Mapping Together in York with the Society of Cartographers

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Urban Graphics
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Art and Cartography
pages 18-19

Winter 2015 – £3.00
As Restless Earth Co-Ordinator, I will provide an update on the goings on at RE and show how amazing the last few years have been visiting the schools. Many thanks to Peter Jones for the tireless work and huge efforts and many, many thanks to the volunteers for taking your time out to support Restless Earth. Also thanks to your employers. I still need your help! - Keep your eyes peeled for the RE roadshow announcements!!

BCS Website News - please see how the website is progressing and being bought into 2016.

Finally and most importantly - Welcome to the new President Dr. Alex Kent and farewell and thank you to the Immediate Past President Peter Jones.

By Alice Gadney

Council Members: Ken Atherton, Richard Carpenter, David Forrest, Jane Sprague.

Hon Secretary – Tim Rideout

Hon Treasurer – Jim Nicoll

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Best Wishes,

Peter Jones, BCS President

Notes from our President

After three years in the post of president, this is my last article for Maplines and a chance to both reflect and look forward. It has been a very busy period and I like to think that I leave the President’s post with the Society in at least as good health if not better.

Membership has increased over the period, but that is not the only measure of a healthy society, although it certainly suggests that we are doing things right if we can continue to attract new members when I know that other professional bodies are struggling to maintain their membership base.

I like to think that the society represents the broad range of interests within the cartographic industry and beyond, with something that will appeal to a wide variety of people. If we consider the cartographic industry that too has experienced a major revolution in the last few years and we have arrived at the point where pretty much anyone can make a map. Arguably that has always been the case and it is more a case of anyone can make a map and get it widely ‘published’ via the Internet. This democratisation is a great thing in opening up the industry, removing some of the mystique and encouraging everyone to ‘have a go’. My only concern is that there hasn’t been a commensurate growth in cartographic education and only a minority of those creating maps will probably have had some formal cartographic training. For those with a good eye for design and compilation that is probably not too worrying but there are a lot of published maps that are of a very poor standard, don’t get their messages across and could easily be improved by just a few simple changes. I’m not sure that ‘Education, education, education’ should be our watchword going forward but we do need to keep lobbying for greater awareness.

The Restless Earth Programme is something with which I am particularly pleased to have had a chance to be involved. It has been a much greater success that any of us thought when we held the first workshop in Nottingham five years ago. The workshops are still incredibly popular with schools and the programme this year will once again be the biggest yet. The success has been down to a group of people who have worked tirelessly to prepare for, run and then tidy up afterwards. It is a big undertaking for the society but one which has had a huge benefit in increasing our profile and the understanding of why maps are important. Volunteers to help at the workshop are always needed so if there is one being run near you please do come and support your society in a very practical way – it’s hard work but great fun.

Our 50th Anniversary year was also a big milestone for the society. We published an anniversary book (copies still available!), we had some big name speakers lined up for the year including Michael Palin and Nicholas Crane, and we had a very well attended Symposium in Leicestershire. The Symposium saw the heads of the five major map organisations in the UK come together for what we think was the first time. There was a very ambitious programme of events during the year which left us all exhausted but very pleased that we had made the society proud. More recently we have held our first joint event for several years with the Society of Cartographers. There has been ongoing interest from both sides for some time in running an event together but with both bodies celebrating anniversaries in consecutive years, 2015 was the time. Because we set out right from the very start with a joint event very much in mind I would say that it actually worked better than previous attempts at collaboration. It truly felt like a single event rather than two bolted together and gained very positive comments from both parties.

Our Special Interest Groups continue to thrive and are regularly holding events, the website is being redesigned to give it a fresher feel and our publications continue to maintain a high standard. Another big success story has been the BCS Awards which have gone from strength to strength over the last couple of years, such that we had nearly 100 entries across all categories this year, comprising entries from around the globe. The opening up of cartography and map making to far more people has been reflected in our award entries, where many came from non-traditional cartographers. This can only be good for the society in moving forward.

Finally I would like to say thank you to all those who have provided me with an excellent level of support during my time as president. I am truly grateful to everyone who has contributed to the society, supported me as president and has helped to move the society in a positive direction. Any organisation is only as good as its membership and as we are all volunteers it really does do us huge credit that so many are willing to give their time. I wish the new president Dr. Alex Kent all the best in continuing to develop and improve the BCS.

From the Editors & New Council

A s 2015 winds down to the festive period, it’s easy to forget what happened in January! What a full packed 2015 we have had at BCS, Restless Earths, a new President and a brilliant collaboration with the two UK Cartographic societies met up in York in September, shared stories and learned a lot! International Map Year started in September in Rio. Better Mapping Series is starting again in December at the OS in Southampton.

This is the last edition of Maplines for 2015 - full of book reviews and great articles. BCS Members - Ordinary and Corporate are our main contributors and we welcome all articles and imagery. We would love to hear what you are up to or any work you have been doing.

