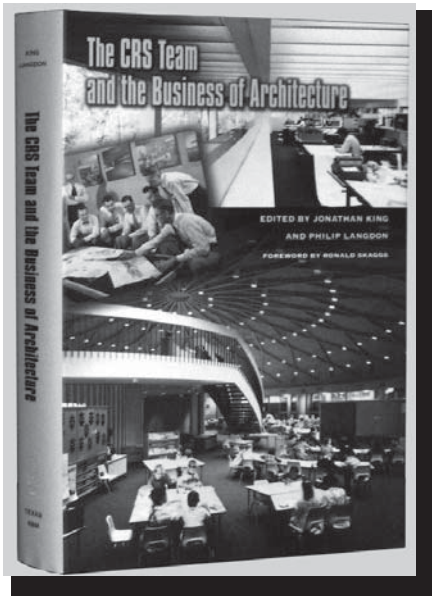


# CRS Center

for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry

CRSC Newsletter, Vol. 4.1, Fall 2003

## New book examines legendary design firm Caudill Rowlett Scott



Published by the Texas A&M University Press, *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture*, was released in October, 2002. This 384-page book was originally envisioned by the late **Johnathan King**, former Director of the CRS Center and professor emeritus of architecture at the University of Michigan. As many of you know, Jonathan King was a partner and officer at CRS in the 1970s and director of CRS's construction management subsidiary.

This unique book chronicles the history of CRS through the eyes of those who were there. Drawn primarily from interviews taken from 35 CRS leaders and staff members, the book traces the company's development from its humble beginnings to its emergence as the largest architecture/engineering firm in the United States by the early 1980s and to its dismemberment in 1994. The main focus of the book is on the period from the 1940s to CRS's merger with the South Carolina-based engineering firm Sirrinc in 1983. The interviews are set within a narrative that places the firm and its innovations in a broader perspective connecting the CRS story to contemporary developments in architecture, the economy and society.

Since the end of the Second World War, few firms have influenced the practice of architecture as much as CRS. From its establishment in the 1940s as a three-man operation above a grocery store in College Station, Texas, CRS evolved into a world leader in programming, construction management and school design. By the 1970s, CRS was a master at organizing complicated architectural undertakings and had earned a global reputation for sharing its insights with practitioners worldwide. Filling an important gap in architectural history, the book explores the ways in which architects of the mid-twentieth century developed methods that allowed professionals to ana-

lyze projects systematically rather than relying on the traditional combination of information and intuition.

Each chapter is introduced with pithy memos, better known as "TIBs" – **This I Believe** statements – written by Bill Caudill, the firm's charismatic founder, intellectual leader and AIA Gold Medal winner. The book is heavily illustrated with 47 black and white pictures and 4 line drawings of firm members at work as well as views of important CRS buildings such as the Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts in Houston.

Your copy of *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture* can be purchased at the Brazos Bookstore, Borders, Barnes & Noble, the 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)>.

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## Inside the Book

"Certainly CRS lives on in the hearts and minds of those who worked there and among those it served. The firm developed individuals who are leaders in the industry all over the globe, in addition to advocating principles that are now widely embraced by the profession. The interviews contained in this book offer a fascinating insight into the launching, expansion, and transformation of one of the truly great architectural and engineering firms. The candor provided through open dialogue offers a unique insider's understanding of how a group of passionate people working together with common goals can achieve greatness in the annals of American architecture"

— excerpt from the foreword of *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture* by Ronald Skaggs, Chairman and CEO, HKS Architects.

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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## From the Director

It has been a while since our last newsletter, and there have been a number of exciting changes. First, we are very pleased that *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture* was published in October 2002. It was Jonathan King's idea to



edit the interviews into chapters of a book about CRS, and the original working title for the book was *CRS: Autobiography of an Architecture Firm*. Everyone I have spoken to about the book has found it to be interesting and informative. Alleen Caudill, for example, said, "I have read it from cover to cover and think all involved in its publication did an excellent job." In another note, Willie Peña wrote, "Bill Caudill, the great communicator, would be very proud of *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture*. Alleen and Willie, thank you for your letters.

