



VIRGINIA CHAPTER  
AMERICAN  
SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTS

2415 Westwood Avenue  
Suite B  
Richmond, VA 23230

March 16, 2016

Honorary Member Nomination  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, D. C. 20001

**Re: Nomination of Carlton Sturges Abbott, FAIA, for Honorary Membership of the ASLA**

Dear Members of the Executive Committee:

The Virginia Chapter of the American Society of landscape Architects (ASLA) is formally requesting the election of Carlton Sturges Abbott as an Honorary Member of the Society. As an architect Carlton Abbott has made significant contributions to and supported the practice of landscape architecture, landscape architects, and the Virginia Chapter ASLA over his nearly 60 years of professional practice in Virginia.

After his graduation in 1963 from the University of Virginia School of Architecture and following study at the Ecoles d'Art Américaines de Fontainebleau in France, Carlton Abbott joined the practice of his father and renowned landscape architect Stanly W. Abbott. Through his experience collaborating with his father, Carlton Abbott gained an appreciation for landscapes and landscape architectural expertise that served as the foundation for his future contributions to our profession and the landscapes of the Commonwealth and beyond.

Many of Virginia's most important places have been shaped by the work of Carlton Abbott and his firm. Over the course of his practice he led the development of plans and designs for many of the museums, historic sites, campuses, and transportation systems serving Virginians and visitors to the Commonwealth. His early practice with his father included the preparation of master plans and designs for several of Virginia's state parks including Seashore, False Cape, Chippokes, York River, and Staunton River state parks. Carlton Abbott prepared the first master plan for the James River Park—the most important open space in Richmond, Virginia. One of his more recent significant contributions to Virginia's landscapes was his master planning and design of new visitor and educational facilities on Jamestown Island in the early 2000s. His design work supporting the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Jamestown was highly representative of his landscape-sensitive approach to site planning and architectural design that defined his entire career.

After his father's retirement, Carlton Abbott undertook projects along the Blue Ridge Parkway following his father's legacy as the lead landscape architect for the parkway's planning and design. Carlton Abbott's sensitivity to landscape influenced his design of visitor facilities and the documentation of historic building types along the parkway. Many of his projects went beyond the design of facilities and included specific recommendations for interpretation of natural and cultural resources to enhance public understanding and management of landscapes. His James River Flood Wall Enhancement Plan provided the guidance that would mitigate visual impacts of the floodwall in the City of Richmond as well as serve as a means of educating the public on important local landscape history.

Carlton Abbott has advocated for landscape management components within the Commonwealth's Department of Conservation and Recreation including serving on numerous boards and committees supporting landscape-related missions of the agency. He has served on a technical advisory committee of Scenic Virginia for the development of a Scenic Vistas Registry for the entire Commonwealth that would complement the state's Historic Landmarks Register. This new registry will identify important scenic vistas in the Commonwealth and the information will be utilized by the Department of Conservation and Recreation in development of the Virginia Open Space and Conservation Plan. His contributions to the stewardship of the Commonwealth's natural, historic, cultural, and scenic resources have been and continue to be significant.



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In 1983, with over twenty-five American Institute of Architects (AIA) design awards to his credit, Carlton Abbott was one of the youngest practitioners to be elected to the College of Fellows of the AIA. In 1995, his firm received the Fitz-Gibbon Architecture Firm Award, the highest honor bestowed upon a Virginia architecture firm by the Virginia Society AIA, recognizing a practice that has consistently produced distinguished architecture over a period of at least ten years. In 1999, the Virginia Society AIA awarded the William C. Noland Medal to Carlton Abbott. The Noland Medal is awarded annually to the single architect whose distinguished lifetime achievements most fully exemplify the values and abilities of the architectural profession. Other awards received for his architectural accomplishments include the Hampton Roads Chapter AIA Outstanding Service to the Profession of Architecture Award in 1996; Hampton Roads Chapter AIA Firm Award in 2004; and the Virginia Society AIA Award for Preservation for his firm's contributions to the preservation of Virginia's architectural heritage.

