

A Brief History of the HALS Liaisons Network

by

*Susan Crook, HALS Liaisons Coordinator, 2002-2008 (information through 2007),
with additions by Noel Vernon, SoCal HALS Liaison (information 1979-2005),
and David Driapsa, HALS Liaisons Coordinator, 2009- (information 2008-09)*

The designation of historic preservation liaisons in ASLA chapters began long before the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) was established. The original ASLA Historic Preservation Committee (now HP-PPN), organized in the 1970s, recognized the need to provide outreach and continuing education to colleagues about landscape preservation. The chronology that follows outlines the history of HALS and the HALS Liaisons Network.

- 1970s ASLA Historic Preservation Committee (HPC), chaired by the late Thomas J. Kane, FASLA, begins advocating for landscape preservation, but committee goes inactive in late 1970s.
- 1978 Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation formed by Kane and a small interdisciplinary group of colleagues from the U. S. and Canada.
- 1979 Baker H. Morrow initiates a state survey of historic landscapes for the State of New Mexico, the first in the nation, with a grant from its Cultural Properties Review Committee for \$50,000. Significant properties are included on the New Mexico Register of Historic Landscapes.
- 1979 Opening of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site [NPS] at 99 Warren Street, Brookline, Massachusetts. Documentation of Olmsted parks is an impetus for several early cultural landscape survey efforts, and the documents held at the FLONHS will support this long-term initiative.
- 1980 Founding of the National Association of Olmsted Parks (NAOP).
- 1981 ASLA's HPC reactivated, Richard Machias, Chair; Patricia O'Donnell, Vice-Chair.
- 1982 HPC Chair O'Donnell renews chapter liaison network to provide continuing education within the profession about the need to consider landscape preservation issues when working on projects.
- April 1983 Newly-named ASLA Council of Open Committees, including Historic Preservation Open Committee (HPOC), directed to include both landscape architects and allied professionals to "develop and communicate state-of-the-art professional practice."
- Nov 1983 Olmsted Historic Landscapes Act (S. 2082, H.R. 4365 – 'the Seiberling bill) introduced by Senator Patrick Moynihan and Ohio House Representative John Seiberling seeks funding "to identify, commemorate and preserve the legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted . . .".
- 1983 HPOC Chair Patricia O'Donnell meet with Jerry Rogers, NPS, Associate Director of Cultural Resources, the NPS Landmarks Program staff, and professional organizations fostering historic landscape preservation to discuss forming a Historic American Landscapes Survey, similar to HABS; an additional hope is that this information also would contribute to a Theme Study in Landscape Architecture. The meeting marks the beginning of the NPS Historic Landscapes Initiative.
- May 1984 HPOC announces the National Historic Landscapes Survey with the national mailing of a letter and survey forms, a modified version of the National Register form developed by Dorsey (HPOC Vice-Chair) and O'Donnell (HPOC Chair) for the ASLA.