Next, this last Fall we were very fortunate to have Steve Parshall as the Visiting Peña Professor. The course he taught, "Effective Client/Team Communication," was quite popular with the students, and I am convinced his popularity was the result of not only talent but organization and commitment. I recall seeing Steve one evening after he had just flown in from the Middle East. He drove directly from the Houston airport to Texas A&M so that he would not miss class. It is that kind of commitment which creates excellent teachers.

Finally, our digital archives project was conceived as a way to improve access for researchers and scholars to the original CRS documents available in our College Station archives. As such, it complements the CRS Center Archives Scholar Award, which reimburses scholars wishing to use the materials here in College Station. The digital archive project is a work in progress, and if you have any suggestions about it or any other CRS Center program, please contact us.

Dr. Bob Johnson, AIA  
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## Steve Parshall appointed as fall 2002 Peña Professor

Steven A. Parshall, FAIA, senior vice president of one of the world's largest architectural firms, was awarded the prestigious William M. Peña Professorship in Information Management at Texas A&M University's College of Architecture for the 2002 Fall semester.

A fellow in the American Institute of Architects, Parshall is senior vice president for Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum (HOK). Parshall also serves as practice director for HOK Consulting. The January 2001 World Architecture magazine listed HOK as the world's second largest architectural firm.

"We are delighted to have an industry leader of Steven Parshall's caliber on the architecture faculty," said Robert E. Johnson, director of the CRS Center for Leadership and Management in the Design and Construction Industry at Texas A&M. "His professional and academic contributions have greatly advanced communications between architects and their clients, adding considerable value to the practice of architecture. As Peña Professor, I know he will greatly enhance our academic and research initiatives."

The Peña Professorship was created in 1990 by the CRS Center to honor Willie Peña FAIA, a founding partner of the Caudill, Rowlett and Scott (CRS) architectural firm, acquired by HOK in 1994. Peña is widely known for his pioneering work in architectural programming and for developing an innovative programming process called "problem seeking;" also the name

of a textbook he coauthored along with John Focke and William Caudill.

Peña later collaborated with Parshall on the fourth edition of *Problem Seeking*, which remains a standard textbook in architectural programming courses taught throughout the nation. According to the book, the architect's first task, programming the requirements of a proposed building, is often the most important.

"Good buildings don't just happen," Peña and Parshall wrote in their text, "They are planned to look good and perform well, and come about when good architects and good clients join in thoughtful, cooperative effort."

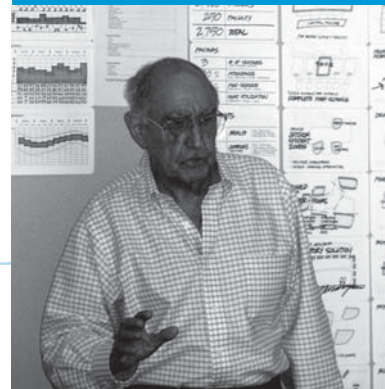
Like Peña, Parshall's professional life has been dedicated to increasing architects' understanding of client needs and to enhancing the provision of pre-design services. Through benchmarking, training and publishing, he has expanded the architect's role in architectural programming and in research and evaluation of the built environment.

A product of the University of Illinois, Parshall earned three degrees: a bachelor of science in architecture, 1973; a master of architecture, 1977; and a master of business administration, 1978. He has been associated with HOK since 1977. In recent years, Parshall has focused primarily on assisting major corporations with the development of comprehensive facility management plans.

"I am quite honored to be chosen for this prestigious position honoring my good friend and col-



Steve Parshall (seated) of HOK conveys the art of client/team communication to A&M Architecture students while serving as the Peña Professor.



Students discussed problem-seeking with Willie Peña himself.

league, Willie Peña," Parshall said. "Additionally, I am excited and humbled by the opportunity to teach at one of the world's top-rated architecture schools."

In the Fall of 2002, Parshall taught a graduate architecture seminar at Texas A&M University exploring effective client/team communication.

"This seminar," he said, "was designed for students with an interest in the challenges facing architects, planners, engineers and constructors that require innovation in the use of technology for successful communication and knowledge transfer among project teams and client/user organizations."

## Join the TIBs list serve. Caudill's words of wisdom delivered weekly to your inbox

Did you know that the Caudill TIBs are available at a virtual mailbox near you? The CRS Center and the Texas A&M College of Architecture invite you to participate in the TIBs LISTSERV, an innovative project which seeks to merge past with present and directly involve you!

