

ARCLIB BULLETIN

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CONTRIBUTE TO THE BULLETIN !

The annual ARCLIB Bulletin has changed from print to an electronic version and is published in late spring of each year.

The next issue is going to be edited by a Scottish team. The editors are David Buri, Diane Lindsay, & Pam Masters. If you have already promised to write something, then please get it to Diane as soon as possible using the following email address:

d.lindsay@strath.ac.uk

If you would like to discuss your contribution prior to publication Diane can be reached by telephone at: 0141 548 4089

Apart from those 'promises' we should like contributions from anyone else associated with architecture libraries. We would welcome articles, news, accounts of conferences, and reviews on anything that would be of interest to other architecture librarians. For the next issue we are particularly interested in accepting articles on themes of user education and staff training.

As we will not have the same space restraints with a digital version, the length of each article is not too critical. Photographs could also be included.

We should particularly like to hear from librarians in countries outside the UK and Ireland. We know we have contacts in several countries including the Netherlands, France, Italy, USA, Israel and it would be very interesting to receive a report from each country on some aspect of their own libraries.

Please send your contributions as soon as possible to Diane at the above email address and no later than the copy deadline of 31st January, 2003.

Guidelines on format for submission- see the SCONUL Newsletter advice for authors as an example:
<http://www.sconul.ac.uk/publications/newsletter.htm>

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ARCHITECTURE LIBRARIES FROM A UNIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE**By Professor Bryan Lawson****Introduction**

I am not yet that familiar, other than being a user, with the RIBA Library so it seems impertinent to make to make comments or recommendations about it. I have chosen rather to prepare some thoughts on the particular needs and patterns of use of libraries in the Universities that have schools of architecture. Hopefully then these thoughts can be taken and discussed in the particular context of the RIBA Library.

Architecture Students are rather Special

Students of architecture use their libraries in ways that often puzzle and confuse University Librarians. This in turn often leads to difficulties for the School of Architecture and apparently unsympathetic responses to their complaints. These patterns of usage relate directly to both the method of study and the very nature of design as a mental process.

Of course students of architecture are no different in many ways to any other student. They have lecture courses and need to revise for examinations. They sometimes need to prepare seminars. They occasionally write essays and usually at least once or twice in their course prepare a dissertation. All these activities can be found in most university departments and are generally well understood and supported by university libraries.

However students of architecture are also special and different. It should also be said for academic completeness here that many other groups of students are also special, we architects sometimes arrogantly assume we are the only different ones! Lawyers are also special in their study patterns and library needs, as are music students and many others. Architecture students are different in two major ways.

Contemporary

Firstly they are much more contemporary in their study than many other university students. That is to say they are concerned about what is happening in their field this year, this month and even this week. This would not normally be the case to anything like this extent in most other fields in a traditional university. For this reason architecture students need immediate access to new books and of course to journals. In say psychology, which of course I know well, undergraduate students would not be expected to look at this month's issues of the major journals. In architecture the staff expect and the students want to see the Architectural Review for example not just in back issues but this month.

Studio

Secondly students of architecture are special because of their dependence on the design studio as a major of delivery of their education. It is important to identify a number of features of that studio that have significance here.

First it is largely design based. This means that each student is working on their own unique design solution and in many cases their own problem. Again this would be unusual in most university undergraduate departments. Students then may need access to a very wide and unpredictable range of material. The concept of a bench collection, so normal in most other parts of a university just cannot be made to work here. This has serious implications for the non-loan, short-loan and long-loan patterns that have to be instituted.

Next the studio is integrative. It is not as so often thought in universities a parallel to the laboratory. The laboratory in an undergraduate course is normally a practical session within one of the specialised subjects forming the course. The design studio may play that role occasionally but more normally is integrative even across the humanities, technologies and social sciences. We expect our architecture students to be bringing many influences and sets of theoretical ideas to bear on each task. This is not true of the laboratory. Again this makes the range of material that might be required from the library not only unpredictable but also potentially extraordinarily wide.

Because design is so multivariate and complex we know that students frequently need almost immediate access to information. Waiting for a week for some information upon which design project decisions are to be based is simply not acceptable. The project cannot survive such a delay, and we know that students faced with such obstacles simply turn elsewhere. Thus the loss of immediacy often seriously influences the direction

a student takes, and not always for the better! In fact a delay of a day or even hours can sometimes prove unworkable!

