Welcome to the Spring and the beginning of a busy year for BCS. What plans have you got for the year? BCS is kicking off 2009 by announcing new dates for two of its main events, the Symposium, and the Map Curators Group Workshop, see pages 2, 20 & 9 for further details.

Where exactly is Kyrgyzstan? Paraguay? Solomon Islands? Are you sure you know? Is your geographical knowledge as good as you think or do you struggle whenever a map is shown on the BBC/ITV/Sky news? In a knowledge as good as you think or do sure you know? Is your geographical knowledge is getting poorer? Peter Vujakovic, investigates, see pages 6 & 7.

This issues holds a special treat, our first ever double Quiz, sponsored by NGA & the AA. If, like me, you followed the first software available for drawing maps. We are looking for letters, articles, submissions or opinions. The idea is that these articles should provide BCS members with a comprehensive overview of what software is out there and what it can do for the cartographer. Don’t hold back... send in your material.

In the light of the recent discussion on Carto-Soc, Maplines is looking to do a series of articles highlighting the different software available for drawing maps. We are looking for letters, articles, submissions or opinions. The idea is that these articles should provide BCS members with a comprehensive overview of what software is out there and what it can do for the cartographer.

Notes from our President

Just before Christmas, a colleague sent me the US President’s list of the top ten predictions for 2009 that would impact on their interest area of ‘promoting the application of geospatial technologies in a holistic and multidisciplinary manner for the stewardship of our planet’. The targeted audience includes professionals in transportation, utilities, policy & planning, and natural resources & the environment. Second on the list of predictions is ‘Cartography for Online Differentiation’ and an explanation that the growing competition between online mapping portals will lead to innovation in style and presentation of the mapping content ‘that may spark a resurgent interest in the art of cartography’.

Whilst I naturally applaud this realisation I’m unsettled by the thought that good cartography may only be seen as a unique selling point by those supplying the technologies and not seen as a fundamental requirement for any mapping service. It doesn’t have to be complex mapping; even the simplest of data visualisations will benefit from cartographic principles. But what really troubles me is why hasn’t our voice been heard by the technologists and how is it that the technologists here announcing a possible re-birth of cartography?

I think I saw part of the answer when I very recently presented Ordnance Survey in a series of articles highlighting the different software available for drawing maps. We are looking for letters, articles, submissions or opinions. The idea is that these articles should provide BCS members with a comprehensive overview of what software is out there and what it can do for the cartographer.

See you in Newport Pagnell! Lynda, Martin, Adam & Mark, Maplines Editors

BCS 2009 Mapping at Work

Harben House, Newport Pagnell, Wednesday 17 June to Saturday 20 June. See page 20 for further details.

This is a new time of year for the Symposium, brought about to avoid the perennial clashes with a very busy conference season in September. The Programme is close to being finalised; highlights include a variety of inspiring presentation sessions, a wide range of hands on workshops, the Annual Awards ceremony, and we are delighted to announce that Barbara Bond, a Past President of the BCS, will be delivering this year’s Helen Wallis Memorial Lecture titled Communicating with maps: did the message get through?

The programme will begin on the Wednesday afternoon with a series of events being run by individual Special Interest Groups, the Exhibition opening and networking activities. The GIS Group and the Design Group have already confirmed that they will be running sessions and we hope that the Historical Military Mapping Group will be in a position to confirm their session by mid-April. Full details will be available soon on the website. Thursday 18th June will open with a session entitled New Horizons and will include a presentation from Bob Lilley, BCS President, entitled The British Cartographic Society: A Fresh Vision, based on work that has been taking place at Executive and Council level. We are pleased to announce that Bill Cartwright, the current President of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) will also present within this session.

All of the presentation sessions include a wide range of speakers from a variety of academic, government and commercial backgrounds covering the topics of Mapping the Environment, Mapping on the Web and Symbology and Representation. These reflect some of the topics of key importance to cartography today. The Workshop programme is designed for you to gain practical experience through exercises, discussions and demonstrations. The topics are wide ranging and hopefully there will be something for everyone.

