

The Design Group Road Show's next appearance was at the BCS Annual Symposium

We all met after dinner and a quick visit to the bar, on the Friday evening. As usual there was an excellent turnout and all involved seemed keen to partake in the design challenge Alan and I had planned.

As many of you know it is vitally important for all cartographers once in a while to put the mouse aside and get back to the heart of the matter, using coloured pencils and our imaginations!

The following challenge was set to the three teams of cartographers (willing victims):

On my holiday, I travelled from Brazil to New Zealand. On the way, I visited

- Hawai and saw the Hula Girls
- Florida and visited Disneyland
- Rome and saw the Tivoli Fountain
- Egypt and saw the Pyramids
- Nepal and went trekking in the mountains
- Australia and visited Ayres Rock
- finally ending up in New Zealand

Each team was asked to design a map explaining this trip. One of the aims of this exercise was to see how effectively we can design for our users. We therefore gave each team a different scenario from which to approach their maps.



The first team were given a pack of crayons and were told that they were a five year old boy who was drawing the map for their best friend who was also five years old. This group regressed to the correct age group in seconds and through a fever of activity managed to produce a masterpiece of cartographic



design. Seemingly directed by Mike Wood (five and a half years old, from Aberdeen) the group produced a pictorial strip map. The two and a half metre map graphically communicated the boy's holiday with the aid of beautiful hula girls, Yaks and strange looking aircraft. I must admit it has been a long time since I saw such a mature group of people having so much fun with their colouring pencils.

The second group were supplied with a pack of felt tip pens and told that they were a fifty year old who had always wanted to undertake such a world trip. On his return had been asked by his boss to give a presentation about his travels. This boss, at twenty five years, had already been travelling a lot and spent most of his spare time snow boarding and kite surfing, much to the envy of his employees. The resulting map was a very interesting illustration of the man's travels around the globe. The mountains of Nepal and the San Andreas Fault were very cleverly represented and 'gold star' goes to the group for the simplicity of the map.



The third group were asked to produce the map as a nineteen year old man who was trying to explain his travels to his hard-of-hearing grandmother. The team were given the trusty coloured pencils for their designs and the resulting map is a very diagrammatic depiction of the journey. The additional design materials demonstrated a lot of brainstorming and some very good ideas can be seen in development.

Thank you to all of you who took part. It is wonderful to see that you can put yourselves so effectively into the shoes of your users, especially those who are really five years old at heart!

Susie Hart



BCS Design Group Social

The Design Group Party, as usual, continued the academic discussions on after we all left the Warrior. Conversation was in full swing on the veranda of Rees Hall, with the moonlight dancing on the sea, when we were asked to move our delegation into the bar.

Alan continued to amaze us all with his yo-yo skills, whilst others set the world to rights in the customary fashion of not being able to remember the solution in the morning. It was lovely to see everyone again and to talk about what the past, present and future hold for many of us.

Although many planned to go on the SAGA mystery tour the next morning (Nick Tasker having got a sneak preview), it seems that the numbers on the coach were dramatically less than was anticipated the night before.

Thank you to all those who supplied refreshments and those who participated in their disposal.

Susie