

Newsletter

No62 Fall 2010

AIA UK



A Chapter of
The American
Institute of Architects



University of Sheffield Team Wins 2010 Student Design Charrette

Brianne Page, Assoc. AIA

Ten enthusiastic teams of university students from across the UK filled the Architectural Association with energy on the 31st of October. The brief this year centred on sustainability and the team discussions throughout the day focused on the opportunities that could arise from sustainable development and living. The students had an opportunity to visit the three-acre site at Old Middlesex Hospital, which is just a short walk from the AA. The site's context, which includes a neighbouring school, views of the BT Tower and a Grade II listed chapel & facade, had a large influence on the teams' final designs.

The students kept the event sponsor, CallPrint, racing back and forth between the AA and CallPrint's shop. They provided the students with their site photos, plans, enlargements and other materials for models. At the conclusion of the six-hour design phase, the designs generated provocative discussions during both the presentations and critiques. Paul Finch of OBE, headed the jury, which included architect Wade Scaramucci, Associate Director for AHMM, as well as architect and environmental analyst Edward Garrod, Director of PHA Consulting.

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2010 Scotland Excursion

Lester Korzilius, AIA, RIBA

On September 18-19, AIA members and guests had a full two days of tours in Edinburgh and Glasgow. In total there were 23 AIA members and guests, including two AIA Continental Europe members. The two days were packed with tours of many architectural sites, both historical and modern, such as the Edinburgh Castle, St Giles High Kirk, the Museum of Scotland, the Small Animal Hospital and the Architecture and Design Scotland building. It was a very enjoyable weekend and for those who could make it for Friday evening, there was a pub dinner at the Doric Tavern, reputedly the oldest pub in Edinburgh!

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2011 UPCOMING EVENTS

LENI LIGHT PROJECT LECTURE

Herman Miller Showroom
Tuesday, January 11, 6:30pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Herman Miller Showroom
Elections for 2011 AIA UK Board
Wednesday, January 19, 6:30pm

OLYMPIC SITE TOUR

Stratford, London
Thursday, February 3, 3:30-5:30pm

2011 AIA UK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AIA UK will be holding their annual election of officers and directors at the 2011 Annual General Meeting, which will take place on the 19th January at the Herman Miller Showroom located at 61 Aldwych. The evening will include a brief overview of the Chapter's activities over the past year as well as a discussion of what events are being planned for 2011. The AGM is also a chance to meet a wide range of AIA UK members and to visit the new showroom of Herman Miller, a long-time chapter supporter. It is important for as many members as possible to attend the AGM as it is a great opportunity to give feedback to the Board and influence the Chapter's plans going forward.

If you are interested in getting involved with the chapter, please consider nominating yourself for a position on the board. You are welcome to make nominations for the board of directors and the four officer positions, although we are looking specifically for the role of Vice President. For the officer positions, we would ideally prefer US licensed architects, but would also accept foreign licensed architects for nominations. The board of directors can be both licensed or non-licensed and all members of the board would normally be willing to help with events coordination and other organization within the chapter.

If you would like to nominate yourself or another candidate please email AIA UK Vice President Elizabeth Waters at ewaters@rtkl.com



AIA UK Movie Nights

Andrew Wade, Assoc. AIA

The 2010 film series continued this autumn with three documentary films exploring transformative practices in photography, architecture and urbanism. The stunningly sequenced "Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman" was played for an enthusiastic audience in the BFI Screening Room on September 21. This multiple award-winning film documented the life and career of a leading architectural photographer through the eloquent narrative of the Californian Modernist movement.

The film series concluded with "Volume Zero: The Work of Charles Correa" on October 19 and "Urban Goddess: Jane Jacobs Reconsidered" on November 16. These films were purchased on special order from India and Canada respectively for AIA UK members and their guests. Volume Zero documented buildings integrated with their environments as well as the masterplanning of Navi Mumbai by MIT-educated Indian architect Charles Correa, while Urban Goddess recounted the lasting influence of Jane Jacobs on insurgent planning processes and community activism in redevelopment projects. Please stay tuned for details on our 2011 film series!

Board Commends AIA UK Chapter President

Michael Lischer, FAIA

One of the highlights in the cold dark depths of an English January is the AIA UK's Annual General Meeting! The key purpose of the AGM is to vote for the Chapter's new board of directors and say thanks to the old board. Special thanks must be given this year to our retiring president, Richard Spencer, Int. Assoc. AIA, RIBA.

