joining the San Francisco offices of Sasaki, Walker and Associates in 1967.

From 1969 through 1977, Mr. Abbott worked at the New York offices of Lawrence Halprin and Associates. Among other accomplishments, he was the lead designer of the Charlottesville (Virginia) Pedestrian Mall, which reflects his longstanding interest in movement as a means to achieve a sense of place. After teaching at the University of Minnesota from 1977 to 1980, he joined Clarke & Rapauno through 1988, producing a competition-winning redesign of Boston's Copley Square during that time. He returned to teach at the University of Minnesota from 1995 to 2011, and remains a part-time instructor in its College of Design.



Historic downtown pedestrian mall in Charlottesville, Virginia.

William "Bill" Johnson Oral History

Through the Cultural Landscape Foundation's *Pioneers of American Landscape Design Oral History Project*, alumnus William "Bill" Johnson (class of 1953) has recorded an amazing story of his life and career. The goal of the series is to make the practitioner's stories available for future generations, examining each designer's personal and professional history, their overall design philosophy, and how that approach was carried out in their most emblematic projects. In addition to advancing historical research, the *Pioneers of American Landscape Design* initiative fosters a richer and deeper understanding of both the professional and unique works of landscape architecture.

Bill received his B.L.A. from Michigan State University in 1953 and his M.L.A. at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. He went on to form Johnson, Johnson, and Roy in 1961 with his brother Carl and friend Clarence Roy. Bill was also a professor of landscape architecture beginning in 1958, Dean of the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan from 1975 to 1983, and became Professor Emeritus in 1988. Johnson was named a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1973 and awarded the ASLA Medal in 1986.

Bill's oral history is the fourteenth recording of the award-winning *Pioneers of American Landscape Design Oral History Project* series. Please consider donating to the Cultural Landscape Foundation www.tclf.org so that these important works can continue for years to come!