

# CRS Center

for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry

CRSC Newsletter, Vol. 5.1, Spring 2004

## RTKL delivers message of collaboration and team work 2004 Rowlett lecture

While there's no such thing as an ordinary Rowlett lecture, what started as *RTKL: In Pursuit of Great Projects*, an afternoon of presentations and panel discussions, turned into a delightful, informative display of RTKL's claim to "follow the client." RTKL's passionate belief in collaboration was vividly unveiled when the last half of the conference was transformed into a highly interactive, provocative question and answer session with the audience. Niki Manning, undergraduate ENDS major at A&M commented, "Having a question and answer format let students focus the conference on topics important to us." She then added, "This afternoon was a great experience for us all."

The 400 students, faculty and professionals attending the lecture departed with a distinct impression of the RTKL philosophy – developing great work for great clients in a firm that supports the total person and not just the bottom line. "Apart from the pleasure of seeing long-time friends, former students with success stories, and making new acquaintances, **the program was a clear demonstration of what makes RTKL such an outstanding firm,**" commented David Woodcock, Professor, TAMU College of Architecture, on his experience at the afternoon lecture.

RTKL Chairman Emeritus and A&M College of Architecture distinguished alumnus **Harold Adams** kicked off the lecture with a presentation of the firm's history, which was followed by an exploration of the firm's values by RTKL Chairman **Paul Jacob**. The panel discussions scheduled to follow quickly turned into an open format discussion led by audience questions. Thinking back on his afternoon experience, Thom McKay, RTKL Vice President and Rowlett Lecture panelist, commented, "We were all impressed with the sincerity that seemed to come through, the quality of the questioning/inquisition and the genuine, almost heart-wrenching, passion the students clearly have for the architectural craft."

The **John Miles Rowlett Lecture Series** is sponsored by the CRS Center, College of Architecture and the Texas Architectural Foundation, whose generosity makes this educational annual lecture available for students at no cost. The Lecture Series was endowed in 1979 through a grant to the Texas Architectural Foundation from the founders of CRS and Mrs. Virginia Rowlett. The goal of the lecture series is to bring speakers of national and international significance to the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University.



**Top:** An impromptu Q & A session put RTKL's best and brightest in the hot seat.

**Bottom:** Texas A&M University students had a rare chance to "pick the brains" of RTKL members.



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## From the Director

“This is the best job I have ever had.” I’ve said that many times while at Texas A&M University. Why do I feel this way?

One big reason is the Rowlett Lecture. The Rowlett Lecture series has been a wonderful way to meet leaders in the industry. I’ve learned how firms overcome many difficulties to become enormously successful. I’ve also learned that the struggle never ends. Both 3D/I (2003 Rowlett Lecture) and RTKL provided a unique window into the history of their companies. I’m looking forward to working with Ron Skaggs and others from HKS as we plan the 2005 Rowlett Lecture.

Another reason this is the best job I’ve ever had is all the pleasure I’ve had working with exceptionally brilliant faculty and students as they build their careers in the design and construction industry. It has been delightful to work with people such as Chris Ellis, PhD, one of our most gifted professors in Landscape Architecture. Bruce Bockhorn, PhD, AIA, and a former student of mine, is now teaching at Prairie View A&M and is doing a fantastic job. I am sure we will hear more about him in the future.

But life also has tremendous disappointments. I was very saddened to hear of the loss of Russ Groves, Professor of Architecture at the University of Kentucky and a faculty fellow of the center. Russ had a great vision for the pursuit of research on the issue of leadership in the profession, and I know he would have made terrific contributions.

I would like to dedicate this newsletter to the memory of Russ Groves.

Dr. Bob Johnson, D. Arch, AIA

Director, CRS Center, Thomas A. Bullock Endowed Professor of Architecture

The CRS Center Newsletter is published twice each year to promote the programs and activities of the CRS Center, one of eight research centers and laboratories within the Texas A&M University College of Architecture.

Endowed in 1991 by the firm of CRSS Inc. and the University, the Center’s mission is to improve the quality of business practice and management in the planning, design and construction industry. Though CRS is no longer in existence as a result of the divestiture of its various components in 1995, the firm’s goals are being carried forward at the CRS Center.

In addition to serving as an archive for the slides, photographs, video and audio tapes, articles, business and personal records of the firm, the CRS Center also conducts external research and sponsors various programs benefiting faculty, students and researchers.