Richard's enthusiastic leadership spanned two terms as president! While at the helm, chapter membership increased and the number and variety of events grew. His efforts are much appreciated! Richard will remain on the board in 2011 and we look forward to his continued input. On behalf of the 2010 board of directors and all of the chapter members, I would like to extend a big THANK YOU and WELL DONE to Richard!!

Scotland Excursion, cont.

Lester Korzilius, AIA, RIBA

The weekend started on Saturday morning by touring Edinburgh on foot, in particular the old town. The tours were led by the effervescent Isabelle Lomholt of E-Architect and combined with expert architectural knowledge and sharp criticism! We saw normal 'tourist' sites such as the Castle, St Giles High Kirk and Edinburgh University. We also visited 'architectural' buildings such as the Museum of Scotland (Benson and Forsyth), Dynamic Earth (Hopkins) and the Architecture and Design Scotland building (Richard Murphy). The group listened to a stimulating talk by the office of Malcolm Fraser in their Infirmary Baths project, which was followed by a tour of the Scottish Parliament building (Enric Miralles). The gala dinner on Saturday evening was held at the penthouse restaurant of Harvey Nichols and was a pleasant combination of good company, good food and stunning views over Edinburgh.

On Sunday the group continued onto Glasgow, starting with architect-guided tours of the Small Animal Hospital - the 2007 building of the year (Capita) - followed by the Hazlewood School (Murray Dunlop). Both buildings were of the calibre that remind you why you went into architecture school in the first place! We then had a walking tour of Glasgow, led by Adrian Welsh of E-Architect, who is also the former site architect of the Scottish Parliament. The sights included 'Home for the Future' (Ritchie, Ushida Findlay, et al), Egyptian Halls (Greek Thompson) and the SAS Hotel (Murray Dunlop). The tour finished at Mackintosh's School of Art.

13 CES credits were available for the weekend excursion, so in one weekend you could fulfill over half of your AIA CES credits! The overall opinion of those that attended was that it was a resounding success and that the AIA should make this type of excursion a regular feature in the calendar. Plans are now underway for a similar trip to Bath or Oxford in the autumn of 2012 – watch this space!



Scotland Photos by Toby Cisneros

AIA UK



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Student Charrette Second Place Team
University of Sheffield



Student Design Charrette, cont.

Brianne Page, Assoc. AIA

The winning team included Corina Angheloiu, Andrew McKay, Josh Taylor, Rafaela Taylor, and Lavinia Scaletti. They are all third-year architecture students at the University of Sheffield. Their design included a halfway house to aid one's reintegration into society and also educate the public about sustainable living. Other design elements looked at emerging sustainable technologies, such as aquaponics, and how they might become architectural features. The group also looked at celebrating the listed chapel and transformed it into a 'seed chapel' for drying and storing the development's harvest.

Third prize went to students representing the University for the Creative Arts at Canterbury, while both the second and first place teams were representatives of the University of Sheffield. A group made up of students from Oxford Brookes and London South Bank received an honourable mention.

Thank you to all the mentors and AIA UK board members who volunteered their time to inspire the creative minds of the future. We look forward to hosting the event again next fall and we hope to see you there!

Leni Light Project Lecture

Leni Schwendinger presents:

"Creative Lighting for Public Space and Infrastructure"
Tuesday, January 11, Herman Miller Showroom

As a city expands, its edges become incorporated into the city centre. Residential and commercial development expand outward and infrastructure such as bridges and tunnels once on the "periphery" are being re-discovered and re-interpreted. Creative Lighting for Public Space and Infrastructure addresses the challenge of these emerging districts and structures that typify them--and of the lighting designer's role in balancing civic imperatives, aesthetic objectives and sustainability goals. It is a narrative that unfolds on a human scale--with lighting as a unifying force that connects spaces and buildings with the people who inhabit them.

AIA UK Building Tours

Wade Scaramucci, AIA, RIBA

Monthly building tours have continued into the winter, providing opportunities to visit unique buildings around the capital. These tours provide practical knowledge concerning London-specific issues, as well as units of CES / CPD accreditation. Recent tours have included St. Martins in the Fields by Eric Parry Architects, the Maggie's Center by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners and Murray Grove (Stadthaus) by Waugh Thistleton

In September, two building tours were conducted, each focusing on the theme of unusual building typologies.