The Programme Committee looks forward to welcoming you back to Harben House.

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The Programme Committee looks forward to welcoming you back to Harben House.

Peter Jones & Fiona Cocks
Cartography is more than just a map

A s a professional cartographer I would like to comment on the proposals made by the BCS Strategic Review Committee. There are many administrative suggestions that are long overdue, but equally there are some disturbing trends and proposals that have severe implications for the continuing existence of the BCS in the industry and which received. Changes are being introduced against the wishes of large sections of the membership and without fully appreciating the consequences. An example of which is the change of the Symposium date from September to June, which the report says was forced upon BCS by the timing of the much larger AGI conference. We have not been forced to move by the timing of the AGI event, but by the trend towards making the BCS a GIS technical support body, already occurring in other organisations. Even if the reason for the move were to be valid, which it is not, not enough thought was given to the consequences which it would not, did not agree to this change, and have chosen to retain their Workshop in September. For legal reasons our AGM has to be held in the Autumn. So it too has to be split off from the Symposium. Where will it be held? Probably at the AGI conference. And if that isn’t enough the report also suggests that the Awards ceremony too could take place separately. You’ve guessed it, at the AGI conference! We cannot afford this fragmentation of our core activities. With the Symposium already farmed out to a private company and the Better Mapping sessions held under the wing of the AGI, it seems that we are incapable of running our own Society these days. If such is the case, it is difficult to see how the BCS can remain independent for much longer.

The question to ask is how the compilers of this report come to find that such fragmentation is beneficial to the Society. None is more curious than the suggestion to change the name to The British Mapping Society. The change is not the issue, but the ethos, the values which it was based. Even if the name remains the same, the thrust of the report is not just a re-branding of the BCS, but the foundation of a different society. It is the suggested change of name that reveals the thinking behind these proposals. The idea of dropping the word ‘cartographic’ from the Society’s title and replacing it with the word ‘mapping’ – because some people think the name is a bit archaic and not broad enough to cover the geo-information industry – is like changing the name of the Royal Photographic Society to The Royal Picture-Taking Society because of the advent of the digital camera. And are we now to share an acronym with the British Menopausal Society? This proposal is so strange that one must ask why it was ever contemplated in the first place. I think the crux of the matter lies in the view of cartography taken by the Review. Two particular references in the report highlight what I am talking about.

The first, on page 9, is that cartography is viewed differently from map making. The former based on the creation of traditional printed maps, the latter being more about maps created from GIS based activities. Who on earth would say that GIS is map making and cartography is not? Only someone without a full understanding of what cartography is all about. I believe that the reason such a remark has found its way into the report is quite simple. The question to ask is how the proposal to change the name of the Symposium already farmed out to a private company and the Better Mapping sessions held under the wing of the AGI, it seems that we are incapable of running our own Society these days. If such is the case, it is difficult to see how the BCS can remain independent for much longer.

The first, on page 9, is that cartography is viewed differently from map making. The former based on the creation of traditional printed maps, the latter being more about

activities, merely operating a group of procedures. The cartographer as HANDYMAN. This aspect has now almost completely transferred to DTP and GIS. The handyman works with automated activities, pre-selected styles, colour ramps and symbols. Sometimes deselecting the defaults to alter the line weights but generally working within a proscribed system. Digital solutions bring a host of new possibilities, saving an awful lot of time and effort, but to a cartographer, the digital is a means, not an end.

Today if you want a garden shed you order one that arrives on a palette. You fix it together over a weekend. You curse over it not quite being straight, but think it just about does the job. You just wanted somewhere to put the lawn mower but before long it is a leaky space for storing rubbish. In hindsight you wish you’d asked someone, but at the time you thought that just about anyone could make a shed. It is thinking like this that leads to so many unreadable maps, and which keeps the business of selling flat pack sheds on pallets so lucrative. But sometimes a handyman is not quite enough. A little more skill and know-how is required.