### THE CRS CENTER

- Robert E. Johnson.....Director
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- Jana Gober.....Administrative Assistant
- Eberhard Laepple.....Ph.D. Scholar
- Lindsey Kirkpatrick.....Student Assistant
- Niki Manning.....Student Assistant
- Whitney Ferguson.....Student Assistant
- Mili Shah.....Student Assistant

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## Facility Management Student Chapter membership doubles

This fall the Texas A&M University Facility Management Student Chapter recorded a record number of members. Thirty students paid dues this semester – twice the number from previous semesters. “We had a very busy and exciting semester for our student members,” said chapter President, Isilay Civan. A field trip to tour Aramark-managed Baylor University, attending IFMA World Workplace (the facility management tradeshow) in Dallas and receiving the IFMA student chapter charter were among the most exciting of the chapter activities this fall.

IFMA Houston chapter continued their generous support of the A&M Facility Management Certificate Program through the donation of funds for scholarships and a scholarship endowment. Additionally, the Houston Chapter sponsored IFMA student chapter memberships for the second consecutive year. “Once again we want to thank the IFMA Houston chapter for their generous support of our student chapter without which our students could not be IFMA members,” commented Isilay.



**Left:** Chris Ellis demonstrates the use of a data collection unit, part of a total data station, to his students.

**Right:** Chris' students learn to effectively use the total data station and GPS unit in design studio.



## Focus on a faculty fellow: Chris Ellis

Christopher D. Ellis, PhD, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning in Texas A&M's College of Architecture, was awarded a CRS Center Faculty Fellow position in 2001.

Ellis joined the faculty here at Texas A&M's College of Architecture in 1998 bringing with him interests in landscape planning, spatial modeling and human factors in spatial information systems. With a BS in Environmental Design from the University of Massachusetts, Ellis completed his Master of Landscape Architecture in 1993 from Cornell University. His award-winning PhD work in Regional Planning from the University of Illinois focused on Spatial Systems research, and here at A&M, Ellis teaches nine different classes.

With an infectious enthusiasm for teaching, Chris brings the real world into his classroom. More correctly stated, Chris takes his students out into the real world. In 2001 he obtained funds to purchase a total station and a GPS unit. That Spring and Summer he began training students to use the equipment. Within just a few class periods, students gained

enough familiarity with the station and GPS unit to map the proposed 2 acre site of the Texas A&M Bonfire Memorial. Students then combined their digital data, aerial photos and other data in GIS software to produce a thorough site description and inventory.

Nowadays Chris regularly incorporates the total data station, GPS unit and selected sites around the Bryan-College Station area into his teaching. His students use the equipment to create their own digital data sets on local sites for design studio projects. By creating their own data set, students get first-hand experience with state-of-the-art survey techniques and equipment, and they gain intimate knowledge of their project site.

As a CRS Center Faculty Fellow, Ellis regularly participates in weekly research meetings held during each academic semester. These weekly research meetings are sponsored by the CRS Center and began as an informal platform where College faculty and students could exchange research ideas, plan project research and give one another valuable feedback. Ellis finds these seminars to

be the highlight of his week. "Sitting together with students and other college faculty discussing a different research theme each week is very exciting," says Chris. "Research makes being a faculty member a lot of fun."

For more information about the weekly research seminars, contact the CRS Center via email at [crscenter@archone.tamu.edu](mailto:crscenter@archone.tamu.edu).

The CRS Center Fellows Program is designed to help the Center accomplish its mission to build a supportive intellectual environment and research infrastructure for faculty, graduate students and professionals whose interests are compatible with those of the CRS Center.

Appointment as a CRS Center Fellow is open to any faculty members, visiting and adjunct faculty, researchers and professionals. Fellows are appointed and reviewed by the CRS Center Board of Directors, and an appointment is for a maximum of three years, renewable in accordance with College policy. A list of our current CRS Center Fellows is available on our website at <http://crscenter.tamu.edu/>.

## Funding from King Memorial Scholarship goes beyond paying research expenses

by Bruce Bockhorn, PhD, AIA

Recent news headlines at Texas A&M University have focused on initiatives announced by President Robert Gates to attract more minority students to the campus. While the debate has begun on how to specifically achieve his objectives, the fact remains that A&M must do a better job attracting minority students.

