



Newsletter 2010 No 2

Section on Library Buildings and Equipment

What to do in Gotheburg – our important meetings.

The open session of our section will take place on Saturday 14th of August 2010, (12.45 -15.45).
with the main theme:

Inspiring interiors – creating and designing practical and exciting library spaces to promote use

The papers to be presented are

- [Color, materiales y luz en las bibliotecas de la Xarxa de Barcelona](#)
IGNASI BONET and IMMACULADA SABATER (Architect of Library Architecture Unit, Diputacio Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain)
- [Southwark's 'stunning exemplar' library: modest investment for maximum effect](#)
DAVID JENKIN (AMA - Alexi Marmot Associates, London, United Kingdom) and PAM USHER (Library Service, Southwark Council, United Kingdom)
- [Redesigning the interior of an existing public library to inspire use](#)
ADRIAAN SWANEPOEL and CHRISTINE SWANEPOEL (Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, South Africa)
- [The adventure of the ICMC/IKMZ-Building of Cottbus University \(Germany\)](#)
ANDREAS DEGKWITZ (Brandenburg Technical University of Cottbus, Cottbus, Germany)

We are also holding a workshop in partnership with the Art Libraries Section looking at how art libraries in particular but libraries in general cope with designing for traditional material and new technologies. The Off-site Session will take place on Friday 13th of August in the Gothenburg Art Museum (10.00 – 13.00). Papers to be presented are as follows:

- **The Södertörn University Library designed with flexibility for changing needs**
CECILIA KUGELBERG AND CHRISTER MALMSTRÖM
- **The renovation of the Richelieu Building: a future centre for art researchers...**
SÉBASTIEN GAUDELUS, MARTINE POULAIN, LUCILE TRUNEL
- **A new library building for the Bauhaus collections and the library of Anhalt University of Applied Sciences.**
DR WERNER MÖLLER

See you in Gothenburg



Chairman's Editorial

The first decade of the 21st century has proved an exciting one for those of us involved in the design of new library buildings. Contrary to the gloomy predictions that libraries as physical entities were on the way out, many prestigious new buildings have opened their doors in recent years.

Excellent examples can be found all over the world and we members of the Library Buildings & Equipment Standing Committee want to hear about them. A quick look at the papers presented in open sessions and satellite conferences reveals information on the buildings featured over the years. We are also trying to build up a dossier in this Newsletter of buildings that both work well and look good so this is where you all as members of the Section come in. Let us know if you have a building you would like to write up, suggest conference topics, respond to our call for papers and tell us what projects you think we should be undertaking.

The current committee includes librarians who have been involved in planning buildings large and small, consultants and architects and we are working on getting brief biographical information up on the website. I took over the chairmanship at the Milan conference this year having been Secretary for the previous four years. I started my career by working as a library building consultant on an extension and renovation project at the University of Houston. For much of my career I was Architecture & Planning Librarian at Queen's University, Belfast before moving into library management. I currently chair the Steering Group of Designing Libraries in the UK and have published widely on various aspects of librarianship including library design. I also chair Hearth Housing Association & Revolving Fund, a building preservation trust which restores historic buildings mainly for social housing or for sale. I am an honorary member of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects and was awarded an OBE in 2007 for services to architectural heritage.

In recent years our efforts as a committee have been focused on publishing the *IFLA Library Building Guidelines* and the web-based *Key Issues in Building Design* which summarises the critical topics relating to library planning –

research, vision, space needs and communication. In addition to those projects we are always working on providing good conference programmes. In 2009 we ran the highly successful satellite in Turin in collaboration with a number of other Sections and our Milan session, another collaborative effort, looked at children's libraries – papers from both these conferences are available on the IFLA website. The conference in Gothenburg promises to be excellent with the topic this time being inspiring interiors. An added bonus for anyone attending is a joint workshop with the Art Libraries Section looking at designing art libraries in the digital age. And then of course there are the queries as colleagues get in touch with specific problems or to ask for suggestions about buildings to visit for inspiration.