THE OUTER SHELL Important but peripheral to the core, needing a skilled artisan. The cartographer as JOINER. Establishing a logical hierarchy depending on the purpose of the map, more important, less important, figure ground relationships, legends, balance, harmony, elemental design, letter spacing, layout, readability, colour. This involves not just knowing how to turn off the default selection, but knowing what would be better in its place given the task in hand.

THE CORE Things that are essential, and needing a highly-skilled professional, capable of authoritative cartographic judgements. The cartographer as CABINET-MAKER. Evaluation and verification of sources, degrees of reliability and compilability, the design visualising alternative outcomes, consistency, cartographic credibility, graphic problem solving, and bringing Continua...
Too often the acquisition of basic geographical knowledge (where countries are on the map, the names of state capitals, etc.) is treated as nothing more than a ‘trivial pursuit.’ This would be fair if this knowledge had no direct bearing on real world issues, however as David Lambert of the Geographical Association points out, it is not trivial, but helps us to make sense of the world and face vital issues such as climate change, energy, food production, the ‘war on terror’, water and poverty.

David’s point was quoted in relation to a recent survey that showed that a third of British adults believe that Mt Everest is in Europe. This and other anecdotal evidence suggests that the public are becoming less geographically literate. A National Geographic study in 2006 showed that many young Americans (18-24) have poor geographical knowledge. Only 37% could find Iraq on a map, despite the fact that U.S. troops have been there since 2003, while 20% placed Sudan in Asia. Should we be worried? A comparison of two small-scale studies I conducted about a decade apart suggests that geographical knowledge of young British students might actually be improving, but that large gaps and errors still exist.

The surveys, part of my news media map research, were carried out with first year undergraduates (most also had taken A Level Geography) at Canterbury Christ Church University. Students were asked to name countries on a map of central and Eastern Europe (extended to include areas of the Middle East and southern Asia in the second survey). In both cases familiar states bordering the regions of interest were included to provide context (e.g. Italy, Germany, and India in the later survey). Both studies were aimed at understanding geographical knowledge of geopolitically significant areas in the news. The first survey, involving 47 students, took place in late 1999, following NATO intervention in Yugoslavia. During the first seven months of 2000, 25% of all the maps published in the UK quality press were related to the Kosovo crisis and Balkan region. The second survey, involving 31 students, asked Russian intervention in Georgia (South Ossetia crisis), and during reporting of British military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In August 2008 just under a quarter of all news maps in the UK quality press related to Russia’s activities in Georgia or its geopolitical relationship with Poland and the Ukraine. While many students admit that they did not regularly read the quality press, similar levels of coverage were provided by television news, which most students quote as their main source for information on international affairs.

The 1999 survey showed that the students have a very limited understanding of the geography of the Balkans despite major news coverage, but it also showed their general understanding of the geography of Europe was limited. While Germany received a reasonably high recognition score at 87%, other important states, such as Russia, Greece, and Turkey, were incorrectly identified or left blank by nearly a third of students. Ex-Soviet states fared very poorly, ranging from, at best, 17% for Estonia to none for Moldova. In Eastern Europe, Poland fared best, but was still only recognised by half the students. In the Balkans only four students correctly identified both Serbia and Bosinia, although Croatia, with its more distinctive shape scored better (15%). This contrasts with the more recent survey. Student’s recognition of key states is improved in all cases; Germany 94%, Russia 97%, Greece 74% and Turkey 81%. The Balkans generally remain confused, with Serbia 6% and Bosnia 7% doing marginally less well than years previously, although Albania rises from 6% in 1999 to 26%. The 2008 cohorts knowledge of central and Eastern Europe was certainly better than ten years previously; Poland 84%, Estonia 45% and Moldova at 10%.

The 2008 survey involved a slightly larger geographical area to cover states that had recently received major news coverage related to geopolitical issues. The results for UK students for two key states, Iraq 55% and Iran 32%, show somewhat better results for the UK students, than for the US young adults, Iraq, 37%, Iran 26%, but some caution should be applied in making a comparison between the results as the National Geographic Society study was much larger (510) and included a wider educational range of respondents and reflects conditions two years earlier. Interestingly only 25% of both UK and US respondents could identify Israel. The UK recognition factor for Afghanistan was 35%. These results are less positive given the fact that UK troops have been actively engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan for over half a decade and the region is regularly covered in the news. While a few students muddled Iran and Iraq, etc., this was not a major issue – many simply did not label these states on the map.