Precedent

Finally, I want to turn to a fundamentally different way in which design knowledge works and its implications for a library. We know that the design process is a wonderful and highly unusual one (Lawson 1997). It is in many ways quite unlike the forms of thinking that students are learning to develop in many other parts of a university. This is not the place to explore this concept in all its detail but one feature of this process is so crucial to the success of design and critical in the use of library resources that it needs some attention. Designers depend heavily on precedent (Visser 1995). In this they are to some extent like lawyers, certainly lawyers in our non-constitutional legal system here in the UK. Hertzberger puts it more succinctly:-

"When we are designing, we have to explore our memory continuously for all the experiences that can be brought to bear on what we are making." (Suckle 1980)

There are a number of reasons why precedent is important, if not even central in architectural education and thus in terms of library provision. Precedent is based on knowledge of a prior event which at the time of experiencing we may not necessarily know why or when it will later be useful and in what way. This kind of knowledge is therefore largely stored in our memory as episodic rather than semantic knowledge. The psychology of memory continues to be an evolving subject but we have now identified a number of functionally distinct memory systems. We have long recognised for example that short term memory is largely iconic, rapid fade, and very small in capacity (considered to be about 7 chunks). By comparison long-term memory is more symbolic, potentially permanent and has unlimited capacity. We have also recognised that these two memory systems drive our concurrent perception in different ways and in particular that we normally pay more attention to information that has the potential to be stored in long-term memory.

Episodic and Semantic Memory

The difference between semantic and episodic memory is less commonly understood but now thought potentially to be at least, if not more, profound (Tulving 1983). That these two systems are functionally discrete is not in doubt but complex to fully understand. However a number of simple demonstrations are available to us. We may find that our memory of events very early in childhood is very poor even after we began learning theoretical material such as language. Clear childhood memories are rarely strong from before the age of about 3. Similarly we may be aware of sad cases of severe amnesia possibly as a result of Alzheimer's or other traumas. In such cases the subject will have very poor recall of events but may still be able to access theoretical knowledge learned during the same period.

A personal demonstration of this of direct relevance to our argument here goes back to my own student days. At that time the Oxford School of Architecture thought it appropriate that we should be required to draw plans and elevations from memory of a large proportion of the major buildings in Bannister Fletcher! I can clearly remember sitting one summer's day in Christchurch meadow with some colleagues debating the best way to reconstruct from memory the plan of Hagia Sophia. Of course we were trying to establish a procedural system based on geometrical theory. It consisted of drawing a sequence of circles and squares and connecting them and removing arcs and segments. It worked well enough for me to pass my exams but as I have not used this theoretical knowledge since it has faded. However I can remember clearly the event of establishing it and who was with me, where we were sitting, some of the items of clothing we were wearing, the weather and much else of the event. On a recent visit to Istanbul all of this came back to me and I tried to draw the plan from memory again during the flight. The real building turned out to be rather more impressive!

The Peculiarity of Architecture

Architects are then remarkably dependent on episodic memory and knowledge compared with many other professions (Lawson 2001). It is not so much the theoretical knowledge we have that is important as our ability to recall large numbers of ideas about design which may be more or less disconnected and to re-interpret them and reconnect them in new ways. We understand this to be so important that at university we expend considerable effort trying to get our students to begin to establish their pool of possibly useful experiential knowledge. We encourage them to visit buildings, to travel widely, we take them on field trips and we encourage them to use sketchbooks and to begin recording things. We also encourage them to read the journals and to look as widely as possible at current design. We teach them history and expect them to study and record buildings of the past. I was amazed when, at Sheffield, we started to put together our innovative dually professionally recognised degree in structural engineering and architecture, to discover that our civil engineers had no instruction in the history of their subject at all. By comparison to us they are far more dependent on theoretical or semantic memory.

We need also here to recognise that students are still learning about architecture. Their process therefore

may well be different in some respects to that of more established and successful architects (Lawson 1994). There is evidence to suggest that experienced professionals in fields such as architecture often recognise situations rather than extensively analyse them rather in the way grand masters do in chess (De Groot 1965). This of course cannot be done without the great pool of episodic knowledge upon which they draw. Establishing that pool and developing the attitudes towards its central value and the skills for acquiring it are central challenges in architectural education. Connecting the more everyday experiential knowledge with theoretical knowledge is another great challenge and one in which we often are less successful than we should be (Lawson 2001). We can see this in the inability to acquire theoretical knowledge in a form described by Nigel Cross as 'a designerly way of knowing' (Cross 1982). For example we can teach students theoretical knowledge about such matters in building science as say energy loss and get them to pass examinations on the subject with high marks. Never the less those same students may demonstrate little understanding of this knowledge in their design work!

The Consequences for Libraries

All this means that students of architecture need to browse in their library as a sort of substitute for actual experience. By comparison to other students they are much less likely to take books out. They also make little distinction in their browsing between books and journals. The idea of psychology students browsing past issues of a major journal is faintly ridiculous. Not so for an architecture student. Our University Librarian had used computer statistics of book withdrawals to argue that the architecture library was underused. He had not noticed that actually whenever you went into it, it was always full of students! So students of architecture rarely take out their books, and when they do look at them in the library they frequently simply look at the pictures! Surely this cannot be serious academic work? Well of course it is! It is building up the episodic knowledge base without which most normal students cannot succeed. Occasionally of course we find a genius who can design entirely *de novo* but this is rare! In fact the library is one of the most important spaces in a university school of architecture. It is arguably more important than the lecture theatre and almost as important as the studio.