New Council

At the BCS AGM on Tuesday 17th November the following appointments as Officers and Members of Council were made:

President – Alex Kent

Vice President – Ken Atherton

Hon Treasurer – Jim Nicoll

Hon Secretary – Tim Rideout

Council Members:

Ken Atherton, Richard Carpenter, David Forrest, Jane Sprague.

Winter 2015 / Maplines •

visiting the BCS website at www.cartography.org.uk

Visit the BCS website at www.cartography.org.uk

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Richard Phillips Obituary

Please find below a message from Steve Chilton, Chair of Society of Cartographers, to all delegates of the BCS-SoC 2015 Conference:

Very sadly, I have to report that Richard Phillips passed away at the weekend (6th October 2015).

I had the pleasure of following him on to the stage in the programme at the BCS-SoC ‘Mapping Together’ conference last month. He was on fine form that day in his Openstreetmap-based talk, ‘Evesham Mapped’.

I have sent my condolences to the family, and offered a silent prayer for them.

I had this message from his son Will:

“A Tribute to Richard Phillips

“My father died at Worcestershire Royal Hospital on Saturday due to a heart attack he suffered the previous Tuesday. This has come as a shock to everybody who knew him because he had appeared in good health for his age (67 years).”

“Hed was on fine form that day. . .”

Dr Alex Kent

Dr Alex Kent (Vice President of the Society and Editor of The Cartographic Journal) has just been promoted to ‘Reader in Cartography and Geographic Information Science’ at Canterbury Christ Church University. It is the first academic appointment at this level in the UK to explicitly mention ‘Cartography’ since that of John Keates 35 years ago, and reflects a resurgence of the relevance of cartography in research, teaching and in the wider geospatial industry.

New Editors Wanted!

Maplines are looking for a new person to join our editorial team. This is a voluntary position and involves looking for interesting content, arranging supply of reports from regular contributors, editing and reading of articles. Interested? Contact the editorial team at maplines.editors@gmail.com

British Cartographic Society Children’s Map Competition for 2016

The BCS Children’s Map Competition is sponsored by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO). It aims to encourage children’s creative and graphic representation of their environment. The awards are given every two years – running alternately with the ICA’s Barbara Petchenik Children’s World Map Competition – and comprise a prize and certificate for the overall winner in each age group.

The theme for the 2016 competition will be “Our Coastal Heritage”. This could be based on any area or any period – it could show how elements from different periods interact to make up the overall scene or how human and natural forces have changed the land-and sea-scape. Entries may be hand drawn or computer generated (to a maximum size of A3).

There are four age categories (7 to 9; 10 to 11; 12 to 14 and 15 to 16 years). The result will be revealed 31 August 2016 with an overall winner chosen from each category. The closing date for entries will be 26 March 2016.

Full details, including the entry form are available on the society’s website – www.cartography.org.uk – and can be found by following the ‘Awards’ link.

BCS ESRI UK New Mapmaker Award for 2015

The British Cartographic Society is pleased to announce that the winner for its 2015 New Mapmaker award, sponsored by ESRI UK, is the Interactive Atlas of the Polar Regions: An interactive iBook for iPads produced by a group of undergraduate and graduate students enrolled on the Computer-Assisted Cartography course at Oregon State University.

The map can be downloaded from http://cartography.oregonstate.edu/AtlasOfThePolarRegions.html which also has a static (pdf) version available.

For further details of the competition see www.cartography.org.uk/default.asp?contentID=1144
From Moscow to the Minster: The Secret Soviet Mapping of York

S
trolling the picturesque streets of York – the location of this year’s BCS-SoC Conference – it is difficult to imagine such idyllic, meandering thoroughfares as the subject of a highly secret military map produced at the peak of the Cold War. Tourists and shoppers scrolling the ‘City Walls’ in February 1980 would have been blissfully unaware that a highly-detailed plan of the city was rolling off the press in the Russian city of Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg), over 2,000 miles away.

However, York was not alone. The map represented just part of a global military mapping programme undertaken by the Soviet Union’s General Staff throughout the Cold War. Beside thousands of topographic sheets at scales ranging from 1:1,000,000 to 1:25,000, the Red Army produced a separate series of over 2,500 plans of towns and cities around the world, including over 100 in the British Isles.

Initiated by Stalin in the mid-1940s, military city plans were produced in several factories (see excerpt), five large trees in the grounds of the Minster and the route of a former rope ferry in Clementhorpe, are among some of the details not overlooked by the General Staff when compiling the map.

The third is the plan’s striking design; printed on two large-format sheets in ten colours with a very distinctive orange used to demark major roads. Although the plan’s raison d’être remains something of an enigma, still very much subject to speculation, sites of strategic importance are evidently of particular interest. As most city plans in the series, York’s buildings are colour-coded for ease and speed of interpretation.

Military sites or buildings important to communications are marked in green; from the complex of buildings at the former Aerodrome north of the city, to a number of small suburban post offices. Buildings involved in governmental or administrative activities of any kind are coloured violet, including the historic Guildhall (marked ‘town hall’) to the University Campus on the fringe of the city. The use of black to denote industrial buildings ensures that these are visually prominent on the plan, whether a railway depot or a chocolate factory.

