



# CRS Center

*for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry*

CRSC Newsletter, Vol. 2, Spring 1999

## Spotlight on Schools: *Revisiting the 1999 Rowlett Lecture*

Take a quick glance at any Texas roadway or inhale a deep breath full of pollen-laden air, and it will become readily apparent that spring has indeed sprung. For the CRS Center, that means another Rowlett Lecture has come and gone.

Just as the appearance of roadside flowers and budding trees signals the end of winter, the annual Rowlett Lecture symbolizes the much-anticipated return of a tradition steeped in memorable events. How fitting then that this year's lecture celebrated another rebirth of sorts near and dear to the Center's namesake firm: school-building.

*Transitions to Schools of the Future*, held February 12 at Rudder Theatre on the Texas A&M University campus, focused on a critical national problem: the design and construction of K-12 educational facilities. Texas A&M students, faculty and staff as well many architects and school administrators took part in the day-long symposium, which featured presentations from well-known architects, public school leaders, educational technologists and technology experts. The symposium addressed a number of key issues involving school environments, the integration of information technology and instruction, and school design and construction.

The following day, symposium attendees took the message to heart, teaming up for a by-invitation-only design charrette at the Langford Architecture Center. Five teams comprised of students, professionals and educators explored the implications of issues raised during the symposium by designing their own schools of the future. Following the presentation of design ideas, the day concluded with an informal dinner.

Touted as a program that would enrich the education of students while presenting information that was inspirational regarding their possible futures, the event

more than lived up to its billing—and for more than just Texas A&M attendees. Students and instructors from Ball State University, Mississippi State University, the University of Oklahoma, Prairie View A&M University and Texas Tech University participated in the weekend's events, leaving College Station with perhaps a broader view of educational facilities, not to mention Aggies.

Our sincere thanks to our co-sponsors (the Texas A&M Colleges of Architecture and Education, the Center for Distance Learning Research and the Texas Architectural Foundation), our industry sponsors (3D/International Inc., gold; Corgan Associates Inc., silver; HKS Inc., silver; HLM Design-formerly JPJ, silver; Simon-Burch-Clark-Maris, silver) and our College faculty and staff for their continued support of this valuable lecture series.



Jean Wulfson, University Relations

Texas A&M Professor of Architecture Tom McKittrick (right) works with (from left) Laurie Rath (M.Edad), Dana Woodruff (M.Arch) and Yi-Chen Wu (ENDS) during the design charrette portion of the 1999 Rowlett Lecture/Educational Facilities Symposium.

## CRS Center Awards Contract to Complete Oral History Book

In December, the CRS Center contracted with *Philip Langdon* to complete work on the CRS Oral History initiated by Jonathan King, former Center director and board member who passed away in November 1997. After a comprehensive search, we determined that Langdon was uniquely qualified to complete this specialized task.

An award-winning writer and editor, Langdon possesses a very strong background and interest in architecture. He has written four books on design subjects and co-authored two others. In addition, he was a se-

nior writer/editor at a major architecture magazine and has written for a number of national magazines including *Architectural Record*, *Progressive Architecture* and *Atlantic Monthly*.

Most recently, Langdon was a senior writer/editor for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, associate editor of *The American Enterprise* magazine, and a frequent contributor to *Architectural Record* and other magazines. He is now a free-lance writer.

Langdon plans to complete the book by December 1999.

# IN THE outbox

Since the official opening of the George Bush Presidential Library Center in November 1997, hundreds of thousands of visitors have flocked to the Texas A&M University campus for the chance to go back in time and experience a day in the life of the nation's 41st president. Now, thanks to the CRS Center, the opportunity also exists to take a sneak peak into the equally interesting history of the Bush Library Center.

In December, the Center unveiled a publication that archivists and general history buffs alike will want to consider adding to their collections. *Vision & Leadership in the Creation of the George Bush Presidential Library Center* represents the compelling story behind the planning, design and construction of the George Bush Library and Museum on the Texas A&M University campus.

*Vision & Leadership* chronicles the events of the 1998 Rowlett Lecture / Bush Library Symposium, hosted this past spring by the CRS Center and the Texas A&M College of Architecture in collaboration with the Bush Library and Museum and the Bush School of Government and Public Service.

While the original idea behind committing the symposium to public record was to inform and educate those who will plan and design future presidential libraries, the resulting product appears to go one step further. According to President Bush himself, it also entertains.