So our libraries need to be organised so they have easy access, close to the studio. The use of them during design requires instant and easy access. Often tutors may want to go there with their students. They need the back issues of journals to be on stacks as accessible as the book stacks not hidden away in vaults. They need the new books and current journals on non-loan display with front covers not spines showing. They need to be open whenever the studios are open, and certainly well into the evening. They need systems of filing and searching that facilitate apparently random or aimless browsing as well as through theoretical knowledge structures. In particular they need to be browsable visually not just by text. They need to be heavily interconnected with other knowledge systems such as the Internet. In fact a system like Google Picture Search is now arguably one of our most important tools. What of course we really want is to access the more detailed facts and information about buildings through the medium of the image. Google gives us the image and goes no further. Ideally the library should be on-line at the studio drawing board and searchable through multimedia hypermedia techniques.

The RIBA Library

I will resist the temptation to say too much here for now. Clearly the RIBA Library from a student point of view needs to concentrate most on what it can offer that is unlikely to be found in a university library. I would suggest this includes its drawing, picture and other special collections. For some of the time for the many students in London it may be an extension of the university library. For the many other students outside London it is most likely to be able to make a contribution to their learning across the Internet rather than through visits to it.

To end perhaps again we might turn to Hertzberger's brilliant treatise on *Lessons for Students of Architecture*, to summarise the argument:-

"Everything that is registered in your mind adds to the collection of ideas stored in the memory: a sort of library that you can consult whenever a problem arises. So, essentially the more you have seen, experienced and absorbed, the more points of reference you will have to help you decide which direction to take: your frame of reference expands." (Hertzberger 1991)

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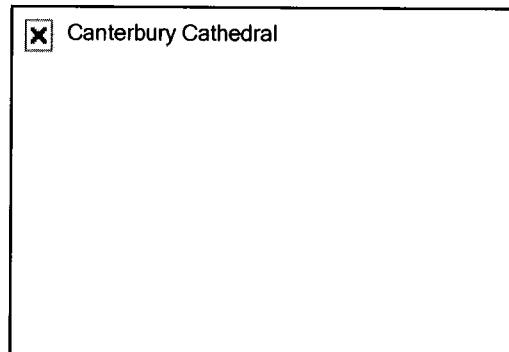
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ARCLIB CONFERENCE 2001: A CANTERBURY TALE
By Denise Harrison

This was my first architecture conference and I was looking forward to two interesting days of talks, visits and meeting new people, working in the art/architecture field. I'd already had glowing reports about ARCLIB from my colleague at Sheffield, Lois Burt, who had attended a number of ARCLIB conferences over the past six years. "You will really enjoy it" she said, "it's the nicest group of people I've met up with" - she was certainly right. I felt most welcome from the minute I arrived in Canterbury.

The conference started with an illustrated talk on the planning of Canterbury by Dr Christopher Tadgell. Dr Tadgell is an author of many books on architectural history, including the History of Architecture in India and the ongoing series of illustrated guides to architectural history published by Ellipsis. He gave an extremely informative and interesting talk on the history and planning of Canterbury. I had already had time to wander round the streets during the afternoon and his talk gave a good insight into the planning of the city and its development.

Dinner followed in the Canterbury Christ Church University College refectory. This was another opportunity to get to know more members of the group and to find out who had come and from where and to enable me to pass on best wishes from Lois.

The first full day of the conference began with a talk from Paul Bennett, Director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. This was an excellent follow-up from Christopher Tadgell's talk and gave us further information, this time about the archaeological history of the region and the work of the trust.

Jane Oldfield, Assistant Director, Information Services at the RIBA British Architectural Library and an ARCLIB Committee Member, well known to many of the delegates, then gave a very clear and in-depth talk on how to find historical information on the built environment, drawing on her experience gained answering enquiries which had come to her at the RIBA Library.

After Jane's talk there were three short yet very detailed talks and demonstrations from Emma Sutton from DIGIMAP, Lynda Thompson from NBS and John Clements from Technical Indexes. All did excellent information packed demonstrations but the timetable gave little time for questions. However, all had lots of handouts for the group and at least the representatives had an opportunity to raise their profile and we had an opportunity to discuss what they had on offer during lunch.

The afternoon was a workshop session led by Dor Pontin and Margaret Pope. Dor is a freelance research librarian with thirty years experience in library and information services including twelve years with the Architectural Press. Margaret Pope is a freelance Research Consultant also with thirty years experience and a Fellow of the Royal College of Art.

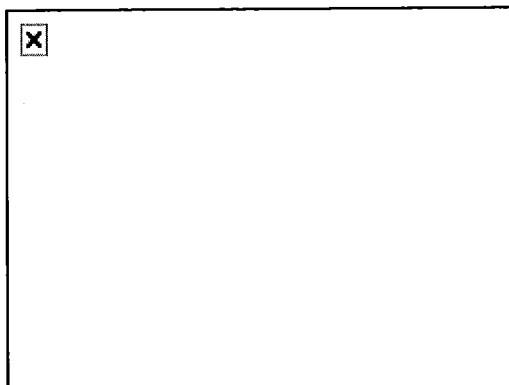
Dor and Margaret provided us with two comprehensive lists of information:

1. A list of useful web sites for trade literature
2. A list of useful printed sources of information

They gave us "hands on" experience of samples of construction products and gave us details of the different

classification schemes available. We were then put to the test to classify a number of items ourselves - no cheating/conferring allowed. I think most of us passed the test!