All other buildings are brown, although individual building footprints are, on the whole, still shown rather than generalised. All buildings, with the exception of those in brown, are numbered and given to such areas. Fulford Barracks, to the south of the city, is simply marked as ‘Barracks’ on the contemporary Ordnance Survey map at the same scale. Its Soviet counterpart labels individual buildings: a garrison, church, arsenal, and buildings used by infantry and cavalry units, are all individually distinguished.

Attention to detail

A predisposed concern with strategically important sites is displayed in the attention to detail with OS data from the 1920s. These perhaps belatedly found their way to Warsaw Pact cartographers via German Plandefit dossiers from World War Two, which contained annotated reproductions of County Series maps.

Although York may not immediately spring to mind when considering the great flashpoints and prime targets of the Cold War, its inclusion in this remarkable mapping programme highlights just how far-reaching it was. In total secrecy, the Soviet Union completed a standardised series of maps, unmatched before or since both in terms of its geographical coverage and its sheer volume of sheets. To this day, few people have ever seen this plan of York. To those who have, it gives an enlightening snapshot of the elusive world of Soviet military cartography.

By Martin Davis, Canterbury Christ Church University. Martin is undertaking a PhD on Soviet military mapping and belongs to a study group on the topic, alongside John Davies, Alex Kent, John Cruickshank and David Watt.
Earth Observation: It’s Time to Take Another View

Images from space have been used for the creation and updating of mapping for decades. Ever since the inception of satellite image processing users have been accessing the data to both create new maps and update existing ones. It is fair to say that sources from space have not delivered everything a cartographer needs, resolution being the most limiting factor. However, this has been offset by the ability to see in wavelengths of light other than red, green and blue, thus enhancing the ability to map features such as geology and vegetation. Unless you have been monitoring the remote sensing industry, you may not be aware of a quiet revolution going on.

The Right Data on the Right Day

For most cartographic purposes, earth observation data tends to be better if you access the visible and near-infra-red elements of the spectrum (rather than radar). However, if you do, then clouds tend to get in the way. This has previously meant that you could not get the data you want of the area you need in the timescale required.

Not anymore! Where satellites were the playground of governments in the past, a plethora of private companies are now building and launching their own capabilities. From Urthecast and Space Imaging to Planet Labs and Earth-i, these organisations are focused on small, lightweight and cost-effective sensors that can be launched in constellations. So long as resolutions of a few metres is acceptable, then welcome to the world where almost anywhere could be imaged two to three times a day. Cloud will still be present, but the statistical likelihood of available imagery is so much greater, allowing users to rely on a steady stream of quality images. Along with availability, both the resolution and range of spectral bands is also increasing. Resolutions of 50cm+, delivered with vastly improved positional accuracy, suddenly means the range of map scales viable to update with satellite imagery has increased dramatically.

Getting Access to What You Know Is There

So, there is potentially a huge amount of data ready to access and use, but where is it and how do you get access?

Traditionally, satellite imagery has been accessed through specialist companies or, in the last 10 years, via the web. This has not been an easy process. There is still a clear reliance by many companies offering data on the user having a reasonable level of expertise to select the right image of the right area. From complex geographic search parameters (row and path) to product level, view angle, likely cloud cover, file format etc. For the untrained user this can be more than a little challenging. Furthermore, the business model behind the companies has also rather dictated to the user how they “buy” the data. If your site is across two scenes it is quite possible that both would have to be bought, even if you are only using a fraction of each.

Again things have changed. There is a “coming together” of the organisations that provide the data and those that offer the tools to process it. The technology model that has moved from specialist importers to direct read has advanced again. Companies are now forming strategic alliances that allow seamless discovery, access, payment and processing within a single environment. Probably the biggest and most advanced of these is the recent strategic agreement signed between Hexagon Geospatial (owners of the ERDAS IMAGINE and ER Mapper software) and Airbus (owners of the SPOT, Pléiades and TerraSAR-X constellations). Whilst details are still emerging, this is likely to offer the opportunity to create monitoring services of a specific area that seamlessly allow the capture and use of data within a single cloud environment – including novel approaches to the purchase and licensing.

Big Data Never Seemed So Big

With all changes in opportunity there comes additional challenges and managing this tsunami of new satellite imagery is just one. Realising the potential requires a completely new approach to access, management and processing. Again the industry appears to be standing up to the challenge. If you combine the huge amount of data referenced above with the innovative approach to access outlined and then linked to the processing engine, you could create a seamless product generation programme. It is here the power of the cloud comes into its own. Traditionally, you required high-powered software to process the large images. You also needed high-powered hardware and this was expensive. The entire approach was costly to the end user and those companies wishing to exploit earth observation needed to be convinced of its benefit before investing in sizeable capital investment.