Caudill wrote his first TIB on April 2, 1964, and continued writing them until 1983. Each was distributed to company leaders and displayed on office bulletin boards. TIBs communicated ideas, encouraged responsiveness and illustrated concepts Caudill and the firm believed in and sought to promote.

Though the firm no longer exists, interest in Caudill's TIBs continues. We are sending one TIB each week to our list of subscribers. To date, there are over 1200 subscribers to this free weekly service, representing countries around the world including the United Arab Emirates, Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, South Africa, Thailand and Tonga.

To receive your TIB every Monday, send a one line e-mail message (subject not required) to <LISTSERV@TAMU.EDU>. Type the following command in the first line of your message:

SUBSCRIBE TIBS-L firstname lastname  
(example: SUBSCRIBE TIBS-L John Doe)

You may also request a subscription by sending an email message to <crscenter@archone.tamu.edu>. Please include your first and last names.

## Facility Management Certificate Program flourishes

The Facility Management Certificate program, administered by the CRS Center, is currently in its fourth year and going strong. To date 19 certificates have been awarded to students not only in the College of Architecture, but in the College of Engineering as well.

The FM certificate program is supported by the Facility Management Industry Advisory Council (FMIAC) which works in partnership with the College to advance and support the growth of facility management studies at Texas A&M University. Each year the FMIAC meets in early November to discuss goals and priorities for previous and upcoming years. For more information about this year's

meeting, please send an inquiry to the CRS Center Administrative Assistant, Jana Gober, <jgober@archone.tamu.edu> or visit the CRS Center website.

This year, thanks to the financial support of the FMIAC, three \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to students pursuing studies related to facility management: Nitin John Abraham, who is seeking a MS in Construction Management; Isilay Civan, a PhD student in Architecture; and Ranjeet Mohandas, who is also getting his MS in Construction Management.

The Houston IFMA chapter has played an integral role in supporting the Facility Management Certificate program. This last year they committed funds

to begin a Facility Management Scholarship Endowment and provided funding for our FM student chapter to become an official IFMA student chapter. Jeff Hill, CEO, Texan Floor Service, generously purchased 20 copies of the required textbook for the certificate program's core class. Student chapter members taking the class may check out a copy of *Facility Design and Management Handbook* free of charge from the Facility Management Student Chapter.

The Facility Management student chapter has approximately 15 active members year round. Throughout the Fall and Spring semesters, they tour facilities and sponsor presentations from industry leaders.

## FROM THE TIBS...

GENERAL - CRS HISTORY

24 June 1966

WWC

Why waste time thinking about what CRS has done? I've asked myself this question many times. I'm not a look-backer. The good old days are not for me. But I find myself having to dig in CRS history. I don't particularly like it, but you can't find the roots without digging. And I'm looking for CRS roots.

There's another point in favor of digging. It's imprudent, if not ridiculous, to throw away the experiences of twenty years.

This TIB is particularly relevant to the publication of *The CRS Team and the Business of Architecture*, a project that involved many people spanning more than a decade. The CRS Center is indebted to all those who made the book possible, with a special thanks to the following: Jonathan King, who conceived the original book of interviews; Phil Langdon, who wrote the introductions for each chapter; and Ron Skaggs, who wrote the foreword.

## Digital Archive Project moves forward

If you haven't had a chance to check out the CRS Center website lately, you might want to look again. In the Summer of 2002, we launched our new website thanks to the talent, hard work and determination of Ge Xia, former CRS Center PhD Scholar.

The new and improved website offers users the ability to search through the CRS Center archives via the internet. Records may be searched using title, author, subject, date, etc, but the user-friendliness of the site does not stop there. We have undertaken the monumental task of creating a full digital archive in which you can read or search through the text of any archive document housed here in College

Station from the comfort of your own home or office. If you prefer, you can even download a copy of the document in Adobe PDF.

Right now you can visit our world wide website at <<http://crscenter.tamu.edu>> and take a look at any of Bill Caudill's wonderful TIBs or speeches. In the near future, you will be able to search through thousands of CRS interoffice memos, choose one and download a copy of it for yourself. A limited number of records are downloadable now, but more are added regularly.

