

## Greg Alvin Howell: Scholar, Collaborator and Friend

Lauri Koskela<sup>1</sup>, PhD

Greg Howell was one of the most intellectually curious persons I have ever met. He was attracted to collaboration, to creativity through interaction, conversation, even debate. He wanted to push boundaries. He was fearless in challenging the received wisdom. He wanted to share the new he had learned. And he wanted scholarship to be in the service of good.

I came to know Greg in 1992, first through a telephone call. Over the years, our relationship evolved to scholarly collaboration and friendship. In 2000 - 2014, we wrote together - and often others participated - over two dozen papers on lean construction and project management, many of which are now highly cited.

Greg was a man of many capabilities, many dimensions. Many of my recollections are related to the dimension that operated somewhat quietly in the background, namely academic scholarship. Greg was a scholar, even more intensely than many career academics of today. He did not publish out of academic necessity, but out of passion. Surely, for 11 years, he was professor at the University of New Mexico, a much-liked teacher. However, he started to publish much earlier, and this continued to the recent years. Google Scholar lists more than 100 publications where Greg has been involved. He has now more than 8000 citations in Google Scholar - his influence has been huge.

Thank you, Greg, for everything you have taught to us, through your work, your example and your companionship.

---

<sup>1</sup> Professor of Construction/Project Management, Department of Architecture and 3D Design, School of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, UK, [L.Koskela@hud.ac.uk](mailto:L.Koskela@hud.ac.uk)



*Excerpt from: Ballard, G (2020). Greg Alvin Howell: In Memoriam (1).  
Lean Construction Journal 2020 pp 154-159  
www.leanconstructionjournal.org*

*Gregory Alvin Howell (Greg Howell) passed away peacefully on June 15, 2020 at home in Ketchum, Idaho. He was born February 3, 1943 in Springfield, Missouri to Alvin Hinshaw Howell and Joyce Howell, née Gregory. He lived in Independence, Missouri before moving to Scottsdale, Arizona when he was in high school. Greg studied construction engineering at Stanford, was a member of the ATO fraternity, and played on the university rugby team. After he graduated in 1965, Greg joined the Navy as a Lieutenant Commander in the Civil Engineering Corps and commanded Mobile Construction Battalion 11, better known as the Seabees. He served in Vietnam in Dong Ha and then led a group of 12 Navy men in a kind of Peace Corp role in northern Thailand for one year. After returning to the U.S. he served as Aide to Admiral Robert Wooding. Among his duties was recruiting on university campuses in full dress uniform amidst the rising protests against the war in Viet Nam.*

*In 1972, after leaving the Navy, Greg worked with Paolo Soleri at Arcosanti for a while, then returned to Stanford for a Master's in Construction Engineering. Two of his instructors, Henry Parker and Clark Oglesby, had just authored a book on construction productivity improvement. Their teaching inspired Greg to explore more fully how to improve construction work methods, and in 1989, Greg joined his mentors as author of Construction Productivity Improvement. After graduating in 1973, he started working at Timelapse, Inc. in Mountain View, CA. Greg eventually took over the company and hired his future wife, Dana Langhorne, as office manager.*

*In 1986, Greg moved from California to Albuquerque, where he held the position of Visiting Professor, funded by the New Mexico AGC, in the construction program at the University of New Mexico. In 1997 he left the University and moved to Ketchum, Idaho. He founded the Lean Construction Institute with Glenn Ballard to work with construction industry companies to develop and deploy Lean thinking and practice. In 2001, he founded Lean Project Consulting with Hal Macomber.*