From 2016 onwards, this is likely to change forever. With the ability to create your image analytics directly on the cloud and link to the data (on the cloud or elsewhere), you can cost-effectively create entire programmes seeking to extract business information from satellite imagery. For example, you need to create a map update programme for a rapidly changing city. By submitting the area of interest (perhaps the extent of the current city) to the cloud, you can link to those satellite sources most appropriate / within budget / with the best chance of capture. You can then create one or more “processes” that identify and perhaps classify change. These are linked to the data on the cloud and the system is engaged.

Below: Landsat8 image of New York.

So What!

It frankly does not matter how good the data is, how fast you can access or how powerful the analytics are – if the output is not understandable. It is pointless if the end client cannot see the key changes / developments, or their immediate impact on his or her responsibility within a matter of seconds of viewing. For this to be truly successful, the output needs to be made easy and output understandable. It is pointless if the end client cannot see the key changes / developments within a matter of seconds of viewing. For this to be truly successful, the output needs to be made easy and output understandable.

Understood?

So to the final challenge of all: If we are to fully embrace and exploit the rise of this brave new world, we have to make the output understandable. It is pointless if the end client cannot see the key changes / developments, or their immediate impact on his or her responsibility within a matter of seconds of viewing. For this to be truly successful, the output needs to be made easy and output understandable. It is pointless if the end client cannot see the key changes / developments, or their immediate impact on his or her responsibility within a matter of seconds of viewing. For this to be truly successful, the output needs to be made easy and output understandable.

By Andy Wells
At the BCS AGM on the 17th November, Martin Lubikowski, Chair of the Publications Committee, introduced a short presentation to update members on progress of the design and construction of the new website.

The presentation was given by Ann Goodwin of Win Marketing. She gave a short outline of Win Marketing followed by an outline of the structure of the new website and then showing the proposed design of the pages. This was well received by members who asked Ann for further clarification on some of the aspects of the new site.

It is hoped that the new site will go live early in 2016.

The one-day Gough Map Symposium took place in the Weston Library, Oxford on Monday 2 November 2015. It was attended by 75 delegates including 15 speakers from the academic world. There were four sessions during the day chaired by our host Nick Miller, Catherine Delano-Smith and Peter Barber.

For those unfamiliar with the Gough Map it was made in the late Middle Ages, drawn in pen and ink with coloured washes on two pieces of vellum stitched together and measures approximately 553mm x 1164mm. It is a map of Great Britain depicting rivers, towns and cities with what appears to be, at first sight, roads linking the latter. The rivers are more prominent than the ‘roads’ which might properly be better described as ‘routes’. London and York have their text in gold. As yet there is nothing in the literature to explain why. A thought – Lambeth Palace was built in the 13th century so London and York hosted the powerful Archbishops and hence their importance. The mapping of England is good, Wales less so and Scotland appears as a blob. Subsequent military adventures would improve the quality of the geographic information of Scotland. The map was donated to the Bodleian Library in 1809 by Richard Gough who had acquired it in an auction in 1774 – hence its name ‘The Gough Map’. The Lot number, 405, can still be seen on the back of the map.

The presenters had just 20 minutes each to make their point. The topics covered included: map conservation, multi-spectral and 3D scanning, Raman spectroscopy, ecclesiastical connections, sands and rivers, the shipwreck scene, the red lines and pinholes, place signs and names, Gough’s North West and why the Gough Map was made. Then Nick summed up with ‘the picture so far’.

The general consensus was that the Gough Map was used as a working copy of the original. The most interesting outcome for me was that the map was clearly a working document. A study of the text has shown that the map was edited by more than one scribe and that there had been work done and alterations made over a period of about 75 years. As can be seen the label for Lewes has been moved from centre left to below but it is unclear as to the reason. Largely discredited but romantic, the ship might relate to the fate of the Maid of Norway who died in the Orkneys on her way from Scandinavia to marry Edward of Caernarvon in 1290. The scans revealed and confirmed suspicions that originally the ship’s mast was unbroken. The break in the mast is unnatural which suggests that the work might have been done in a hurry with little thought to reality.

So why was the map produced and what was it used for? As I mentioned, this copy is regarded as a working document, but for whom? At this stage no one can be sure but it may be that it was used by members of the Royal Household and/or senior clergy to plan visits around the country. No matter what, it is a fascinating document which will continue to challenge the academic community and be a topic for debate.

By Peter Jolly
The 2015 combined BCS-SoC Conference in York was well attended by representatives from all areas of the business of maps, and with corporate members filling the exhibition area, there was a real opportunity to network. It was great to see such a good turn out, thank you for your support. If you have any comments you would like me to put to the BCS Council, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The BCS gives you the opportunity to promote your business to the wider cartographic community, please make sure you are taking full advantage of your membership. The Maplines editors are always on the lookout for corporate news, new products and business opportunities and it is free, so it’s a great way to raise your profile within the cartographic community. Corporate membership continues to grow and the diversity of activities within the membership increases, which can only be good news.

