



CRS Center

for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry

Special Edition, Vol. 3, Summer 2001

Remembering a Pioneer: Jonathan King, Hon. AIA

"I see the architect's role stretching to the very edge of the social sciences and back to the brink of industrial management and in between covering building design. In short there are going to be lots of different kinds of architects, not just the Renaissance Man, and they're likely to be working in teams as we move into the '70s and the decade of industrialized building."

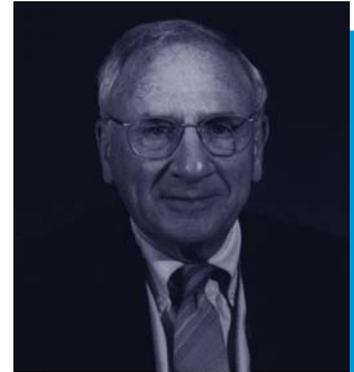
— Jonathan King, *The Architect's Role in Systems Construction* 1971

In November 1997, the world of architecture lost a friend, visionary and pioneer. Jonathan King (1925-1997) was a supporter and mentor to a great many in architecture. It is in this spirit that we are pleased to publish the *Jonathan King Memorial Issue* of the CRS Center Newsletter. It is our hope that, through the stories in this special edition, we may share with you the significance Jonathan King had on education, research and the profession of architecture. What follows is a brief outline of King's career, which spanned over four decades.

Foundation executive, architect and university professor, Jonathan King, Hon. AIA, began his architectural career in 1958 while serving as vice president and treasurer of Educational Facilities Laboratories, which was simply known as EFL. A nonprofit corporation established by the Ford Foundation, EFL's charge was to help schools and colleges prepare for their increased space and equipment needs due to the post World War II baby boom, to stimulate research and experimentation, and to disseminate knowledge about educational facilities. One of the first things King did in EFL's brand-new office

was to invite Bill Caudill to New York to talk about what his firm, Caudill Rowlett Scott, was doing about school architecture and what needed to be done. CRS was already recognized nationally for designing innovative schools. That meeting, with Caudill and his then company manager, Tom Bullock, began a long and rewarding relationship.

EFL's impact on American schools in a time of radically changing pedagogical theory was immense. "Educational Change and Architectural Consequences" (the title of a 1968 EFL publication) sums up the thrust of EFL's philosophy. The innovations it spurred in the shape and quality of school construction are visible today. King's years with EFL, his research and development of building systems for schoolhouses, which made it possible to construct better schools faster and at equal or less cost than traditional methods, and EFL's extensive publication program (more than two million copies of their reports were distributed) under his strong direction caused him to become known as a major force in the architectural community. In 1970, when the school building boom had waned, King left EFL and



Jonathan King, Hon. AIA

joined Caudill Rowlett Scott as senior vice president and partner, a befitting move considering CRS's reputation as one of the nation's leading architectural firms for innovative school design, and the fact that CRS and EFL had collaborated on a number of major projects. At CRS, King brought his knowledge of building systems to other building types such as housing and hospitals. He also became an adjunct professor of architecture at Rice University.

After 13 years with EFL and six with CRS, King switched gears once again and began educating the

contd. on page 8

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Director

ARCC King Medal

King Endowment Established

Caudill TIB

Tributes

Oral History Update

From the Director



In this newsletter you will find an announcement of the inaugural award of the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment*. We have used this opportunity to not only recognize our recipient, Bruce Bockhorn, AIA, but also to thank the many friends, colleagues and family members who contributed to this endowment. Many future generations of students will directly benefit from your generosity.

We have also taken this opportunity to reflect on Jonathan's career. I first knew Jonathan when he became Director of the Architectural Research Laboratory at the University of Michigan in 1976. I was a doctoral student at the time, but was immediately impressed with his intellect, dry sense of humor and ability to put people at ease. As I learned more about Jonathan, the great influence and legacy of the man

became clear. He was a wonderful person to work with and I learned a great deal from him.