The Virginia Chapter ASLA has recognized Carlton Abbott's contributions to the Commonwealth's important landscapes and the profession of landscape architecture. He received a Certificate of Appreciation for Contributions to the Profession of Landscape Architecture in 1978 and was the first recipient of the Virginia Chapter's Interprofessional Award for Contributions and Support of Landscape Architecture in Virginia in 1988.

Carlton Abbott has supported the Virginia Chapter and landscape architects working in Virginia over several decades. He actively supported the Chapter's multiple initiatives to secure licensure. His licensure advocacy efforts on our behalf included, but were not limited to, lobbying his architecture colleagues and the support of licensure-related publications. His support of our profession has been constant and important for the public, political, and governmental agency understanding of the value and work of landscape architects.

Given Carlton Abbott's decades-long support of and contributions to the profession of landscape architecture, the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the landscape heritage of Virginia, we, the undersigned Virginia Chapter Fellows enthusiastically support the Virginia Chapter ASLA's nomination of Carlton Abbott as an Honorary Member of the ASLA.

Respectfully yours,

William D. Almond, FASLA  
Mark K. Brinkley, FASLA  
Warren T. Byrd, FASLA  
Gordon W. Chappell, FASLA  
Terry L. Clements, FASLA  
J. Barry Frankenfield, FASLA  
Richard G. Gibbons, FASLA  
Mary V. Hughes, FASLA  
J. Timothy Keller, FASLA  
Lucille C. Lanier, FASLA  
Donald M. Lederer, FASLA  
Robert M. McGinnis, FASLA  
Elizabeth K. Meyer, FASLA  
Patrick A. Miller, PhD, FASLA \*  
Robert H. Mortensen, FASLA \*  
Peter J. O'Shea, FASLA  
G. Glenn Oder, FASLA  
Reuben M. Rainey, FASLA  
John J. Reynolds, FASLA  
Barry W. Starke, FASLA \*

\* Past-Presidents of the American Society of Landscape Architects

03/14/2016

Executive Committee  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 EYE Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Re: Honorary Member ASLA Candidate Carlton Sturges Abbott

To whom it may concern:

This is a letter to support the election of Carlton Sturges Abbott as an Honorary Member of ASLA. I have personally known and worked with Carlton for over 40 years and cannot think of anyone more deserving of this high honor.

As a celebrated architect and artist in Virginia, Carlton has been a staunch supporter of landscape architecture throughout his professional career. His association with the profession began at birth as the son of the prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape architect, Stanley Abbott, perhaps best known as the designer of the Blue Ridge Parkway. As such, Carlton grew up with an understanding and deep appreciation of our profession and incorporated this legacy into his architectural practice.

Ironically, Carlton intended to follow in his father's footsteps as a landscape architect but the absence of a landscape architectural program in Virginia at the time lead him instead to study architecture at The University of Virginia. He went on to become perhaps the most celebrated architect of his generation in the state. Part of his success is due to the incorporation of landscape architecture as one of the cornerstones of his practice, now in its 50th year. Much of his firm's work dealt with the preservation and interpretation of historic sites and cultural landscapes for which it is well known.

More than any other member of an allied profession in Virginia, Carlton Abbott has long supported landscape architecture and the Virginia Chapter of ASLA (VAASLA). He gave freely of his time and considerable artistic talent in helping the fledgling VAASLA establish its presence and clout with allied professionals. As an AIA Fellow and icon in the Virginia architectural community, Carlton was a major influence in getting architects throughout the state to support certification/licensure of landscape architects in Virginia, which would not have been possible without such support.