Alan Grimwade, BCS Corporate Liaison Officer, alangrimwade@cosmographics.co.uk

. . . Continued from page 02

At the Council meeting the following day, in accordance with the Constitution and bye laws, BCS Council approved the following appointments: Vice President – Ken Atherton

As Ken had been elected to council, this left a space; Alice Gadney was also confirmed as Restless Earth Co-ordinator and as BCS cannot pay members, Alice resigned her membership and her post on the council.

The two candidates with the next highest votes from the election were then appointed to Council: Paul Naylor for a two year term (vice Ken Atherton) and Warren Vick for a one year term (vice Alice Gadney).

Tim Rideout had agreed to continue as Hon Secretary for one additional year and council will actively seek a replacement for 2016.

Peter Jones, BCS Immediate Past President

- A recently discovered map of Middle Earth annotated by Tolkien has recently gone on sale. The map was found in a copy of The Lord of the Rings at Blackwells in Oxford and is on sale for £60,000. The map can be viewed at the shop.
- A Google Earth image at www.heatmapnews.com/ shows real time global incidents of internet activity, related to news stories, by the hour, day or week, or any particular day. As I write, the day after the attacks in Paris, the city shows as a white hotspot as worldwide media covers the events.

The website at www.iom.int/world-migration shows an interesting interactive map of where migrants to a particular country hail from, as well as where emigrants from the country move to.

- The Ordnance Survey have jumped onto the current trend for adult colouring in, with the production of images derived from street mapping. Have a go in the sample below of Edinburgh:
Over the centuries there have been villages, towns and cities that have grown and developed due to population increase and industrial development — but why were they there in the first place and who designed them?

Geography, political boundaries and natural resources are some of the reasons for location of conurbations. Historically and as of now, people live along lines of communication — roads, rivers, rails and nearby sources of work.

Urban Graphics — a collective of cartographers and graphic designers have over 25 years of successful projects being delivered.

Communication whether be spoken, written or drawn is always a key to any successful mapping project. The urban design clients consist of planners in local authorities, house builders and private companies. All have different budgets and time constraints and differing levels of communication.

‘Let the professionals do what they do’ but on the other side the clients should understand what they need to communicate to their contractors. A smooth process of work schedule and updates is always key. Nothing snous be overeved oon e the pat. The re are always changes!

Attracting Inward Investment

Communicating the regeneration vision for your area to help attract developers, investors and businesses is now at its peak. Stimulating interest and unlocking the potential of developments in a crowded market place is not always straightforward.

Demonstrating the opportunities for growth and investment is a fundamental part of facilitating the story of change and inviting enterprise.

Our communication tools, strategies and campaigns play a significant role in facilitating regeneration initiatives both here in the UK and internationally by delivering clear and coherent messages.

Knowing that every map we create is a unique opportunity to influence both your target audience and the built environment.

Be Central Bedfordshire Interactive mapping goes live

Be Central Bedfordshire has launched their online interactive map allowing users to integrate key points together with development and investment opportunities in the region. Not only does the map illustrate the geography and context, it also demonstrates the scale of opportunity and how the area will develop over time.

The innovative map, which is complemented by a promotional film, has already been an excellent promotional tool and has captured the interest of developers and investors. It demonstrates the wonderful mix of future development projects and why Central Bedfordshire is an ideal location to work or site your business. The interactive key can be delayed to focus on particular land use, or specific sites can be zoomed in on and more detailed information brought up at a click of a button!

The designers at Urban Graphics set out to achieve both a visually stunning graphic, as well as an intuitive and accessible functional map. It has already been recommended for several awards and has gained considerable interest from the British Cartographic Society.

Jason Longhurst, Director of Regeneration and Business at Central Bedfordshire had the following to say about the value of the interactive map and the work of Urban Graphics: “Central Bedfordshire Council had a requirement for an innovative visually lead, intuitive interactive map and digital media to effectively demonstrate the range of exciting new development opportunities in the area. The interactive map and film produced by Urban Graphics for the new http://maps.urban-graphics.co.uk/central-bedfordshire/

Investment website, has enhanced our customers experience and generated much favourable feedback from users. We have worked closely with all of the team on the project and were very pleased with the high quality of the final products, which will assist us in promoting the opportunities and growing the awareness and profile of Central Bedfordshire’s key developments, as part of our efforts to attract new investment to the area through a hierarchy of importance, will add gravity to your vision whilst captivating your target audience”.

Royal Opening for Borders to Edinburgh Railway

The Borders Railway is the longest new railway to open in the UK for over a hundred years. Passing through the beautiful rolling hills of the Scottish Borders and Midlothian, it will connect Edinburgh with Tweedbank and will be a catalyst for growth and development in the region.

It will improve links to the rest of Scotland and the UK’s rail network — and make other transport hubs such as airports easier to reach. It will mean the region is commutable for its residents and open it up to millions of potential visitors.