When I became Director of the CRS Center, I found that Jonathan, with the key assistance of Barbara Anderson, had done an outstanding job in organizing the CRS archives and making the Center a viable part of the academic and professional community. Jonathan conceived the idea of the Oral History Book, and we are very happy to announce that the Texas A&M Press will be publishing this book in late 2002.

Finally, I know you will find Shana Hutchins' article about her tenure in the CRS Center engaging and informative. Her contributions to the oral history were invaluable. We miss her wit and charm greatly, but are also very proud of her success as the new Communications Officer for the College of Science.

Bob Johnson

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 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.

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And from the TIBs...

General - Social Science
Input

8 August 1972 WWC

ONE OF THE KEYS TO MAKING A REAL BREAKTHROUGH IN ARCHITECTURE IN THE FUTURE WILL BE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE INPUT "IN A FORM USEFUL AS DESIGN INPUT." THIS IS A PROGRAMMING FUNCTION, AND CRS SHOULD BE IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE. BUT THE WHOLE FIELD NEEDS STRONG ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP, WHICH HASN'T BEEN THERE UP TO NOW.

The above came from Jonathan King. We have always had a certain degree of social input, but it has stemmed more from a social consciousness than from social science.

I think Jonathan's asking that we raise the input to a higher level of sophistication.

ARCC Establishes King Medal

As a testament to the commitment Jonathan King had for the research and education of architecture, the Board of the Architectural Research Centers Consortium (ARCC) established the *ARCC/King Student Medal for Excellence in Architectural + Environmental Design Research* in December 1998.

Named in honor of its co-founder and first president, the award is intended to inspire students and serve as a tribute to Professor King's lifelong work. The *ARCC/King Student Medal* is awarded annually to one student per ARCC member school. While the selection process is left to the discretion of the individual school, the intent of the program is to provide recognition for innovation, integrity and scholarship in current research. Since its inception in 1998, 44 scholars have been awarded the *ARCC/King Student Medal*.

Harris Wins Coveted King Medal

"Dr. Harris is one of the most organized and motivated individuals I have encountered. She is typical of a new, admirable 'species' of designer/educator," writes Mardelle Shepley, a College of Architecture faculty member about Debra Harris, the 2001 recipient of the *ARCC/King Student Medal for Excellence in Architectural + Environmental Design Research*.

High praise indeed for the recent doctoral graduate, but deservedly so. The College of Architecture recently selected Harris for the *ARCC/King Student Medal* for her Ph.D. dissertation, "Environmental Quality and Healing Environments: A Study of Flooring Materials in a Healthcare Telemetry Unit." This study investigated the impact of flooring finish materials on the environmental quality of hospital patient rooms.

A 1994 recipient of the American Hospital Association/American Institute of Architects Graduate Fellowship in Health Facility Planning and Design, Harris has also been recognized with awards from the International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and the Institute of Business Designers Foundation.

Dr. Harris is currently consulting on design projects and building a consulting practice based on her experience as a healthcare planner and researcher on environmental quality in healthcare environments.

"I believe that research in design practice will become imperative as client expectations challenge the design profession to address environmental health and environmental quality as fundamental to human health and performance," Harris says.

The following resolution was passed by the ARCC in November 1997.

"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 Laboratories 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."

Ironically, her design philosophy runs very close to that of Jonathan King, the award's namesake, who once said, "Design must, if it is to change the way of life in the United States, become part of the fabric of all of us." Congratulations, Dr. Harris.



Rewarding Research: King Endowment Established

The support provided by the family, friends and professional associates of Jonathan King is a great source of pride and strength for the CRS Center and the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University. Through this support, an endowment in memory of Professor King, Hon. AIA, was established in 1998. We are honored that his family chose to establish this fund that reflects King's life-long commitment to architectural research and the educational enrichment of students.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the donors whose generosity established the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment*. Through your contributions and continued support, this memorial will enable us to continue Professor King's dedication to building, supporting and recognizing students involved in architectural research.