To accomplish this lofty goal, the CRS Center hired six hard-working Texas A&M Aggies. (Of course everyone already knows they are *hardworking*, because they are *Aggies*.)

The CRS Center would like to thank Mike Lyssy, Lindsey Kirkpatrick, Niki Manning, Helen Boostrom, Katie Butler and Matthew Harpster for the hours they have committed to the tedious task of scanning, formatting and proofreading documents in pursuit of this goal.

We estimate that most of the material in our College Station archive will be posted in digital format to the CRS Center on-line Archive in three to four years. In the meantime, we hope you will use our web site to find useful materials. If the materials you need cannot be downloaded, just get in touch via phone or email, and we will be happy to send you a hard copy for a nominal fee.

## Call for CRS Scholar applications

Applications are currently being accepted for two research-related awards offered by the CRS Center for the year 2004:

The **CRS Center Archives Scholar Award**

seeks to encourage scholars of architectural and

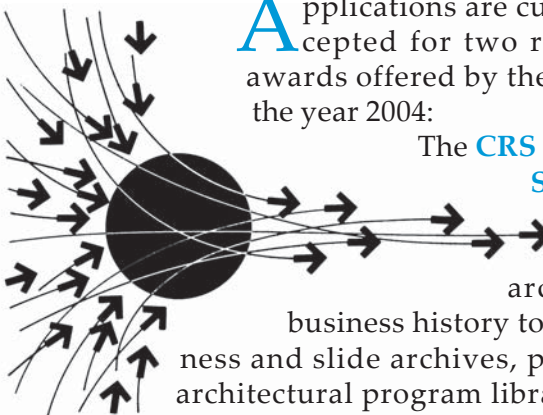
business history to utilize the business and slide archives, publications and architectural program library of the A/E/C

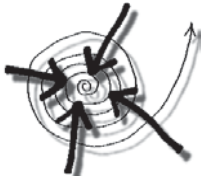
firm Caudill, Rowlett and Scott. The award (a maximum of \$2,000) is intended to reimburse expenses associated with research which utilizes the CRS Archives and the CRS Center. Faculty members and graduate, doctoral or post-doctoral students in architecture, engineering, business or

related disciplines are encouraged to apply by the January 2, 2004 deadline.

The **CRS Center Ph.D. Scholar Award** is offered to prospective students who wish to participate in a leading research program that is exploring future uses of information technology in the design and construction industry. The CRS Center PhD Scholar will be awarded a 12-month research assistantship as well as a 12-month fellowship to cover educational expenses beginning Fall 2004. To be eligible for this award, candidates must apply for admission to one of the PhD programs in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University and forward a copy of all application materials to the attention of the CRS Center Director Robert E. Johnson, AIA, Arch.D.

For more information on either of these awards, please contact the CRS Center.





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## Rowlett Lecture Series rallies group of 400 to Bush Conference Center

With over 400 professionals, students and faculty attending, the **2003 Rowlett Lecture Series** was quite a success. The lecture, held February 7 at the Bush Presidential Conference Center on the Texas A&M Campus, was hosted by 3D/International. The series titled **"3D/I: The Pain and Pride of Change"** explored the firm's history and featured a special presentation by Lee Evey on the rebuilding of the Pentagon after the September 11, 2001 attack. Additional panels covered topics such as: Design & Planning, Construction, Information Technology and Management. The final summary panel included A&M architecture students and Dean Tom Regan posing candid questions to 3D/I founder and Advisory Director, Vic Neuhaus III, FAIA and to 3D/I chairman, Chuck Thomsen, FAIA.

The upcoming **2004 Rowlett Lecture** is slated for Friday, February 6 and will be hosted by the global, multifaceted urban design and architecture firm

RTKL. Tentatively titled **"RTKL: The Pursuit of Great Projects,"** this series will explore RTKL's history, philosophy and plans for the future as they reach for their simple but audacious goal to be a viable contender for any major architectural project in the world.

Registration information is available through the CRS Center at (979) 847-9357 or online at <<http://rowlett.tamu.edu>>. Continuing education units are available to AIA members attending the conference.

The John Miles Rowlett 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. The series is presented annually by the CRS Center, and we hope you join us next year for an informative afternoon at the Bush Presidential Conference Center.