"This is a valuable history to have for our library records," Bush said. "It was fun for me to go over the various presentations each reciting the recollections of the speaker as to how A&M came to be the venue for my presidential library. All I know is I am very glad I made the decision to put the library at A&M. I love every minute I spend up there, and I want to spend more and more time there as the years go by."

Both the monograph and the complete symposium transcript are available through the CRS Center. For ordering information, please contact the Center. For additional information about the Bush Library, call 409-260-9552.

## Archives Angles: *CRS Slides To Go Digital*

Largely through the combined efforts of student assistants *Brad Hollas* and *Jenny Kaus*, the CRS Center's extensive slide collection was sub-categorized this past summer in an effort to pinpoint those slides that are most worthy for inclusion in a prototype digitization project to be offered through the Sterling C. Evans Library. The library is targeting projects involving 5,000-10,000 slides, which would be scanned into a database and then be made available via the

Internet.

Digitizing the CRS slide collection will help to ensure the preservation of the slides, some of which are beginning to fade. An additional benefit will be the increase in their accessibility through the Internet. We expect that this project will take approximately two years.

## HAVE FINDINGS; WILL TRAVEL

*Center Research Roadshow Boasts Sold-Out Tour for Summer of '99*

While the typical person's summer plans might include a trip to Disneyland with the kids or a romantic vacation for two in the Tropics, there will be no such thing as lazy days of summer where CRS Center faculty are concerned. However, the two scenarios do have one thing in common: They both involve travel. Among the highlights:

One look at the calendar tells you the month of June isn't just reserved for weddings anymore—although CRS Center Faculty Fellow *Mark J. Clayton* will be in attendance for one in California fresh on the heels of his presentation at the May 30-June 3 International Conference on the Durability of Building Materials and Components in Vancouver. From California, Mark will head to Atlanta for the prestigious June 7-8 CAAD Futures '99 Conference to present his paper, "Downstream of Design: Web-Based Facility Operations Documents."

The Golden State appears to be the destination of choice for CRSCers in June. At month's end, Center Director *Bob Johnson* will travel to Los Angeles for a presentation on current Center research as part of the Construction Specifications Institute Conference, slated for June 24-26.

Meanwhile graduate assistant *Yunsik Song* will be on the other end of the continent in Montreal, Canada, to present his paper, "Just-In-Time Documentation for Delivering and Managing Facility Information Using Intranet Technology" at the 1999 ACSA Technology Conference, scheduled for June 25-27.

On a brighter note, July and August still represent a comparatively clean slate, but stay tuned, for the summer is indeed young!

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## Target 2000: *The TIBS-L Update*

As previously mentioned in the fall edition of our newsletter, the CRS Center has initiated an e-mail listserv to promote the Caudill TIBs. Inspired by Bill Caudill, 1985 AIA Gold Medal recipient and CRS founder, the TIBs listserv seeks to spread the word about TIBs, or "This I Believe" statements authored by Caudill from 1964 until his death in 1983.

The purpose of the TIBs listserv is two-fold: to make use of the CRS Archives in service to the profession and to increase the visibility of the CRS Center. Though there are currently just under 300 subscribers to the list, our eventual goal is to top the 1,000-subscriber mark by year's end. A special thanks to *Chuck Thomsen* of 3D/I, *Steve Kliment*, and *Bob James* of the Dallas AIA for their unique individual efforts toward helping us to achieve this milestone!

## Rewarding Research:

### ARCC Honors King With Student Medal

While the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment*, established through the College of Architecture in honor of Jonathan King in Fall 1997, continues to mature toward its eventual goal of \$20,000 in 2000, the CRS Center was pleased to see its former director honored in another significant way in 1998.

In November, the Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC) announced the establishment of the *ARCC/King Student Medal for Excellence in Architectural + Environmental Design Research*. Named in honor of King, co-founder and first president of the ARCC, this award is intended to recognize current research and scholarship.

Following King's death in November 1997, the ARCC passed the following resolution:

"ARCC is deeply appreciative of the long-standing commitment of Jonathan King to the advancement of architectural research. During his early days at the Educational Facilities Laboratory at the Ford Foundation, as a partner in CRS, as director of the Architectural Research Laboratory at the University of Michigan and, more recently, as director of the CRS Center at Texas A&M University, he stimulated others to understand and explore how to systematically link the process of architectural design to human satisfaction. As a founder of the original ARCC and its first president, he has raised the aspirations of the university-based architectural research community to link their efforts in a manner that would make the sum of their efforts greater than the parts."