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Continuing Support

Income from the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment* is designated to fund student research projects within the CRS Center. If you are interested in contributing to this endowment, please contact Larry Zuber, Director of Development, at (979) 845-0939 or l-zuber@tamu.edu, or Bob Johnson, CRS Center Director, at (979) 847-9357 or rejohnson@tamu.edu.

And the Award Goes to...

Imagine being a doctoral student putting together a mere 32-page answer to one preliminary exam. Imagine working as a project manager designing religious and commercial projects for a well-established architectural firm. Imagine being married and a father to four.

Any one of these individual scenarios is easily imaginable, however, collectively unimaginable. But this is the life of Bruce Bockhorn, AIA, first recipient of the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Award*. How does he do it?

"Frankly, I don't know how he does it all," said Bob Johnson, director of the CRS Center, in announcing the award at the 2001 Rowlett Lecture. "But I have noticed that many of his e-mail messages to me are sent in the wee hours of the morning, so I think he just doesn't sleep."

Upon receiving the award, Bockhorn stated that he is "keenly aware of Jonathan King's strong legacy at CRS for encouraging the continued improvement of our profession through innovation and exploration, and for furthering our development as practitioners." He added that he is "proud to have received this award."



Jean Wulfson, University Relations

Award Winner: Dean Regan and Mrs. Toni King present the first *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Award* to Bruce Bockhorn, AIA, at the 2001 College of Architecture Scholarship ceremony.

Through Bockhorn's own innovation and exploration, he is currently involved in research that focuses on the projected shortfalls in meeting architecture workforce demands on both national and regional levels.

"I believe that his research will make a major difference to increase the talent base for architecture that also more closely reflects the demographics of our society," Johnson says.

Bockhorn intends to survey all incoming freshmen at Texas's seven accredited programs and hopes his findings will help the schools improve their recruitment efforts by helping them to understand the significant aspects of how students select architecture as a major.

"I think Jonathan would have been very pleased with his research," Johnson says.

Established in 1998, the King Award is presented by the CRS Center Board of Directors and is commemorated with a plaque and a \$1,000 research grant. Bockhorn says the award will allow him to conduct research this fall, the results of which he looks forward to sharing with the endowment's sponsors.

Bockhorn, who is currently working on his doctorate in architecture at Texas A&M University, received his bachelor's degree in environmental design from Texas A&M University and his master's in business administration from Houston Baptist University. In addition to juggling a full-time course load and employment, Bockhorn assists with student jury evaluations for the College of Architecture, guest lectures at Prairie View A&M University and serves on the board of directors of the Brenham Heritage Museum. A past member of the Dallas Chapter of the AIA's ethics committee, he also works as a volunteer marching band instructor for a local high school and is the chairman of his church's long-range planning committee.

"I believe that this research will make a major difference I think Jonathan would be very pleased with his research"

--- Robert Johnson

The following are personal stories, statements and recollections from individuals who worked closely with Jonathan King during his tenure at the Educational Facilities Laboratories and Texas A&M University. The recollections give personal insight to Jonathan as an educator and mentor.

When Jonathan talked with me about coming to Texas A & M University, I thought I knew who he was. I knew that he had been involved at CRS and the Ford Foundation. I knew he was a person who could be counted on for an honest and thoughtful opinion. I knew he was someone who would give his best. I knew that he had much to offer, much experience, much insight, much wisdom. I knew these things for many reasons, not the least of which was Tom [Bullock]. Tom always had such wonderful things to say about Jonathan.

I found out, after his arrival at Texas A&M, that I hardly knew him. His great strength was in his compassion for people, for students, for colleagues, for his profession and, in the healthiest sense of the word, for his work. Not a slave to it, not as I knew him, but served by it, and servant to it. A remarkable combination in a world that moves too fast, and without pause, plunges into too many things. He was thoughtful and understood the fullness of life. He worked it into a day-to-day experience. This [was his] gift.