After more refreshments to help recharge our batteries we then had a question and answers session chaired by Pam Masters from Edinburgh College of Art. We were all invited to post a question to the group. Not many questions were forthcoming but the main thrust of the session revolved round our differing roles and how the role of the once architecture librarian had, for the most part, changed to librarians/information officers responsible for a whole range of other subject areas. Information giving/user education sessions were also discussed and the difficulty of getting students along to sessions offered by the Library. The key to success seemed to be to work as closely as possible with academic staff, to become involved in course planning and work towards getting a slot/slots in the academic timetable.



After a leisurely stroll round Canterbury we then had time to don our finery for dinner at the Chaucer Hotel, a short stroll from our accommodation. This was a really grand affair with excellent food and conversation lasting until the early hours for those in the group who then went on to enjoy the night life of Canterbury!

The last day of the conference started with the ARCLIB Annual General Meeting. The main outcome of this, for me, was a general agreement from the group that we should set up an email list exclusively for ARCLIB members, to run alongside ARCLIB-L the international mailing list. This is now in full swing with at least three messages posted to the list this month! Please keep the messages coming.

After the AGM we had another workshop, this one covered using the RIBA Library web catalogue and was led by Julian Osley, Assistant Director, Books, Periodicals, and Technical Services at RIBA Library, again well known to many ARCLIB members. This was an excellent opportunity to use the catalogue to its full advantage. Julian had already sent us details before the session to try out different searches and gave us the opportunity here to raise any questions rather than for Julian to give a formal lecture. We also had the opportunity to discuss in a group the pros and cons of continuing our subscriptions to the Architectural Publications Index (API).

A delicious lunch followed, brought forward as there were traffic problems for our last speaker Tricia Lawton. Tricia is Knowledge Services Manager at BRE, where she had been involved with introducing Knowledge Management and setting up the Open Learning Centre. Tricia gave a very detailed and interesting talk about knowledge management, provided us with lots of handouts and web sites to investigate further.

To end what had been a hugely successful conference there was a choice of a guided visit and tour of the Cathedral Library and Archive or a guided walk around Canterbury. For some of us though it was time for home after a very enjoyable and informative two days.

Kathleen Godfrey certainly deserved the warm vote of thanks for all the hard work she and her colleagues along with other ARCLIB members had put in. I'm sure we are all now looking forward to the 2002 conference in Oxford. It will be a hard act to follow, although from the few hints from Sue of what is planned I am sure we are in for another success.

Denise Harrison

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CARN: THE WELSH CORE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDS INDEX
By Jonathan Berry

A new national database of sites and monuments of architectural and archaeological significance has been launched. The service, entitled CARN (Core Archaeological Records Index), is the public entry point to the Extended National Database for Wales and is co-ordinated by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW).

The database includes over 100,000 records combined from a partnership of collaborating bodies including the RCAHMW, CADW, the National Museums and Galleries of Wales and the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts. As such, CARN combines the archaeological components of the Welsh computerised Sites and Monuments Records with the information on buildings held in the National Monuments Record.

CARN is intended to enhance remote access to a range of resources including photographs, surveys, maps, artefacts and as such will make it an invaluable tool for the study of Welsh history and information about the man made environment. The database will provide answers to questions such as:

- What sites of interest are there near my home?
- Which monuments in Flintshire are scheduled?
- Where were the schools in Llanilar, Ceredigion?
- How do I find out more about the chapel in my village?
- Are there any slate quarries in South Wales?

The results of current and future fieldwork will update the database; projects which have resulted in the creation of new records have included the survey of threatened industrial remains, the Uplands Initiative and the All-Wales Religious Building Survey.

For further information, please contact:

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T 01970 621 221

hilary.malaws@rcahmw.org.uk

or visit the CARN web site at:

<http://www.rcahmw.org.uk/data/carn.html>

Jonathan Berry

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**THE VII CNBA CONFERENCE IN ROME, JUNE 2001
by Madeleine Brown and Rossana Morriello**

(Please Note - Madeleine Brown's words are in normal script - Rossana Morriello's are in italics)

Rossana Morriello.....

From 7 to 9 June 2001 the VII study days of CNBA took place in Rome. As usual the annual assembly of the Association was accompanied by some days of conference on topics of interest for architecture librarians to which Italian and foreign delegates are invited in order to exchange experiences and reflections. The theme this year was Co-operation and among foreign delegates. Madeleine Brown was invited as a member of ARCLIB and editor of "ARCLIB Bulletin" to talk about the experience of British architecture librarians in this field of work which is becoming increasingly important both at a national and international level.

Madeleine Brown.....