What next? When embarking on a new building, the first thing most of us do is check the literature and then visit buildings from which we think we can learn. However, a very crucial element in all of this is how these new libraries are actually performing in practice and yet there is surprisingly little written on this especially after the first excitement of opening a new building is over. The Committee decided that our next major project should be to compile a post-occupancy evaluation questionnaire which our members could adapt as suited them and we hope to start on this in the current year. If any of you have examples of surveys evaluating building performance I would be very grateful if you could send them to me or get in touch to discuss your experience.

I opened by noting that our worst fears about the demise of the physical library had proved to be unfounded in these first years of the new century but I fear hard times face all of us in the coming decade. The key issues for us in the coming years look like being value for money and the need to design sustainably with perhaps restoration rather than new buildings taking precedence. The Section's programmes and projects will reflect this.

Karen Latimer
Chair
k.latimer@gub.ac.uk

Featured Building-The new Hangzhou Library

By: **Chu Shuqing**, Director of Hangzhou library.

Name of Library: The New Hangzhou Library

Located: the Citizen Centre, Qianjiang CBD, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China

Year completed:

Gross building area: 43860 m²

Planned collection capacity: 2 million volumes

Number of computer stations for library users:

Number of reader seats: 2300 seats in the reading areas



Hangzhou library is located in the Citizen Centre, Qianjiang CBD, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China, which covers an area of 43860 m², with one basement and four floors. The library has a total book collection of more than 2 million volumes with a capacity of 2300 seats in the reading areas. Wi-Fi is also accessible there. The design aims to express the idea of equality and easy accessibility which is provided free of charge

creating a "people's library; the citizens' reading corner." Every section is delightfully furnished in different styles such as Western European and traditional Chinese, with a soothing, pleasing touch. The public library open area has been built to the highest standard national wide. All the service areas are divided into proper spaces avoiding any confusion.



Firstly, the process of the planning and the construction of the new library were full of challenges.

Before the construction, the Hangzhou government set the highest standard for the building. The goal was to build a modern library with some of the highest class facilities in the world. First of all, Hangzhou library should become the citizens' large study room and a cultural and leisure centre, which will guarantee people's rights on lifetime free study and satisfy the multiple cultural demands of our citizens.

Secondly, Hangzhou library should become the literature service centre of the city.

Finally the library will focus on the long-term development with energy conservation and environment protection. In all, the process of the new Hangzhou library's planning and construction were full of challenges, especially the period of site selection and designing.

It took almost 3 years for site selection. With consideration to the modern library's long-term

development and city's development strategy, Hangzhou library finally settled in the Citizen Centre, Qianjiang CBD.

It was very strenuous to select the design companies and their designing programmes. Seven companies took part in the design but there was still a big gap between the design and the requirements. The designing programme still didn't achieve the design requirements after lengthy communication, modifications, and several rounds of selections. In order to achieve the world-class library construction standards, designers worked day and night for data collection, comparison, doing research, communicating with the library managers, deepening the designing programme, and integrating the concept of a people-oriented, exquisite and harmonious open atmosphere. All of these points ensured the success of the construction of our new library.

Secondly, the largest challenge on the designing process

As an integral part of the citizen centre, the outline of the construction, building height, building facades are limited to the integration of the design and the library can't be easily recognized. Designers put a lot of energy into a comprehensive analysis of the whole environment, building spaces, operation mode, users' behavior as well as the sustainable development factors. Finally, designers combined these factors with its design concept. While respecting the main plan of citizen centre, ecological landscape design has been taken into consideration to create a robust and lasting vitality.

To solve the library's individual requirements, the design focused on the "people first" concept and its identification. According to the traffic situation and the trend of traffic development, important entrances are positioned to ensure the convenience of readers and make it safer and more orderly. There is a small and quiet square between the main entrance and the street which can be used to hold book fairs and outdoor activities. All of these meet the library's individual requirement



Thirdly, highlights of the construction of Hangzhou library

Nearly 90% of the area is open to the public. The area is divided into four main spaces including lobby space, reading space, sharing space, and leisure space. Different services and environment experiences are offered to readers. The lobby space and reading spaces offer a special experience, which are divided into proper small areas reflecting the concept of people-oriented design.

The main entrance is designed to be the same height as two floors and the area of the lobby is about 768M². Signs to help and guide visitors are set on the wall. Readers can easily find the sections they require even it's their first time to visit. This ease of getting around helps to create a homely feeling.

