

**Welcoming notes for the CSLA College of Fellows  
by Peter Jacobs**

**Montreal, 19 October 2017**

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Dear Friends and colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you and to offer a possible road map of Fellowship on your behalf.

I invite you to imagine a virtual image of welcoming four new fellows of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects. The picture I have in mind focuses on the welcome accorded the four angels who, thousands of years ago, visited Abraham and his wife Sara at their shelter in the desert. Legend has it that the flaps of their tent had been pulled back from the four corners so as to ensure that all would be welcome, regardless of where they came from.

Glen Manning, Joanne Moran, Claude Potvin, and Mark Schollen have all taken different paths on their way to Fellowship in our Society, and have done so with great distinction. (Please note that I haven't stretched the desert metaphor to suggest that they are also angels). On behalf of all of those assembled here, it is my pleasure and honour to offer each of them our heartfelt congratulations. In the words of Abraham and Sara « borchim habaim » – Welcome to our dwelling.

There is no greater honour than when your peers recognize and applaud the services you have contributed to your society and to your profession over a sustained period of time. Some honours might be purchased, and others attained through political lobbying, but Fellowship is accorded by your peers only on the basis of your merits. And who better to evaluate these merits than those who ply the same waters, use the same skill sets, and share the same core values?

These are challenging times – there are famines and natural disasters around the world, and nations threaten to completely eliminate their enemies. But an academy such as ours is quite different. This community acts proactively to promote actions supporting its core values. It seeks to innovate so as to improve professional practices and is committed to helping our colleagues with the sole purpose of improving what we do and how we do it.

Fellowship comes with the responsibility of serving as a model for others, supporting our peers, helping to improve what we do and how we do it, and above all providing intellectual, artistic, and emotional support to our peers.

(And all along you thought you would be receiving a medal while enjoying a free meal - alas, that's not the case.)

Imagine that you are carrying a CSLA SIM card (subscriber identity module) not so much as a reminder of who you are but what you ought to be doing (Sharing, Innovating, and Mentoring) - values that Fellows might emphasize upon election.

**Sharing** – Since the advent of open source computer programs designed to share information across the internet, itself a worldwide sharing platform, landscape architecture has flourished from the relatively free flow of information helping us to share what we know and what we hope to discover. Through their practice, publications, and involvement in professional activities, Fellows are asked to lead by example, actively supporting a sharing environment.

**Innovation** - Landscape architects have survived in a highly competitive world because we have managed to reinvent ourselves on a regular basis. GIS systems, environmental impact assessment, Xeroscape, and ecosystem services are just some of the fields that we helped to develop. Given our modest numbers (+/- 10% of Canadian Architects and less than 1% of engineers) innovation is an essential component of our tool box. As new Fellows you are encouraged to continue to innovate, contributing to positive, even disruptive, change.

**Mentoring** – If Fellowship consists of people who produce new approaches to shared problems and opportunities, our challenge is to pass these skills and values on to our younger colleagues and to set an example in mentoring our business, political and community leaders. If we are not at the forefront of educating the communities whom we serve, who will be? And finally, for those with the aptitude and skills, we must engage our children and grandchildren to ensure that our values are communicated and their validity understood from a very early age. Mentoring is an essential task and a critical challenge for all Fellows.

Only 229 members have been elected to the College since its inception, of which 34 are no longer with us. The vast majority of fellows are no longer as young as they used to be and, as a result, the burden of activities critical to the well-being of the Association rests in the hands of the newly elected members. I have no doubt that they are up to the challenges.

On behalf of those in attendance and the many who could not be with us, welcome to the College of Fellows and congratulations on your justly deserved recognition.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Jacobs." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline that extends under the word "Jacobs".

Peter Jacobs  
Past President CSLA, FCSLA, FASLA