The invitation just popped through my e mail to speak at the CNBA (Coordinamento Nazionale Biblioteche di Architettura) Conference to be held in June 2001 in Rome. CNBA is the Italian version of Arclib. How could I refuse?

The excitement and anticipation was nothing compared to the thrill, interest and pleasure of the event. Janet Owers and I stayed at a 4 star hotel, my room had a window opening onto a perfect view of the Coliseum. Nearby, a stone's throw away, was the historic church San Clemente, two churches superimposed, built upon remains of Roman houses from AD 64 and an ancient Mithraic temple. Underneath that whole area of Rome stretches the complex of Domus Aurea - Nero's extravagant opulent palace only recently excavated with parts of it now open to the public.

The Conference took place in two central small palaces. A magnificent buffet lunch was provided in the middle of the first day in the airy loggia at the top of the palace. Italian cooking became a reality with the warm breeze wafting through the loggia's arches. Our hosts were so hospitable, Rossana Morriello from Turin, and Antonella Scarpa from Venice, in particular, with their excellent English and professional interest in their work made sure we were comfortable at all times.

Rossana Morriello.....

In the beautiful setting offered by the city of Rome, the theme of co-operation was discussed in its many aspects and results: interlibrary loans, cataloguing through union catalogues, opacs and meta-opacs, professional training, consortia for electronic resources acquisitions and digitization projects. In particular, the theme of co-operation was analyzed from the perspective of increasing autonomy that Italian universities have been granted by recent laws. In fact, the full title of the conference was "Between co-operation and autonomy: competition or collaboration? New strategies for architecture libraries".

The first session of the conference was dedicated to the role that libraries are required to perform in the light of the new Italian legislation. Professors and students have been asked to express their opinions. This new law changed the previous system of a unique 4-5 year degree course (followed eventually by post-graduate specialization or doctorate) to a more articulated teaching programme composed of a general basic three-year degree (1st level degree), a further specialized two-year course (2nd level degree) and a post-degree diversified offer of masters, doctorate or post-graduate courses (3rd level teaching). Also, a system based on credits (very similar to that of British universities) was introduced. This model is aimed at facing the emerging needs in the field of education and in particular the needs of "lifelong learning" that is the model our society requires.

In this new context, university libraries become central tools for "lifelong learners" and are asked to "get out of their walls" and promote the service they offer, making themselves "visible". Lifelong learning implies that people can access whatever level of teaching at whatever age from whatever place: as a full-time student, but also as a worker, for professional training and refreshing, and they can do it residually or by distance

learning. Libraries are asked to face the needs of all these kinds of learners who change from one university to another (also in order to get the best teaching) and are increasingly "remote" in their relationships with the library. Digitization and exchange of information through websites and networked systems become, therefore, the keys to realizing this new objective and fulfilling the needs of this new kind of learner.

The two following sessions were, in fact, dedicated to the presentation of some projects of co-operation, mainly in the field of electronic resources, realized both nationally and internationally. In particular, some consortia for sharing of electronic resources (INFER, CIBER)(1), and some projects of digitization of architecture journals were discussed. Also, the British HATII project was presented by Seamus Ross(2).

CNBA presented the projects its members are involved in: indexing of articles in Italian periodicals of architecture and urban planning for the construction of a bibliographic database, MAIA, the Italian meta-opac for architecture, MULETA, a multilingual glossary for architecture librarians, and CRIDAUP, a project for a network documentation about architecture and urban planning(3).

A session was dedicated to cataloguing and the needs in this sector of library work of sharing procedures and methodologies, particularly as referred to subject indexing, to reach a useful and desirable standardization.

Finally, other examples of co-operation were presented: the recently formed Association of Italian Archives of Contemporary Architecture (AAA/Italia) (4), the Italian Library Association website (AIB) (5), the Italian Association for Advanced Documentation (AIDA) (6), and ARCLIB, about which Madeleine Brown gave a very interesting paper which showed an example of co-operation outside Italy.

Madeleine Brown.....

I gave a paper called ARCLIB: Cooperation between architectural librarians in Britain.

The subject of the paper was cooperation between architectural librarians in Britain through ARCLIB, the Architecture School Librarian's Group. The beginnings of ARCLIB in the late 80's were outlined and the aims of the organization defined. The three main ways ARCLIB members cooperate at a national level were described: meeting and exchanging information at an Annual Conference and the resultant Proceedings; the publication of the newsletter, the ARCLIB Bulletin; and the development of the ARCLIB website.

In addition, ARCLIB's role in international cooperation was discussed. The involvement of ARCLIB and CNBA members over the past decade was reviewed. ARCLIB's international conferences were described as well as contributions of ARCLIB members to CNBA conferences.

The paper concluded by emphasizing the importance that ARCLIB places on international cooperation as shown by its aims, its history and its activities. ARCLIB is a willing partner in the sharing of knowledge and experience at an international level.