In early September, Haworth Tompkins Architects gave a tour of the Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre. The Neighbourhood Centre is a mixed-use development incorporating a number of inter-linking uses. These components include a 64-place nursery with an external play space, a creche & dedicated baby unit, an out-of-school activities and family support space, an entire floor dedicated to learning and enterprise including meeting rooms and conference spaces for community and commercial use, a community cafe, a commercial restaurant & food shop and permanent offices for the client.

Also during September, a tour of the Artist Studios project in Hammersmith was conducted by architect MJ Long. The tour illustrated the complexities and process of working with a number of different clients and projects types on a disused builder's yard.

In October, Gillian Horn of Penoyre & Prasad hosted a lecture and subsequent site visit to the Richard Desmond Children's Eye Centre. The building's south façade features an arrangement of freely placed folded aluminium louvres to create a unique street presence. This event focused on the design and technical challenges of the intricately lit façade and its construction.

A number of future tours are being scheduled and feedback and suggestions for buildings of interest are always appreciated and can be forwarded directly to Wade at wscaramucci@ahmm.co.uk.



Coin Street Neighborhood Centre

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President's Commentary

Richard Spencer, Int'l Assoc. AIA, RIBA

This is the last article I will write for our newsletter as the UK Chapter President. It has been a turbulent couple of years in the economy and consequently, also in our profession. The Chapter, whilst not immune to this, has luckily been able to put on another impressive set of events throughout 2010. A fascinating set of lectures on different aspects of sustainability kicked off the year. We held drawing classes and film nights and most recently we had a full-house to watch a documentary on Jane Jacobs, which generated a lively debate after the showing. There has also been an exceptionally wide-ranging series of building tours throughout London and the summer season was marked by a cycle tour in Canterbury and Whitstable.

We put on four major events this year, starting with the Design Awards in April and followed by the return of the Summer Gala, held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in July. In September we held the weekend excursion to Edinburgh and Glasgow and at the end of October, the Student Design Charrette was held at the AA - another sold-out event. The total for the year was 32 events and 750 attendees recorded!

None of this would have happened without the enthusiastic and tireless work of the members of the Board and other volunteers to whom we all owe a big vote of thanks. Next year will have its own challenges but I urge you to get involved with the AIA UK. Helping to organize these events may be extra work, but it is good fun and great leadership experience. We are also planning a big sponsorship drive for the next couple of months so that we can continue to improve the quality and diversity of our programme of events. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at our AGM on January 19th!



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Noel Hill Scholarship Winner Visits Tibet

Mark Kelly, 2010 Student Award Winner

This scholarship was a tremendous opportunity for my professional and personal development. I volunteered for the Tibet Heritage Fund, which is a non-profit NGO organisation, offering design and heritage conservation opportunities using traditional skills. My job was to build vernacular houses using traditional building techniques on the Himalayan Plateau, located in Ladakh province in Leh old town. As an intern, I was given a unique opportunity to practice indigenous design and learn building skills from experienced carpenters, masons, artisans, stone-layers and adobe plasterers. I was able to work on-site, breaking and shaping Granite cubic blocks for the walls of a traditional museum of Ladaki archaeology and historical anthropology.

I often spent the hottest mid-day hours drawing in the shaded office around a courtyard, where the other volunteers ate dinner and shared stories. The volunteers came from all over the world, including Cuba, Japan, Germany, Hong Kong, Portugal and Northern Ireland. My task was to hand-draw a design for two traditional houses. These heritage houses were ruined in Leh old town and they were currently lying empty and derelict. The organisation restores these properties and maintains the historic load-bearing walls to make them functional. I referred to my own building experience on-site with the Ladaki masons and carpenters to design a pragmatic layout, keeping with the indigenous construction techniques and scale of the small dwellings in the old town. Influenced by Tibetan builders, these building techniques have changed very little since the 6th century A.D.

During my free time, I had many amazing opportunities and to my surprise, I met and shook hands with the Dalai Lama! He is the living head of Buddhism and highly respected in Leh, where 80% of the people are Buddhists. I also had the chance to visit a hot spring from volcanic-heated water and took a ride on a desert camel.

I would like to thank the AIA UK Chapter, Noel Hill and Michael Lischer - without them this project would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the volunteers at the Tibet Heritage Fund and Andre Alexander, the founding Architect who accepted me as a volunteer to design and build indigenous architecture in Leh town.