One medal recipient from each ARCC member school will be selected annually beginning in 1999. While left to the discretion of the individual institutions, selection of recipients is to be based upon criteria that acknowledge innovation, integrity and scholarship in architectural and/or environmental design research. The award may be made at either the graduate or undergraduate level.

The Texas A&M College of Architecture is pleased to recognize *Christopher John Chapman* as its first recipient of the ARCC/King Medal. Christopher, who received a Masters of Science in Visualization Sciences in December 1998, was selected by virtue of his thesis *Real-Time American Sign Language Gesture Generator*.

## Surveying Sample Subscriber Comments

- "Having been part of CRS and read TIBs, my day was made when I received your e-mail [informing me about the TIBS-L]! Thank you. Please add me to your TIBS-L list."
- "Thanks for signing me up. I was fortunate to work with Bill and read some of the originals."
- "Bill Caudill encouraged me to pursue doctoral studies in architecture at Texas A&M. I was surprised and honored in 1984 to be selected as the College's first Caudill Fellow, and upon graduation, I worked for CRSS in Houston. I would very much like to be placed on the TIBs listserv."
- "Fantastic! As an ex-CRSe, I have often spoken of TIBs and how they served to link the staff throughout the firm at all levels and stimulated useful and fun ideas. Thanks for including me—but I always thought that TIBs stood for 'Things' not 'This.' No matter; great idea."
- "Caudill and the CRS legacy have had a profound effect upon my personal approach to architecture and how I have organized my own practice here in Boulder, Colorado."

## 1999 AND BEYOND

*FM Curriculum Initiative:* This past fall, the CRS Center was contacted by Charles E. Claar, Director of Research for the International Facility Management Association (IFMA), regarding the prospect of starting a graduate curriculum in facility management within the Texas A&M College of Architecture. Dean Regan has since appointed a task force to research this issue, which we believe could have a major impact on the direction of the Center as well as the College.

*Central Communications:* In addition to a comeback for several long thought to be dead fashion faux pas from the 1970s, this past fall also marked the revival of the CRS Center Newsletter Series. In our opinion, one successful throwback definitely deserves another.

In 1999, we intend to return to one of the most basic of techniques in the art of promotion: the generic brochure. Envisioned as a "first glance" of sorts at the Center, this brochure will describe the CRS Center at its core—its origins, its mission, its programs, its people, its direction.





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## The CRS Center: *Where Past Meets Present for Visiting Scholars*

The CRS Center recently played host to two visiting scholars who are exploring the impact of the past on the future with the help of the CRS Archives.

Last spring, Professors Kent Spreckelmeyer and Paulo Tombesi were awarded the opportunity to conduct research at the Center as part of its *Archives Scholar Program*. Initiated in 1997, the program seeks to encourage scholars of architectural and business history to utilize the business and slide archives, publications, and architectural program library of CRS, one of the largest, most influential A/E/C firms of the 20th century.

Spreckelmeyer, a professor of architecture at the University of Kansas, is in the midst of a year's sabbatical to study the effects of digital media on the architectural design process. He spent two weeks at the Center in February to investigate ways that CRS utilized early forms of computer technology. Through this research, Spreckelmeyer hopes to analyze the degree to which the firm's reliance on a team approach to design may provide lessons in both contemporary educational and professional practices.

"CRS was well-known for its innovative uses of research and problem-solving techniques in architectural practice," Spreckelmeyer said. "Many of the issues of

data management, communication processes and group decision-making that result from the use of digital media in the studio setting were concepts that the firm struggled with from its inception in the 1940s."

A senior lecturer in architecture at the University of Melbourne, Tombesi visited the Center in December to conduct research on design documentation techniques in high profile firms. While in Texas, he also visited the schools of architecture at Rice University and the University of Texas, participating in several design studio critiques and juries while there.

Trained in Rome, Tombesi has taught at UCLA, SCI Arc and USC, as well as in Italy and Spain. A former visiting critic in Austria and Switzerland, he worked with Mitchell & Giurgola on the Australian Parliament House. Tombesi has published extensively and was the Los Angeles correspondent for *Casabella* from 1990 to 1996. He is on the board of referees of *UME*, the architectural journal from the University of Melbourne. Various articles directly resulting from his research at the Center are in progress.

For more information on the Archives Scholar Program or other Center activities, please contact us!