By way of thanks, Janet and I sent Rossana Morriello in Turin, the video of The Italian Job, the classic Michael Caine comedy caper, where the crooks' escape takes them around Turin by a convoluted escape route through a shopping Piazza, down a subway, down the steps of a local church, (interrupting a wedding), over the roof of a stadium, up and round the famous Fiat Factory, over a weir and finally down through the sewers! Frankly, a far cry from our own serene visit to the CNBA Conference in Rome.

Websites listed by Rossana Morriello.....

1. INFER-Italian National Forum on Electronic Resources:

<http://www.uniroma1.it/infer/e-infer.html>

CIBER, a coordination between universities for sharing databases and other electronic resources:

<http://ciber.caspar.it/>

2. HATII-Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute:

<http://www.hatii.arts.gla.ac.uk>

3. All these projects are presented on **CNBA** new web site

<http://www.cnba.it>

where some papers given at the conference are also available. In particular, **MAIA** - Meta Opac Azalai Italiano di Architettura, in collaboration with AIB and CILEA is available at:

<http://www.cnba.it/maia.php>:

CRIDAUP-Construction of a network documentation about architecture and urban planning

<http://cidoc.iuav.it/cridaup>

MULETA-Multilingual and Multimedia Tool on Environment, Town and Country Planning, Building and architecture <http://www.muleta.org/>

4. **AAA/Italia**:

<http://oberon.iuav.it/aaa.html>

5. **AIB**:

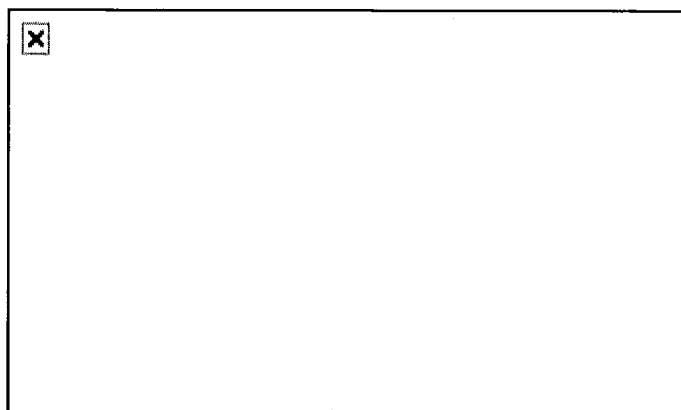
<http://www.aib.it>

6. **AIDA**:

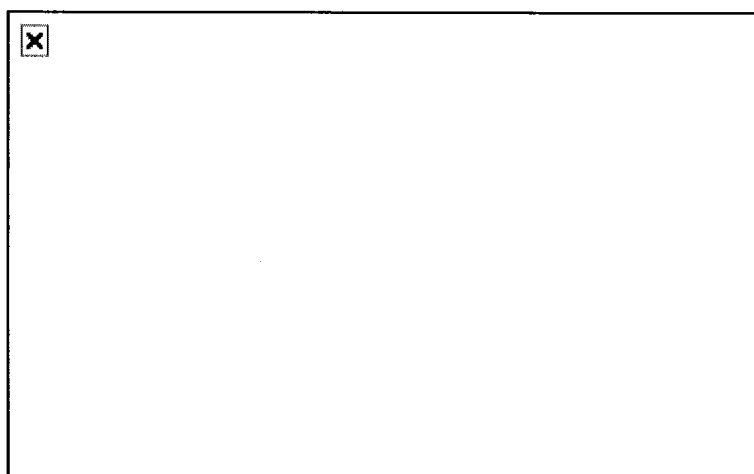
<http://www.aidaweb.it/ingaida.html>

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**Visit to National Monuments Record: English Heritage, Swindon
By Jonathan Berry**

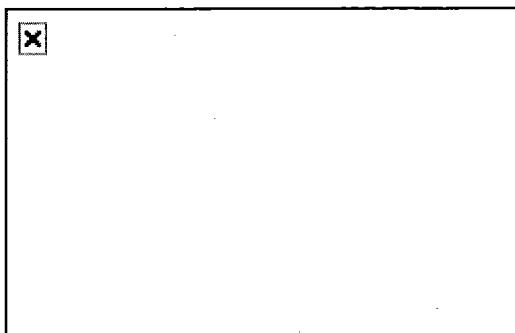
A small group of Arclib members enjoyed a successful visit to the National Monuments Record (NMR), English Heritage's public archive, based at the National Monuments Record Centre in Swindon. The material contained in the NMR is an invaluable resource for people with a variety of interests, ranging from archaeology, architecture, geography and the history of art, to social, economic and local history.



We were received with much hospitality and were provided with a behind-the-scenes tour, including the modern archive store built in 1994 which provides secure, environmentally controlled-storage for the NMR's collections. Here, we learnt how to use the NMR's resources to best effect and were also lucky enough to be able to have a private viewing of many unique and beautiful items related to the historic environment. These included survey records created during the ninety year history of the Royal Commission and a variety of plans and elevations acquired by the NMR from individuals, companies, government departments and other institutions.