I strongly encourage you to elect Carlton Stergus Abbott as an Honorary Member of ASLA.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Starke', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barry W. Starke, FASLA

Former ASLA President, 1999



# VirginiaTech

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and Urban Studies

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March 21, 2016

Dear ASLA Awards Committee:

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to recommend that Carlton Abbott be made an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. As a faculty member and head of the Landscape Architecture Department at Virginia Tech I have known Carlton and his work for 30 years. Carlton is a landscape architect's architect. By that I mean he has been supportive of landscape architects, their work and the Virginia Chapter of the ASLA. This should not be surprising, considering the fact that he is the son of a very prominent landscape architect, Stanley Abbott, the lead designer of the Blue Ridge National Parkway.

In fact, I am a recipient of his support for the Virginia Chapter of the ASLA. I have one of Carlton's framed sketches given to me by the chapter for serving as chapter president. My sketch is one of his many art works that he gave to the chapter for that purpose.

He was a visitor to Virginia Tech on many occasions. He lectured to students and faculty on the important considerations and challenges of preserving the cultural landscape of the Blue Ridge Parkway. On another occasion he conducted a sketching workshop for students in several design disciplines. He gave another lecture titled, "Ideas in architecture that are too difficult to express in words." He was a speaker at a Virginia Tech sponsored conference titled: *Imagining the Blue Ridge Parkway for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Carlton has a quiet and reflective manner, but authoritative way of speaking that inspires students. I recall some particularly good advice he gave to students once about how he uses his artwork to stay fresh and creative in his practice. There is a special relationship between his art and who he is as a person.

Carlton's architecture is beautiful and always responds to the landscape in which it is located. His architecture is eye catching, but not gaudy. It feels like it is part of the place it is in. This comes from his work on preserving culturally important landscapes. His work inspires people and reminds us of how important well-designed buildings and landscapes are to people's lives.

As a former president of the American Society of Landscape Architects, I would be proud to have a man of his design sensibility and values join us as an honorary member. I strongly encourage you to bestow this honor on him. ASLA will be better off for it.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick A. Miller, Ph.D., FASLA, FCELA  
Professor of Landscape Architecture and  
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Outreach  
College of Architecture and Urban Studies  
120F Burruss Hall (0190)  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

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Gary W. Johnson, ASLA  
Retired NPS Landscape Architect  
Asheville, NC 28804



## ASLA Honorary Membership Committee

Dear Committee Members,

It is my pleasure to write in support of awarding Carlton S. Abbott an honorary membership to the American Society of Landscape Architects. I have known Carlton for over 20 years as a client and fellow professional. In my capacity as the Blue Ridge Parkway's chief landscape architect and planner, Carlton and I worked together on Blue Ridge Parkway projects for 16 of my 35 years in the National Park Service. Two of the major projects were the Blue Ridge Parkway headquarters office building complex in Asheville, North Carolina and the Parkway Music Center near Galax Virginia. I saw firsthand his ability to understand topographically difficult and culturally sensitive landscapes. Carlton designed structures and sites that were both functional and architecturally appropriate. He also authored and illustrated the "Visual Character of the Blue Ridge Parkway" documenting all aspects of the architectural and landscape architectural character of the Parkway.


Carlton's introduction to landscape architecture came early in life, being the son of the pioneering National Park Service landscape architect, Stanley W. Abbott. Stanley was most known for his early planning, design and management of the 469 mile-long Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia and North Carolina and the Colonial Parkway in Virginia. For more than 50 years Carlton Abbott and Partners has been the continuation of the firm of Abbott Associates, which was founded by Carlton and his late father, Stanley Abbott. The firm provided planning, landscape architecture, and architecture services based upon the guiding principle of designing with the landscape.

While Carlton is an architect by record of his university degree and practice licensure, his professional accomplishments are unusually varied for an architect. His expertise has been expressed in the breadth of more than 100 award winning projects including architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, sculpture and graphic arts. Carlton literally has directed hundreds of projects providing innovative and pragmatic planning and design solutions for national, state and local parks, historic foot print and interpretive sites, museums, visitor centers, and

memorial sites. In these projects, the firm's site planning emphasized site specific plans and design solutions based upon their thorough understanding of the project's environmental and historical values, other resource constraints and opportunities.