As a graduate of Texas A&M, I find this subject to be of great interest, and it directly relates to my doctoral research which was completed under the leadership of the CRS Center. I discovered that only 5.33% of the 10,000 architects currently practicing in the state of Texas are females, and only 6.45% are minorities. The December 2003 edition of *Architectural Record* reported improvements in the national percentage levels, and I have just embarked on further research to determine if Texas has seen any improvements in conjunction with its move to greater societal diversity.

Since graduation I have continued to practice, and I also have begun teaching in the College of Architecture at Prairie View A&M University, a historically African-American institution. A vast majority of my students are minorities and nearly 40% of them are female. Through teaching over the past 16 months, I have come to be acutely aware of the difficulties many of these students face in gaining admission to college due to poor secondary schooling and the subsequent pressure of funding their education. Regarding the funding, I have found that many of the students hold down part-time jobs while being full-time students and rely on scholarships and grants for assistance. This reinforces the fact that studying architecture at any level takes a personal commitment and financial resources to meet tuition obligations, particularly at the graduate level.

While completing the dissertation work of my doctorate studies, I was fortunate to be the inaugural and 2<sup>nd</sup> year recipient of the Jonathan King Memorial Scholarship. The endowment provided funds that were invaluable in allowing me to successfully complete my research into the reasons that recent entrants to our state colleges of architecture would select this demanding course of study. The

## FROM THE TIBS ARCHIVE

CRS Team - Bullock

14 November 1968

WWC

Things go by us, some very important happenings, without us realizing the full significance. For example, none of us ever really had a keen awareness of what had happened in the architecture profession, specifically in Houston, when Tom Bullock was elected president of the AIA Houston Chapter. Tom was the first president who did not have his name on the door. He proved, among other things:

LEADERSHIP IS NOT IN NAME BUT IN ACTION.

I see this as a trend. Names of architectural firms will be like trademarks. Leaders of architectural teams will be highly individualistic people. It takes a lot more strength to be a leader without being a "name partner" than it does to be on the letterhead. But that's the way it's going to be. And Tom is living proof that it can be done.

funds, provided through the generous support of Mrs. King and other benefactors from the CRS family of employees, were the basis for allowing me to travel to each of the colleges of architecture and conduct my research surveys and interviews.

For those of you who wonder if your contributions to architectural scholarship funds make a difference, I can attest to the fact that they most certainly do. In my case having the King Memorial Scholarship afforded me the opportunity to complete my research and be exposed to opportunities that led me to teach at Prairie View A&M. Through teaching I hope to make a positive contribution to my profession by increasing the registration of minorities and females in the architectural practice and assist in recruiting the best and brightest students to our state's architectural programs.

—Bruce F. Bockhorn, PhD, AIA  
Ben Boettcher & Associates

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## Journalist teams up with the CRS Center to complete book project

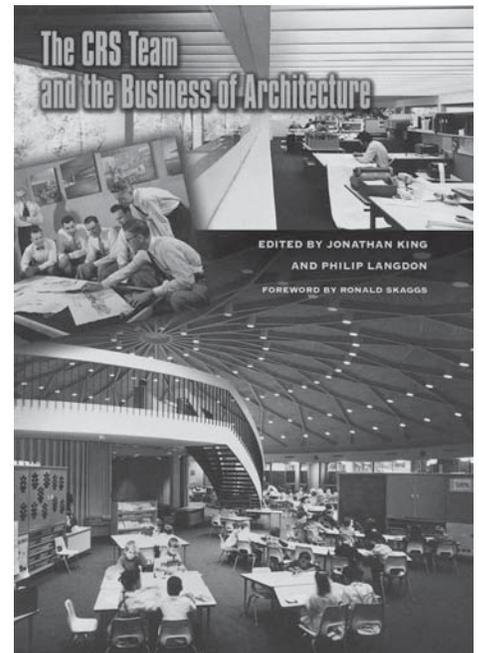
Well known as an architectural journalist, Philip Langdon joined the CRS team to complete the story of the firm as told through the words of those who lived it in *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture*. Though Jonathan King had edited and assembled interviews for the CRS book, the project languished uncompleted after his passing in 1997. Through the effort of Robert Johnson, CRS Center director, the book was completed and published by Texas A&M University Press in October 2002.

Langdon was hired to complete the book project in 1999. He immediately got to work with a trip to Texas to familiarize himself with the history of CRS and talk with some original CRSers. A browse through the College Station archives turned up a number of interesting and informative documents such as an oral history of CRS written in 1971 by a business student from the University of Texas. "This contained some fascinating early history, including interviews with people such as John Rowlett, who had

died long before Jonathan began his own series of interviews," said Langdon of an unpublished document in the CRS archives.