On many occasions he shared with me insights about how things ought to be.... He had the ability to connect particulars to the general condition of life... a few words here and there, like flecks of gold dust, would make a situation, an opportunity, come to life.

*Walter Wendler
Former Dean, College of Architecture, TAMU*

I first met Jonathan. . . as I was inquiring about work organizing the Center's slide collection. It sounded like steady, repetitive activity where someone would tell me what to do, I'd do it – job done, unlike my studies at the time (Master of Architecture) where . . . the style and the rhythm of everything you produced was under scrutiny and analysis. Well, as I entered his office, Jonathan turned around and, after only a few words, immediately hired me. At first my ego reached new heights but later I got to thinking maybe how desperate he was to enlist ANYONE to the monotonous and overwhelming task of organizing, labeling and cataloging some 70,000 slides. However, when I started the next day, Jonathan and I began brainstorming, seemingly as equals. At least that's how he made me feel. Of course I realized, even on the first day, the extent and depth of color of his knowledge. I mention "as equals" because this was pure Jonathan, how he learned so much (and why he was liked by and taught so many people). In his "classroom" I learned more than in those I was (and still am) paying for. Although we were many times at opposite poles of many topics, one of them being architectural practice, we could always learn something in the process because he would always LISTEN to you.

I won't go on about how I've added a vocation (graphic design) thanks to Jonathan or how he has changed the way I think . . . the way in which I will repay Jonathan is to be more like him, especially to LISTEN.

*Scott Kyle
Former CRS Center Graduate Assistant*

As we work our way through what the Asians call the "fifth cycle" (life after 60, which is the guru period of wisdom and teaching), one can look back and ask the "so what?" question: did our individual, modest lives really matter? In the case of JK, the question is so easily answered, and so positively; the EFL publications on the overview of the state of educational facilities in the 1950's; the school library, university planning; the promotion of building systems; the restoration/reconversion of courthouses and railroad stations and the teaching of a new generation of thought in architecture – all served up with a dollop of sweet, dry humor and a dash of caustic wit bitters. Yes, this was a unique personality that made a great deal of difference.

*John Beynon
EFL*

When I walked into the CRS Center for the first time in April 1997, I don't know who had taken on the bigger project – me or Bob, Jonathan and Barbara. As I nonchalantly had admitted to Bob during my interview process, I didn't know a lick about architecture – and to tell the truth, that was probably stretching it. Nor had I ever heard of CRS, with the exception of the infamous syndrome that affects one's capacity to remember basic facts.

So began my CRS experience and my architectural education. As part of my crash course, I received reading assignments ("Architecture and You," "Architecture by Team" and "CRSS Stories," among others) from Bob and weekly CRS Story Hour tutorials from Barbara. However, it was Jonathan who drew the toughest assignment: converting me to the religion known as CRS.

It was my good fortune to meet Jonathan, a devout disciple of CRS himself, as he was entering the latter stages of completing a task he considered as important as the establishment of the CRS Center itself: writing the firm's autobiography. (I say good fortune because he had already done most of the dirty work before I arrived on the scene!) Armed with only a keen eye for detail and his trusty highlighter (yellow, green or pink, depending on the day), Jonathan had tirelessly pored over more than 42 transcripts of interviews with CRS employees young and old, past and present, long-term and short-term. Like the master separating wheat from chaff, his goal was to glean only the choicest prose in his effort to produce the CRS story according to its own larger-than-life prophets.

My goal, of course, was to edit the editor. Talk about your intimidating first assignments! What began as a quest for clarity, consistency and cohesion ended in enlightenment, inspiration and admiration for both the story and its creators. (You'll notice I picked up on the triad theory.)

I didn't have to read far to understand why Jonathan dedicated the latter years of his life toward committing CRS' unique story to print. Though not the Bible, it was an epic that was no less remarkable, mystical and powerful – and as such, it deserved to be told.