- 1984 The Ohio State Historic Preservation Office, with support from Noel Dorsey (Vernon) and the Ohio Chapter ASLA, and partially in response to the Seiberling bill, initiates the Ohio Historic Landscapes Survey.
- Massachusetts, under its Department of Environmental Management, funds the Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program.
- Noel Dorsey (Vernon), Baker Morrow, other members of the HPOC, (and other supporters of the Olmsted Act (including Charles Beveridge of the NAOP) testify before a sub-committee of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in its favor; however, the bill fails to pass after several years of lobbying. Morrow's survey of the historic landscapes of New Mexico and Dorsey's "Dayton Olmsted Historic Landscapes Survey" are among the examples cited of cultural landscape surveys.
- 1987 1st Annual HPOC Historic Landscape Preservation Symposium presented in collaboration with NPS at Baltimore ASLA Annual Meeting. Resource binder from this and following symposia partially fills gap in available landscape preservation information.
- 1989 ASLA HPOC and NPS Preservation Assistance Division sign cooperative agreement that leads to development of guidelines for landscape preservation treatment.
- 1996 ASLA Annual Meeting in Los Angeles historic preservation track (co-organized by HPOC Chair Scott Mehaffey and Los Angeles Annual Meeting program committee member Noel Vernon) includes an 11-session Historic Landscape Preservation Symposium, including a retrospective and next steps presentation by Patricia O'Donnell and a post-meeting mobile workshop organized by Noel Vernon. Premiere of the documentary, "Connections: Preserving America's Landscape Legacy," narrated by Angela Lansbury and produced by ASLA and the NPS Historic Landscape Initiative, headed by Charles Birnbaum.
- Oct. 2000 NPS Director Robert Stanton establishes the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) as a permanent federal program.
- Joint presentation by ASLA, NPS and Library of Congress at St. Louis ASLA Annual Meeting announces tripartite cooperation to develop HALS.
- Feb 2001 Memorandum of Understanding is signed by ASLA, NPS, and LC to cooperatively develop the HALS program.
- April 2001 HP-PI Group HALS Subcommittee representatives speak to ASLA Lobby Day participants about HALS; ASLA includes HALS funding as one of its priorities on Capitol Hill.
- April 2001 HALS Subcommittee secures \$5,000 from ASLA Executive Committee for HALS fundraising activities and marketing materials; development of HALS brochure begins.
- April 2002 HALS Liaisons Toolkit introduced at Mid-year Chapter Presidents' Council (CPC) and Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings/ Lobby Day by HALS Subcommittee members Cari Goetcheus and Charles Birnbaum. HALS Toolkit distributed to chapter presidents with instructions to appoint a liaison to provide local education and outreach and begin a list of possible HALS sites. Susan Crook begins serving as HALS Liaisons Coordinator.
- Oct 2002 San Jose ASLA Annual Meeting is the last at which a clearly defined education track on historic landscape preservation is offered. Historic Landscape Preservation Symposium, Mobile Workshop and Unsung Hero reception subsequently dropped as ASLA shifts priorities and begins focusing on emerging issues such as sustainability.

- 2003-2005 Development of the HALS Guidelines for Historical Reports (Judith Helm Robinson, Noel D. Vernon, and Catherine C. Lavoie), Drawings (The Jaeger Company), and Photography (Tom Lamb).
- May 2005 HALS update presented at ASLA Chapter Presidents' Council (CPC) by Susan Crook and Paul Dolinsky. Chapter presidents asked to work with HALS liaisons to identify one threatened landscape per congressional district to leverage support for funding. Chapter presidents and trustees continue lobbying Congress for initial HALS funding.
- Paul Dolinsky appointed Chief of HALS, transferred from job as Chief of HABS and acting Chief of HALS, but without additional funding for the first full-time, permanent HALS position.
- Fall 2005 HP-PPN HALS Subcommittee and ASLA Government Affairs staff begin concerted effort to have liaisons appointed in every state and to step up lobbying for HALS funding.
- Dec 2005 HALS listserv created by ASLA to facilitate communication among liaisons: hal@asla.org. HALS MOU updated and renewed.
- Jan 2006 First HALS Liaisons conference call held to discuss funding strategy and search for "Dear Colleague" letter sponsor.
- May 2006 Local examples fact sheet template created and distributed to liaisons via listserv by ASLA Government Affairs staff.
- Oct 2006 HALS Liaisons briefing to assess progress and discuss strategy is initiated at Minneapolis ASLA Annual Meeting.
- Nov 2006 HALS Liaisons duties and organizational chart prepared by HALS Liaisons Coordinator Susan Crook and Federal Government Affairs Manager Scott Kovarovics is approved by ASLA Executive Committee and added to CPC handbook.
- Oct 2007 2nd Annual HALS Liaisons briefing held at San Francisco ASLA Annual Meeting. David Driapsa volunteers as incoming HALS Liaisons Coordinator.
- Oct 2008 3rd Annual HALS Liaisons briefing held at Philadelphia ASLA Annual Meeting. David Driapsa appointed HALS Liaisons Coordinator.
- Summer 2009 HALS webpage updated and moved to ALSA Advocacy/Historic Landscapes. ASLA approves HALS Liaisons Coordinator's request to work with Chapter Trustees to invigorate HALS at the Chapter Level. HALS Subcommittee and ASLA Staff working together to develop the HALS webpage.