Some potentially interesting cartographic issues arise from these results. Israel is often in the news and maps abound showing the disputed territories, but it has a poor recognition factor in both the UK and US surveys. It may well be that its small size on the base map confuses some students. Israel is perceived as a strong regional power, but is less than a tenth of the UK’s land area, and 3% of Texas! If it were shown within its local regional setting its recognition factor might increase. There may be a range of other such factors that affect recognition, for example, the quality of the locator maps that accompanies the main map in many news papers – these can often be of very limited size and quality. There is clearly some interesting research to be undertaken regarding the design quality of many media maps in this context.

While the surveys were linked to awareness of geopolitical regions in the news, there is no sense in which the news media are seen as the only influence on geographical knowledge. A range of other cultural factors will be involved. When, for example, I noted with some surprise that Kazakhstan received a relatively high recognition rate in the 2008 survey (29%), especially when compared, for example with Israel (25%), my twenty-one year old son suggested the ‘Borat factor’ – that many young people will be aware of Kazakhstan through exposure to Borat! Cultural Learning of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan, a 2006 ‘mockumentary’ film starring Sacha Baron Cohen, well-known for his Ali G character. Whether this is true or not, it does point to the potential complexities in trying to understand the role of news media maps, and maps and atlases in general, in generating geographical awareness.

The results as a whole must be treated with a little care, as the intention was simply to provide some background information for a detailed study of news media maps. It does, however, provide an interesting picture of student’s geographic knowledge and suggests that a more systematic survey would be rewarding and of interest to those of us who teach geography or produce maps. Cartography certainly matters, but we need to know more about the role maps play in understanding our views of the world.
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once met, Roger was someone you did not forget for he was a larger than life character. He epitomised the solid virtues so often mentioned in conjunction with maps and mapmakers. He was a Lancashire lad and proud of it. He was also a shrewd tactician with much power and influence would come from acting together, and he was always an active protagonist on the subject of curators: stretching their official library remit to take a keen interest and overt part in the wider field of cartography. It wasn’t enough for Roger to curate maps only from a library standpoint; he felt keenly that curators must know about the processes and history of map and chart making, including the surveying process, design, execution, production, communication and politics of the cartographic process as well as knowing or knowing about the mapmakers personally. He also moved readily into the electronic era. To have someone around with Roger’s redoubtable qualities and of his calibre, knowledge base and expertise was key to the better integration of map curators into a much broader community. We have lost a great proponent of cartography and a man of much personal warmth.

Margaret Wilkes

Bring on the Map Curators

In the second of our spotlights on the BCS Special Interest Groups, we talk to the Map Curators...

The Map Curators’ Group was founded in 1966 as an integral part of the British Cartographic Society to promote the professional development of map curatorship. In 1982 the Group became an organisation in liaison with the Library Association, now CILIP: The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, through which it is recognised as the authoritative body on map librarianship in the UK.

The Map Curators’ Group takes an active part in LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche), Groupe des Cartothécaires de LIBER. It is the contact for IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations) and BRICMICS (British Committee on Map Information and Cataloguing Systems) and used to be one of the five Ordnance Survey Consultative Committees (since disbanded). However, BRICMICS, supported from the British Library Map Library, continues to provide a bi-annual forum for map librarians from many United Kingdom Institutions which hold and deal with maps.

The Group organises training programmes in map librarianship from time to time, the next event is detailed below. They also run an annual Workshop, formerly in conjunction with the BCS Annual Symposium each September, at which members can attend lectures, discuss mutual problems, and consider future activities. Since the BCS Symposium is moving to June 2009, the Map Cataloguing Workshop will be held on 9 – 10th September in Edinburgh, see page 19. A technical visit to a map collection is arranged for participants at the Workshop.