After evaluating the project, Langdon felt that, "the book needed longer, more detailed chapter introductions to set the stage for each set of interviews and to give readers more perspective on the architectural and planning world during the period when Bill Caudill and John Rowlett were starting the firm and when they and others were guiding its expansion." The new introductions give more perspective to the interviews and polish this unique story of CRS to an impeccable shine. Thank you Philip for making this book a reality and such a pleasure to read.

Langdon is senior editor of the national newsletter *New Urban News*. He is a journalist who, for more than 20 years, has written about architecture, planning, urban design and related subjects for magazines and newspapers. He has written six books and co-authored/co-edited two books including *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture*. He also



*The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture* was completed in 2002 by Philip Langdon, well known architectural journalist.

writes commentaries regularly for the Sunday edition of the *Hartford Courant*.

Your copy of *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture* can be purchased at the Brazos Bookstore, Borders, Barnes & Noble, the Texas A&M MSC Bookstore, or the TAMU Press website at [www.tamu.edu/upress/BOOKS/2002/king.htm](http://www.tamu.edu/upress/BOOKS/2002/king.htm).

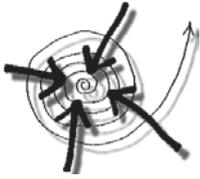
## Annual Fall meeting attracts facility managers from around the state

The Fall meeting of the College of Architecture Facility Management Industry Advisory Council (FMIAC) was held on November 7, 2003. The council welcomed new officers: Steve Moskowitz, President, and Norm Erlandson, Vice President. Steve and Norm will serve two-year terms as President and Vice President, and with their guid-

ance and support, we are looking forward to a productive future.

Nineteen industry representatives from around the state as well as 24 faculty, staff and student chapter members were in attendance for the annual November meeting, where the council discussed goals and priorities for the College of Architecture Facility Manage-

ment Certificate Program. For more information about the meeting or the FMIAC, please send an inquiry to the CRS Center or you may contact Jana Gober via phone or email [jgober@archone.tamu.edu](mailto:jgober@archone.tamu.edu). Minutes from this meeting and more information about the FMIAC is available on the CRS Center website.



## CRS Center

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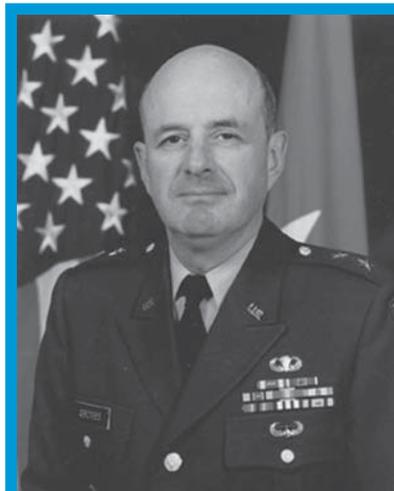
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### The CRS Center remembers a friend and scholar, John “Russ” Groves

The CRS Center lost a good friend and Archive Scholar tragically late last October in the crash of a small aircraft near Louisville, Kentucky. Maj. Gen. John Russell “Russ” Groves visited the CRS Center as our Archive Scholar in 2002 and 2003 for his research on leadership in the field of architecture. Russ always planned his research trips to College Station for early February in coordination with the annual Rowlett Lecture Series. He enjoyed the lecture series and the chance to meet with former CRSers.

A faculty member at the University of Kentucky College of Design, Russ was a remarkably accomplished individual. He was a registered architect, a licensed attorney and held a PhD in education. Russ joined the faculty of the University of Kentucky College of Design in 1974, and from 1995-99, Russ took a leave of absence to serve as Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He also served as the Commissioner (1980-81) and Deputy Commissioner (1978-79) of the Kentucky Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction. Russ is survived by his wife, two sons and daughter.



CRS Center Archive Scholar and friend, Maj. Gen. John Russell “Russ” Groves, 1946-2003, died on October 27 in the crash of a small aircraft near Louisville, Kentucky. Russ was utilizing the resources of the CRS Center for his study on

leadership in the profession of architecture.

Russ was an engaged scholar actively researching the impact of building codes on the design process, affordable housing initiatives and the meaning of leadership in the profession of architecture. His commitment to leadership and service was expressed in his numerous academic, government and civic endeavors. Russ was well known for his warmth, graciousness and good humor. He will be missed.