This is a once-in-a-generation undertaking and will transform the region. The line will not only bring people who live in the Borders and Midlothian to work and play in Edinburgh, it will also bring people who live in Edinburgh to work and play in the Borders and Midlothian. Operational services will start running on the new railway in September 2015 and with it, a bright new chapter in the history of The Borders and Midlothian will begin.

Project Manager, Stuart Kirross had the following to say about Urban Graphics: “Urban Graphics has done an excellent job producing an interactive map and website to host the Borders Railway Inward Investment Prospectus. The three local authorities involved are very pleased with the final product, which includes an excellent film that will help to raise the profile of the project with developers, policymakers, and other key stakeholders. Throughout the project, Urban Graphics has shown a great appreciation of our requirements and its project team has developed a very professional and open working relationship with us.”

By Bally Meeda, Managing Director, Urban Graphics
Reflections on ICC2015

Rio de Janeiro, home to the famous 30-metre-high Christ the Redeemer statue (affectionately referred to by locals as ‘Christo’), and a vibrant population of 6 million, played host to the 27th International Cartographic Conference (ICC) from 23rd to 28th August 2015. Snatching the vote ahead of Washington, D.C. at the General Assembly in Paris back in 2011, with its favelas and funiculares, Rio is a breathtaking city in many ways, and it was an incredible privilege to be able to join a thousand or so cartographically-minded souls to participate in the world’s foremost cartographic conference. I will never forget whisking back those curtains on my first morning after that long flight to reveal one of the most spectacular views I have ever seen: a panorama sweeping down from Corcovado and Christ the Redeemer to Copacabana Beach and the South Atlantic Ocean. (What possible comparison could there be, apart from, perhaps, “Where the Mourne Mountains sweep down to the sea?”)

Situated in Cidade Nova and just around the corner from the Sambadrome, the SuAmerica Convention Center was the main conference venue. This large modern building incorporated a good combination of large and small rooms with a central dining area (which, thankfully, was furnished with tables and chairs) and ample space for the exhibitions. The entire conference was housed on one floor of the building, so it was handy to be able to move easily between technical sessions and the exhibition areas. The neighbourhood surrounding the Convention Center was not a particularly healthy one for meeting and eating at the end of the day and I was advised to hold my first international meeting of the Journal’s Editorial Board elsewhere; Copacabana Beach seemed to be an eminently plausible alternative and happened to be where most international delegates were staying.Metro travel around Rio was both safe and efficient, even if the interiors of some stations seemed to resemble a subterranean lair belonging to one of Tolkien’s dragons. Going anywhere by taxi offered a different (if ‘gripping’) experience, where any given driver might, for example, decide to simultaneously watch TV and hold a conversation on a mobile phone while jumping successive red lights. (A contrast might be drawn with Santiago, Chile, perhaps, where the climax of my taxi experience was an attempt to puncture the silence with a conversation that started “Are you from Santiago? We’re not.”)

As usual, the ICC scientific programme was packed and wide-ranging, with over 800 presentationsorganised into 36 different themes. The overall quality of the papers was very good; there were some truly inspiring talks and others that spent too long defining problems rather than offering solutions. Some speakers did not show up, and, in particular, only one presenter out of four came along to the session that I chaired. (I am starting to wonder if this only happens to me; at Santiago in 2009 I had to pass the time with a conversation on a mobile phone while waiting for the next speaker to show up.)

Announcing their presence with a resounding “We are here!” to the world of mapping, of the 27 stands in the International Technical-Commercial Exhibition the largest and most impressive was that of the Chinese National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation (plausible alternative and was about four times the size of the next biggest). Showcasing the latest developments in mapping, the adjoining International Cartographic Exhibition included over 400 digital and printed entries from 29 countries. As a member of the international ICA jury for its design awards, it was excellent to see such a high standard of cartography throughout and especially to be able to access a growing number of digital entries with ease.

The high point of the social programme was the gala dinner, which was held at the Clube Naval Pirarucu overlooking the lagoon (Lagôa Rodrigo de Freitas). With a local samba band to entertain us during our hearty meal, all that was needed was some dancing action, which, I am pleased to say, was eventually provided – albeit by the more talented delegates!

ICC2015 Rio de Janeiro successfully combined all the elements of a memorable conference and provided a well-organised programme of sessions and exhibitions in a stunning location. Preparations are well underway for Washington, D.C. and I have no doubt that the International Cartographic Conference will continue to go from strength to strength.

By Dr Alexander Kent, Deputy National Delegate, President of the British Cartographic Society and Editor of The Cartographic Journal.
The legacy of Fernão Vaz Dourado

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, Fernão Vaz Dourado’s atlas emerged as one of the treasures of Portugal’s national patrimony, since the charts contained therein proved the importance, greatness and originality of the Portuguese geographical discoveries. In the context of exhibiting the influence and the development of the colonial powers, the codex corroborated how much, supposedly, Europe owed to Portuguese cartography and nautical sciences, as well as Portugal’s right to many of the territories depicted in those hydrographical charts. Keeping in mind the iconography of the 1571 atlas of Vaz Dourado and its spatial distribution over the diverse territories depicted, it can be considered an apologetic work for the Portuguese overseas expansion.