I appreciate the opportunity to lend my strong support for Carlton Abbott's nomination as an honorary member to the American Society of Landscape Architects based upon his leadership and ongoing contributions to the practice of landscape architecture.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Johnson, ASLA  
Retired NPS Landscape Architect



## PRESERVATION VIRGINIA

March 16, 2016

Honorary Membership Nomination

ASLA

636 Eye Street, NW,

Washington, DC 20001-3736

RE: Carlton Abbott, FAIA

Dear Committee Members:

On a clear May morning in 2007, Carlton Abbott greeted Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the newly opened Alan M. and Nathalie P. Voorhees Archaearium. The day was an exclamation point that culminated six years of planning. Mr. Abbott had been captain and cheerleader, consoler and teacher to the Preservation Virginia and National Park Service team.

The journey began when Preservation Virginia and the National Park Service determined to undertake a master planning process to envision a seamless visitor experience at our jointly managed sites at Historic Jamestowne. With the discovery of the archaeological remains of 1607 James Fort by Preservation Virginia's archaeological team in 1996, the story of America's beginnings was to be the central focus of this new interpretive experience.

In 2001 after an international search, Carlton Abbott was selected as the architect for our planning effort. In close collaboration with interpretive designers, Haley Sharpe, he guided the process from master planning to implementation and construction.

Mr. Abbott's leadership in this effort was unwavering. He navigated our team through a public Environmental Impact Statement process required because of the commitment of Federal funds. He brought his encyclopedic knowledge of Virginia's historic landscapes to offer inspiration and design solutions. He enlisted the voices of the Virginia Indian tribes and the African American community to ensure inclusiveness.

As work moved from conceptual to design, he capitalized on his unique ability to balance the historic integrity of the landscape while introducing interpretive elements. Visiting Historic Jamestowne today, you get a sense of Mr. Abbott's ability to achieve this success. His attention to detail, his commitment to the integrity of the site and his persistent push for the highest quality of design are all evident as you experience the interpretive landscape.

The Alan M. and Nathalie P. Voorhees Archaearium embodies the genius of Mr. Abbott. The museum facility is located on the archaeological site of the Third and Fourth Statehouses (1660s). Floated above the seventeenth-century foundations and affixed by helix pilings, this new structure houses a museum dedicated to telling the story of finding the archaeological remains of 1607 James Fort.

PRESERVATION VIRGINIA

204 West Franklin Street • Richmond, Virginia 23220-5012 • 804.648.1889 • (f) 804.775.0802 • [www.preservationvirginia.org](http://www.preservationvirginia.org)

*Connecting people and resources to ensure the continued vitality of Virginia's historic places*



## PRESERVATION VIRGINIA

The subtle details elevate the structure. Copper siding pays honor to the valuable trade commodity prized by the Virginia Indians. The large glass facade ensures that visitors connect the objects on display in the building to their origins at the excavation site. The glass floor panels reveal the original foundations of the Statehouse. The interior courtyard honors the men, women and children once buried on site—a result of the struggle to maintain a foothold in this world new to Englishman.

As I write this letter, it occurs to me that the journey for Mr. Abbott began far earlier than our hiring him to lead the planning effort. It must have begun years earlier when his father, Stanley Abbott was superintendent of Colonial National Historical Park, the NPS unit that contains Historic Jamestowne. Because of Mr. Abbott's long association and intimate knowledge of the site, he was uniquely prepared to take on the challenge of re-envisioning Historic Jamestowne. For that, Preservation Virginia and all who visit the site will share a debt of gratitude with Mr. Abbott.

On behalf of Preservation Virginia's Board of Trustee, staff and statewide membership, it is an honor to support the nomination of Carlton Abbott for Honorary Membership in the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth S. Kostelny".

Elizabeth S. Kostelny

Chief Executive Officer

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