Content

The range of material within the NMR is both awe-inspiring and comprehensive; the collections cover archaeology, buildings and maritime sites. The NMR also includes total coverage of England by aerial photographs in a unique collection of vertical and oblique images. These include recent photographs as well as historic images. The air photograph library consists of a specialist collection of over 500,000 oblique air photographs illustrating architectural, archaeological and landscape subjects and the general collection of 3 million vertical air photographs derived from the RAF (including the 1946-47 National 1:10,000 survey), the Ordnance Survey and commercial sources.



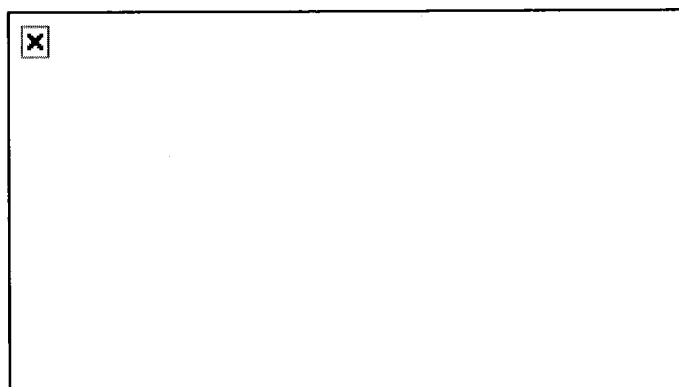
While I have always associated the NMR with housing information on most of the archaeological sites in England, it also includes over three million historic buildings records and photographs and records for statutory listed buildings.

An important part of the archive is the map collection, including the complete coverage of England at 1:10,000 scale and circa 80% coverage at 1:2,500 and 1:1250 scales. There are also many earlier maps of which we were able to some view. Possibly the most interesting materials we viewed were the measured drawings, antiquarian books and country house sale catalogues.

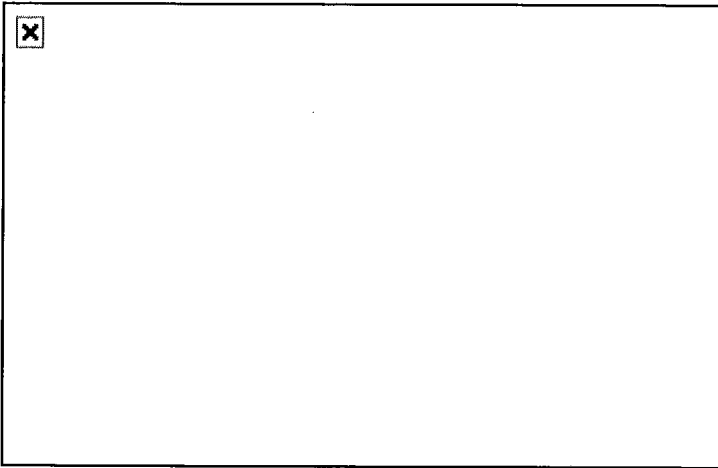
The tour included a visit to the Library, which is for reference use only and stocks over 32,000 books and journals. The architectural content included material on building types, individual architects and specific buildings.

Using the NMR

The NMR can be consulted via either the public search rooms in Swindon and London, or by the free online basic enquiry service. Remote services are increasingly important as in 1999, 80% of the enquiries received were made by people who never visited the search rooms. Customer Services staff based in Swindon deal with enquiries relating to aerial photographs of England and England's archaeology and buildings (excluding London). Staff in London answer enquiries relating to London's buildings. The basic enquiry service is free, but there are also a number of special, charged services. Specific specialist services include the Listed Buildings Information service and Local Studies Resource Packs.



The NMR conducts a programme of events including regular exhibitions and lectures at The Gallery, in which the best of the NMR's collections are displayed and interpreted. During our visit there was a very good display relating to recent English Heritage work recording the architectural heritage of Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter.



The staff at the NMR provide a range of services, designed to meet the diverse requirements of their users. Due to the complex nature of their holdings and the varying quality of the catalogued records, NMR staff do a lot of searching in the collections on the user's behalf.

The NMR does not yet have many of its catalogues online, so a visit down to Swindon comes highly recommended. If one finishes early, one can always sneak off early and look around the McArthur Glen Designer Outlet adjacent to the NMR for a spot of retail therapy!

Jonathan Berry

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ARCLIB BULLETIN NO. 11 2002**A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN ARCLIB****By Joan Drage****Introduction**

The Committee has been beavering away on various projects and activities over the last two or three years on behalf of the full ARCLIB membership. These developments get reported each year at the AGM, but, as not everyone gets to the conference, I thought it would be useful to outline our most recent achievements.

Profile

One of our major concerns has been to enhance ARCLIB's profile within the library world. Having set out to develop a leaflet which would summarise ARCLIB's aims and activities we decided to abandon this in favour of a large eye-catching bookmark which could be easily distributed by post or as a journal insert. A new logo was designed using the Bauhaus typeface and bookmarks were produced employing a simple two-colour scheme. The bookmark contains brief information about ARCLIB's objectives and activities but mainly acts as a pointer to the ARCLIB web site for full details. It is intended to send out the bookmark to all institutions that teach architecture or built environment programmes both as an advert for ARCLIB and also in an attempt to recruit more members.