Finally, wide social impact and positive feedback

Hangzhou library is widely accepted by citizens and the society for its first-class facilities and human space layout, as well as the open service concept, proven by the increasing number of visitors, book lending figures and extensive media attention. People come to library in their leisure time or on holidays, and also bring friends to pay a visit, even other librarians from around the nation come to visit. Now the library has become an important motivating force on the city's cultural

The lending areas are more than 4 meters high, and accentuate the platform design, which makes full use of skylight lighting so that the reading space is varied.

All the reading areas are decorated to create the impression of a private homely library. Each seat has a lamp in front. The continuing decoration of shelves and lamps are seamless, as well as the sofas which are also used as a soft separation tools..

According to the location of each reading area, soft design includes arts and crafts to provide different environments which bring readers real enjoyment

development, influencing the lifestyle of citizens and the quality of their life.

Hangzhou was once applauded by Marco Polo as "the most splendid and luxurious city in the world". And the former US president Bill Clinton said Hangzhou is "a magic city". Now the Hangzhou new library is gradually becoming an important cultural landmark of this charming location.



Featured Building - Albury LibraryMuseum

by: **Carina Clement**, Cultural Programs and Audience Development Team Leader, Library Museum, Albury City Council, New South Wales, Australia.

Name of Library: Albury City Public Library (Building name is Albury LibraryMuseum)

Location: Albury, New South Wales, Australia

Year completed: July 2007

Gross Building area: 3,000 square metres

Planned collection capacity (books, nonprint, museum objects): 100,000 items

Number of computer stations for library users: 25

Number of reader seats: 100

Other key design features: The facility is made up of zones: the lending library zone, the Infozone (research, technology and heritage zone) and exhibition zones. The building is on two floors with a mezzanine level providing meeting rooms and a staff area.

The building design and colour elements were inspired by the local environment, with a stunning X façade referencing an iconic railway bridge, a river motif running through the building and red orange colours in walls and panels referencing the local river red gum trees.



As you consider the entire planning and construction process, what was the greatest challenge and how was it addressed?

The LibraryMuseum was designed by Architects Ashton Raggatt McDougall, well credentialed in Australia for design of a number of cultural buildings including the Australian National Museum in Canberra. It is fair to say that the building designs created community controversy with many maintaining the building with its striking

X façade and orange and green external colours did not fit with Albury's heritage streetscape. The sign off on the building process was delayed as a detailed community consultation process was held, with the "let's just build it" side narrowly defeating the traditionalists.

What was the greatest design challenge and how was it resolved?

A key driver of the architectural brief for the building was the convergence of spaces – the building was to incorporate the functions of a public library, research and technology centre and social history museum but with limited barriers between the zones in the building to encourage integration of spaces and experiences. This has been achieved in part through a large open foyer

which allows that integration to occur through programming and signage. A reception or information desk for the entire building is located in the foyer and staff provide information and respond to enquiries about exhibitions, technology, reference requests and also take on a retail role.



The integration of spaces work well but the different environmental needs of the exhibition zones needed to be planned for. A semi permanent exhibition showcasing the history of Albury and at times temporary and touring exhibitions require more stringent environmental controls than the rest of building. The architects were able to cater for this by creating differing environmental zones throughout the building.

However the openness of the building allows the environmental zones to bleed into each other and at times when the highest levels of environmental controls are required the main doors to the exhibition spaces are closed and access to the space is through a side door, which is not ideal. Alternatives, such as air curtains, are currently being researched.

What features work particularly well in the building?

In general the architects have developed a significant building in a central cultural square in Albury. The internal spaces are as striking as the external design and they have kept well to their brief of designing a welcoming space without boundaries that lives up to its marketing as the

“living room of the city”. The high ceilings and floor length windows along the entire west face of the building create a great sense of space and light as visitors enter the building and this is often commented on. Well used comfortable chairs and coffee tables are placed alongside the windows.



The children's section is at the rear of the library zone and incorporates long wide carpeted steps and small window nooks and children and their

parent are often found in this light filled area immersed in reading or just finding a place to sit in the sunshine.

Based on the buildings use, what design elements would you change?