Fernão Vaz Dourado was, as he repeatedly identified himself to be in the 1568, 1571 and 1580 atlases, a “frontiersman of the lands of India”. The military nature of the tasks that would have been attributed to him in his status of an officer at a “forward post” appears to be an attribute that can safely be assumed to have been typical of a “frontiersman”. Fernão Vaz Dourado would thus have been an individual who would undoubtedly have combined a sound knowledge of a terrain’s topography with military skills or who, on the other hand, transposed his military skills and familiarity with the terrain to the field of topography and cartography.

As stated in the description by Armando Cortesão – to date the only scholar to have systematically studied this cartographer and his work –, Fernão Vaz Dourado’s Universal Atlas contained the following title and subtitle in its frontispiece: “World map prepared by Fernão Vaz Dourado, frontiersman of these lands, which encompasses all the kingdoms, lands [and] islands around the world with their routes and heights and angles, [made] in Goa [in] 1571.” (original text in Portuguese). “Universal and complete hydrographic map in the authentic Portuguese tradition. Description authored by Ferdinand Vaz Dourado, cosmographer, in the city of Goa in the year 1571” (original text in Latin).

Although the work does not include an overall image, a mappa mundi or planisphere, the idea that the sum of the partial charts would provide such an overview is implicit. The “mappa mundi” as a synonym for “atlas”, has been described on the basis of the parts that make up the whole: the kingdoms, lands and islands on the earth’s surface. The technique to locate each of the elements is also indicated by the additional information (direction lines, instructions for maritime itineraries) and the latitudes, observable by the corresponding scales inscribed on each folio.

The atlas nowadays comprises a set of eighteen illuminated folios, in fine, white parchment, of a quality that is superior to the parchment used in other works by this author. Fifteen of these folios are hydrographical charts portraying different parts of the earth’s surface, while the other three folios contain cosmographical information: rules and tables with solar declination figures. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the atlas contained two more folios, viz. the frontispiece and the chart corresponding to the Eastern Mediterranean.

The information that the atlas was made in Goa has induced analysts to attempt to identify exotic references in the drawings, inks and colours. Researchers have sought to find signs of a mingling of cultures, sciences and techniques in the Portuguese empire. In the words of Varnhagen: “The inks are outstanding and appear to be oriental, which would be quite natural given that the artist lived in Goa”. According to Armando Cortesão: “The execution of the drawings throughout the atlas has been done in a curious and elegant manner. Exotic illuminations, rendered in Indian inks and gilt, are exceptional, seducing the onlooker by the freshness of the tones and the good taste with which they have been blended together”. The widespread circulation of books and documents (manuscript and printed works), techniques and artists, materials and products, between Europe & Asia and Asia & Europe, hinders unequivocal conclusions about the unique originality of the maps produced.

In a quest for cartographic heroes, Armando Cortesão defended that it was the work of a single author, rather than that of a workshop and a group of artists and technical specialists. He even believed that it was possible for a cartographer to prepare such a deluxe atlas in a year of continuous work. Considering everything that is known today about the cartographic workshops in the port cities of the Mediterranean, it is clear that such productions have required a team of cartographers and workshop masters, with the knowledge and facilities of the time.

The Universal Atlas owned by the Archivo Nacional de la Torre de Tombo of Lisbon has now a new life. M. Moleiro who, according to Varnhagen, “goes to astonishing lengths to replicate the look, the feel and the smell of the originals”, has reproduced it faithfully and is pleased to make a special offer only for Maplines’ readers. Now, you will be able to enjoy in your own home this lavish cartographic gem at an exceptional price. For more information contact M. Moleiro and mention this article, this is a unique opportunity for all genuine lovers of exceptional atlases and maps.

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4: See the recent studies by Ramon PUJADES I BATTALLER, particularly Les Cartes Portolanes: la representação medieval d’uma mar所学校 (Barcelona, 2007).
In September cartographers gathered in York for Mapping Together the BCS - SoC Conference 2015. This was the first time in several years that the two societies had come together to host a joint conference, bringing together the best of the Symposium and Summer School under one roof. The event saw an excellent attendance with over 160 delegates registered and gave cartographers from all market sectors the opportunity to network and connect with colleagues from across the globe. Making it a true celebration of the ICA International Year of the Map.

The first day comprised the Special Interest Groups (SIG) workshops. The Map Curators’ Group theme was New Maps for Old and discussed maps from across the globe and across the decades. The Historical Military Mapping Group focused on three time periods of mapping, the First World War, Second World War and Since the War. Finally, the GIS SIG ran its second Mapathon where attendees brought their own map making software and applied their cartographic skills to map data supplied by the Mammal Society. This event was free to attend and the GIS SIG would like to extend its thanks to Ordnance Survey and Steer Davies Gleave for the sponsorship that made this possible.