Like CRS and its architecture, Jonathan's trademark writing style was lean and clean, in stark contrast to my own tendencies toward the borderline verbose. Page by page, chapter by chapter, I began to find myself engrossed in all things CRS, much to Jonathan's delight. And to my

surprise, somewhere along the way, I picked up enough knowledge to be helpful to the project; ideas and observations that resulted in some lively exchanges with Jonathan and more than one spontaneous "Oh, do you remember when...?" story from both him and Barbara!

By the time I finished Chapter Ten, which was the final one at the time, I felt ready to make my own contribution to the book. However, I wasn't quite sure how Jonathan would react. My reservations turned to relief, which quickly gave way to overwhelming respect as Jonathan paid me the ultimate compliment, allowing me to work side by side with him to complete the book's final two chapters. It was an experience I treasure to this day.

With the CRS autobiography soon to become a published reality, I can't help but smile when I think of Jonathan and the sense of pride and fulfillment he must now feel. They say each time a man dies, it's the equivalent of a library burning down. Thanks to Jonathan and his initiative, at least one important volume of architectural history – not to mention a part of the individual devoted to creating it – remains standing, untouched by the destructive fires of time. Here's to its long-lived existence and the resulting conversion of generations of CRS disciples to come. Cheers, JK!

Shana Hutchins

Former CRS Center Communications Specialist

As mentioned in both Bob Johnson's and Shana Hutchins' articles, the CRS oral history will be published by the Texas A&M University Press in 2002. It was Jonathan who conceived the idea to review and edit the interviews from the heavy-hitters of CRS into a book. King felt that the interviews together told an extraordinary story that gave insight to the CRS mystique. After King's death, the CRS Center contracted with author and editor Philp Langdon to prepare the manuscript for publication.

The book, which chronicles the history of CRS from 1946 to 1983, is best described in a statement King wrote shortly before his death: *"This book is an attempt to portray [a] corporate culture which sought to forge a passion for new and better architecture...It may contain valuable lessons for architects and others who are today grappling with similar problems in establishing or expanding their own firms."*



CRS Center

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Remembering a Pioneer, contd.

next generation of architects. In 1976, he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan as professor of architecture and director of their Architectural Research Laboratory. In subsequent years, he also was visiting professor at several universities in the United States and abroad. Although he had never gone to architecture school, he served the profession and students as a well-respected educator, critic and mentor.

King published more than 40 articles, research reports and book reviews. His writings have been published in a variety of professional and educational journals, not only in the United States but also in Canada and Great Britain. In 1983, King received a research citation from *Progressive Architecture* for his work as the major author of the seven-volume "Michigan Courthouse Study."

In 1992, King stepped out of retirement and began teaching once

again. He joined the architecture faculty at Texas A&M University and served as director of the CRS Center. Along with the daunting task of organizing the Center, Professor King edited interviews of approximately 50 former CRS leaders into what became a 12-chapter book. This unique manuscript superbly depicts the history of CRS through the personal recollections of those closely involved in guiding the firm. After King's death, the oral history was refined further by Philip Langdon, who expanded the introductions to each chapter and wrote new opening and closing chapters. We are pleased to announce that this manuscript has been accepted for publication by the Texas A&M University Press and will be available in the fall of 2002.

Throughout King's distinguished career, he served numerous organizations and, in turn, was acknowledged for his service. King

received the American Builder Award for Innovation in Building in 1965, was made an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects in 1969, and in 1983 was awarded a Fulbright Lectureship at the Royal Danish Academy of Arts.

The *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment* was established at the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University in 1998; and in December 1998, the Architectural Research Centers Consortium approved the *ARCC/King Medal for Excellence in Architectural + Environmental Design Research* in honor of its co-founder and first president. It gives all of us at the CRS Center great pleasure to honor our former director and those who contributed to the *Jonathan King Memorial Student Research Endowment* through the publication of this special issue of the CRS Center newsletter.