The building backs onto a central community square and the original design brief required that the LibraryMuseum address both the street and the square with entrances to the building from both sides. The architects addressed this through the inclusion of a café at the rear of the building opening out to the central square. Almost three years from the opening of the facility the café is yet to be operational. Whilst there is demand for a café in the building, the location of the provided space is not ideal, being located away from the active parts of the building with access through a corridor used as exhibition space. If the space

was to open and be let as a café there are potential issues regarding its use as a second entrance and exit point to the building, including access through a commercial premises and collection security. The space is currently used as storage, but may be redesigned as a community meeting space and additional activity space for the LibraryMuseum.

The inclusion of a café in the building is now unlikely and should have been specified in the brief with the requirement to be located centrally in the facility.

How has the community responded?

The overwhelming catalyst for the development of a fully converged facility was the potential for audience development. If a new way of operating could enhance services, attract new audiences and acknowledge the common goals and functionality of cultural facilities then it was worth pursuing. An examination of new users indicates this has certainly been the case with the facility attracting and retaining a much wider demographic, with young people being a key user group. There has been a 50% increase in usage over the old Albury Library, with the facility averaging 20,000 visitors per month.

The facility is a success as a community hub – it is a friendly welcoming facility with a range of services and programs that attract and retain community visitors, as well as tourists. In the facility you can borrow a book, research your family history, gain an understanding of the history of Albury and the region by viewing the Crossing Place: Story of Albury exhibition, view a touring exhibition – whether it be contemporary media art, a touring exhibition or a community based exhibition, listen to music, surf the net, attend a meeting in the community meeting rooms, or simply sit and read the papers

Some interesting websites

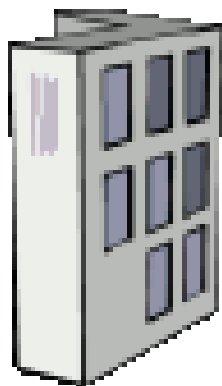


The LIBER Architecture Group

further the exchange of
experience between librarians
and architects throughout

Europe, and attempts to raise the level of awareness of new projects and trends. LAG organizes seminars on a regular basis which include opportunities to visit new buildings. The Group also collects information about building projects and uses seminar proceedings and other publications to disseminate this material. The LIBER Architecture Group is an expert committee of the [LIBER Division of Library Management and Administration](#).

Their seminars take place every second year, and the last one was in Madrid, Spain, April 2010 with the title: **Fit for what purpose? Planning libraries for the users of the future.** The program with links to the speeches can be found on this website: <http://www.zhbluzern.ch/liber-lag/lageps.htm>. Their next seminar is being planned for spring 2012.



[librarybuildings.info](http://www.librarybuildings.info)

[NAPLE](#) (National Authorities on public Libraries in Europe) decided to make a European database presenting the best new library buildings in Europe. The library at [the Royal School of Library- and Information Science in Copenhagen, Denmark](#) host the database. The vision is to create a database presenting new, inspiring library buildings by letting each

member country select minimum five good buildings to be presented in the database. On their website you will find a list of participants, some articles about library buildings, and pictures of interesting library buildings.

You can for instance browse the pictures by motive <http://www.librarybuildings.info/country/motivefront>

or by country <http://www.librarybuildings.info/country/norway>

or by architect <http://www.librarybuildings.info/country#architect>

Chair:

Karen Latimer
Medical & Health Care Librarian
Queens University Library
BELFAST BT7 ILS
United Kingdom
Tel. +(44)(28)90973487
Fax +(44)(28)90973487

Email: k.latimer@gub.ac.uk

Secretary:

Dorothea Sommer
Deputy Director
Universitäts - und Landesbibliothek
Sachsen-Anhalt
Martin Luther Universität Halle-
Wittenberg
August Bebel Strasse
06108 HALLE (Saale)
Germany
Tel. +(49)(345)5522191
Fax +(49)(345)5527140

Email: dorothea.sommer@bibliothek.uni-halle.de

Information Coordinator/Editor of Newsletter:

Ingvild Monsen
Head of Department
Bergen University College, The
Library-Nordnes
Haugeveien 28
N 5005 BERGEN
Norway
Tel. +(47)55587872
Fax +(47)55900011

E-mail: ingvild.monsen@hib.no