It will also be useful when we wish to send some brief information to potential sponsors for the annual conference.

Web site

Members will have noticed that changes to the web site have taken place over the last 12 months or so. The new logo has been incorporated and the whole site has been made easier to navigate. ARCLIB also has a new URL - <http://www.arclib.org.uk/> which is much snappier and more memorable than the previous one. We remain grateful to Liverpool John Moore's University for hosting our web pages but we use a web diversion service charged at a small annual rate to maintain the new URL. Joan Shaw who has been leading the development of the web pages, with help from Jonathan Berry, has several ideas still for increasing the content so do keep checking to see what's new!

Bulletin

The ARCLIB Bulletin has also undergone some noticeable changes since 1999. Under the editorship of Madeleine Brown and Janet Owers, a very professional and attractive journal was published annually until 2001. The editors were also very proud that they were able to get an ISSN assigned to the Bulletin and that its articles were to be indexed by the editor of the Art Libraries Journal. Since the resignation of the present editors, the committee has decided to move forward with an online version of the Bulletin which will be quicker to put together and easier to incorporate visual material such as colour photographs.

Annual visits

A small innovation has been the instigation of annual visits to libraries or organisations of professional interest. These serve a dual purpose: as well as enabling members to meet with each other in between conferences, they also provide ARCLIB librarians with an introduction to the resources and services of other relevant organisations. Three visits have taken place so far; the inaugural visit was to the Building Research Establishment, the second to the British Architectural Library at RIBA and last year's was to the National Monument Record in Swindon. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrange a visit to anywhere this year but if anyone has any ideas for interesting venues for next year the committee would be pleased to hear of these.

Archives

We have been concerned for some time that ARCLIB should have its own archive. Since it was formally constituted in 1990, ARCLIB has accumulated a sizeable amount of documentation in the form of

publications, conference publicity and reports, correspondence, minutes and photographs. Some items, such as photographs taken at conferences, are not held centrally and we should like to be able to gather everything together to create an interesting collection. We are held back at present not just by lack of committee time but also by lack of a suitable central place to house such an archive. However Norman Ashfield has made a very useful start to this project. He has undertaken to scan all the agendas and minutes from committee meetings and AGMs in order to create an electronic archive.

International links

We have set aside time within committee this year to discuss how to encourage an international aspect to ARCLIB. For some time we have enjoyed links with individuals in other countries including the Netherlands, Norway, United States, Italy, and France and we should like to extend this in some way. Our discussions so far have centred around the issues involved rather than on any concrete proposals. We are considering the feasibility of ideas such as study tours, sponsoring ARCLIB members to present papers abroad, paying for overseas librarians to attend our conferences and including reports from architecture librarians in other countries within the ARCLIB Bulletin. Obviously some of these initiatives will cost more than others and we are conscious that an annual commitment to sponsor librarians to come to the UK might stretch the ARCLIB funds too far. We hope to investigate possible funding from other organisations or commercial sponsorship. The committee members are also trying to discover which countries have links with their own institutions with a view to making contact with other architecture librarians. In 2001, ARCLIB was able to give financial support to Janet Owers who, with Madeleine Brown, gave a paper at the CNBA conference in Rome. We are certainly willing to consider other applications for similar support in the future.

Annual conference

The annual conference is a standing item on the agenda at each committee meeting and the host for each year's conference becomes a co-opted member for that year. In general we play a supportive role particularly as some members of the committee have experience of organising conferences themselves and know the problems and pitfalls associated with venues, speakers and tight schedules. However we rely heavily on the enthusiasm, commitment and organisation skills of the host librarian(s) as well as their knowledge of potential speakers and sponsors. We expect a lot from our hosts each year and it is thanks to them that each conference over the years has been both informative and enjoyable.

Mailing list

Finally, ARCLIB has set up a 'members only' email distribution list. Although we have been grateful that the ARCLIB-L list has enabled us to correspond with architecture librarians in the UK and across the world, we thought it would be useful to have a list which is just open to ARCLIB members, (some of whom are from other countries anyway). The list has been set up by Denise Harrison at Sheffield University using JISCMail and any member who has not yet signed up is urged to do so.

In order to join you need to email listserv@jiscmail.ac.uk - no subject heading is needed.

In the body of the message, please put

join ARCLIB-MEMBERS

followed by your firstname then lastname.

Alternatively, you can join online using the JISCMail web site

<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/>

Conclusion

My final thought is this. If any of you would like to get more involved in ARCLIB activities such as those I have outlined above then you might like to consider becoming a member of the committee yourself. There tends to be a vacancy every summer and even if there were not there is always the opportunity to contribute as a co-opted member or to work on some project in the background without having to attend committee meetings. We are always keen to involve 'fresh blood' so please think about it.

Joan Drage

Chair of ARCLIB

March 2002

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