The formal proceedings of the day was the Helen Wallis Memorial Lecture. For those new to the Society Helen Wallis was the Map Curator at the British Library between 1967-1987 and the first female President of the Society 1972-1974. Helen is remembered in the society through the biennial lecture which this year was given by Rose Mitchell from the National Archives, Kew. Rose gave a fascinating talk based on her and Andrew James recently published book Making of Maps: The Untold Stories. The presentation highlighted some of the magnificent maps included within the book which celebrates seven centuries of maps held in the National Archives at Kew, including those found in 14th Century manuscripts, early estate maps, sea charts, maps used in military campaigns, and maps from treaties.

The evening was spent networking and catching up with colleagues and friends. Miles Irving, from SoC organised an excellent ice breaker which tested our global geography as we were guided blind folded to position cities across a map of the world.

The following two days of conference were packed with exhilarating presentations, covering a plethora of topics from Mapping Yorkshire to Maps on Apps and 3D Views. Within the Mapping Yorkshire session we were pleased to include a presentation from John Henry of
the History of Geology Group, The Geological Society. His presentation entitled William Smith in Yorkshire was particularly poignant as 2015 is the 200 year anniversary of the William Smith Geological Map of England and Wales – referred to as the map that changed the world. Completing this session were Giles Darikes presenting on The British Historical Atlas of York and David Overton from SplashMaps.

Bringing us right up to date was the New Cartography session which included Danny Dorling, President of Society of Cartographers, on Mapping the UK elections, and Maps on Apps - a session including new and developing Apps from BGS, The Coal Authority and Ordnance Survey.

The workshops received considerable praise this year due to the variety of topics covered. One of the highlights was definitely Ken Field and Steve Chilton’s Live Map Critique which should definitely be considered as a regular feature. Other workshops considered technical advances, changes to accessibility of data and Maptime – a whole new community of mappers.

The conference also played host to the BCS and SoC annual awards, both of which had entries displayed and awards presented as part of the gala dinner. The recipients of the BCS Award were James Cheshire & Oliver Uberti from University College London (UCL) for London: The Information Capital. An outstanding publication that will change the way you view the city, find out more at http://theinformationcapital.com/stunning-cartography/

The final day of the event was dedicated to the President’s Annual Golf Tournament, impressively won by Andy Wilson, Victoria Litho.

It was a busy week in York; the overall the reviews from our delegates were extremely positive with several commenting on the positive aspects of the two societies holding joint events. The Programme Committee will continue to work with our colleagues from SoC and maybe we won’t have to wait so long next time before we join forces again to bring the cartographic community together.

The final words come from two of the delegates as I couldn’t put it better myself: “Informative, great to meet a wide scope of people from the cartographic industries, I’m left feeling motivated and energised with ideas”.

I will be back next year, Fiona Cocks, Chair of Programme Committee

“I found it very interesting and made me want to go back to my cartographic roots”

“Great to see old friends and colleagues and meet new people”

“Well done”

“The British Cartographic Society would like to thank all the sponsors for the 2015 York Conference! See you next year!”
This new book from Phaidon is a fascinating compilation of over 300 maps, documenting the history of cartography from the earliest maps through to modern and stylish images.

Selected by an international panel of curators, academics and collectors, the compendium covers all aspects of cartography and GIS, often contrasting very different maps to illustrate alternative views of the same area. The book emphasises the art of cartography, and draws the reader to consider the aesthetic of maps, rather than the science: “this book puts the emphasis back on the experience of viewing rather than of describing.”

All maps are shown as full page colour images, with a short description of the history, symbology and provenance. From the Silos Apocalypse map of 1109, through the Hereford Mappa Mundi and Weston Tapestry of Warwickshire, right up-to-date with the 2013 Tweetping map of internet activity and 2015 Google Maps, the book covers all ages and styles of cartography.

The book pairs maps of similar style or geographic coverage on a spread, so the reader can contrast the images. Thus, an early Rand McNally map of the USA from 1892 is placed opposite a 1938 American football map. The comparison is interesting between a more familiar style of topographic map and the bright pennants and cartoon-like images on the football map.

All scales of map are pictured, from world maps to street mapping and estate plans. Infographics, building plans and star charts are also covered.

Many different materials appear, so we can see that maps are not constrained to paper. The book shows maps on tapestry, soap, wood, clay and neon.

There is a detailed chronology of the development of cartography at the back of the book, from prehistoric cave paintings depicting the stars, through to the 2014 USGS digital map of the surface of Mars.

The book is a wonderful compendium of the history of cartography, using unusual examples to illustrate the view of maps as art. It is a coffee-table style book to dip into and enjoy and will appeal to anyone with an interest in maps, geography and art.

Phaidon have kindly offered a 35% discount on the RRP of £39.95 for Maplines readers. At the checkout, when ordering at www.phaidon.com, use the discount code MAP35, which will be valid until April 2016.

Images from the book.
Right: Map of Britain.
Below: Map of Paris.