The Group produces a newsletter, Cartographili, which contains news, interesting short articles, brings serious matters to the attention of readers and provides a little whimsy. It is distributed free to members of the British Cartographic Society who express an interest in receiving it. This in effect defines the membership of the Map Curators’ Group. There is no prerequisite to be a professional map curator or map librarian to join the Group. Participation in the Map Curators’ Group activities is open to all BCS members and any other interested parties.

If you are not already a member and think the MCG sounds interesting and fun, contact Ken Atherton, BCS Administrator. For full contact details see page 18.

The Map Curators’ Group welcomes new members.

Spotlight

The Map Curators’ Group Workshop

Preliminary details

National Library of Scotland Map Library, Causwayside Building, Edinburgh

9 – 10 September 2009

Putting graphic indexes and maps on the web

Six speakers both from this country and Europe will address the subject on the Wednesday. This will be followed by the annual business meeting of the group, a reception and an opportunity to view the Bartholomew archive. Thursday morning there will be a scanning demonstration; afternoon technical visits to various sites around Edinburgh; in the evening, a group meal.

It is hoped to run a coach trip on Friday 11 September.

The Charles Close Society will join us and will arrange a programme for Saturday 12 September.

When finalised the full programme and booking forms will be put on the BCS website. It will also be advertised on various lists.

For booking details see page 19.
Atlantic Quiz

Welcome to our Cross-Atlantic Quiz generously sponsored by National Geographic Maps and the Automobile Association. Each quiz can be entered individually or you can enter both. The prizes will be drawn and awarded separately so you all have twice the chance of winning a great prize.

Send your answers to Lynda Bailey, Maplines Quiz, WH1.233, FCO, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH. lynda.bailey@fco.gov.uk

Closing date is 4 June 2009.

Good Luck!

Congratulations to our December issue’s winner, Paula Williams, who correctly answered the crossword anagram as King Arthur

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United States Quiz

1. Name the last state in the United States to declare a winner of its electoral votes in the 2008 Presidential Election.

2. Only one state split its electoral vote in the 2008 election, due to the minority vote in this state’s largest city. Name the city.

3. One of the candidates in the 2008 Presidential election helped Barack Obama to victory by endorsing him in March 2008 and delivering his state of New Mexico in the November elections. Name the candidate.

4. One of the biggest campaign events for Obama did not occur in the United States, but on another continent. Here a July 2008 rally of more than 200,000 people invoked the memories of a former Democratic President’s visit. Name the city.

5. Barack Obama’s 2008 victory is reminiscent of another Presidential campaign, where an obscure Georgia governor became the first President from the Deep South since 1848. Name the year and name the governor.

6. The state with the highest number of electoral votes went to Obama, even though this state’s governor is a Republican known as ‘the Governor’ (a blend of Governor and Terminator). Name the state and what was the number of electoral votes?

7. Barack Obama’s strategy was to win Midwestern states. He turned this state (bordering Illinois) from one that has voted Republican since 1964 to one that cast its electoral votes for him. Name this state and list the number of electoral votes cast here.

8. The electoral vote got him elected, but how many millions of votes did Barack Obama get?

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United Kingdom Quiz

1. According to a recent study, which city has the most polluted air in the UK: Glasgow, Oxford or Blackpool?

2. London is the city in the UK most visited by tourists. What city is number two?

3. What is 73 miles long and stretches from Solway Firth to Wallsend on Tyne?

4. Which UK city has a main street called Union Street and is reached by the A90 and is the birthplace of singer Annie Lennox?

5. Which British city has the highest concentration of Grade 1 listed buildings: Birmingham, Bath or Belfast?

6. Which of these is the most common street name in Britain: High Street, Church Street or Park Road?

7. Which city gave birth to a pop revolution in a cavern and was also a key port in the Battle of the Atlantic in WW2?

8. Within 10 miles, what is the furthest distance you can get from the sea in the UK?

Visit the BCS website at www.cartography.org.uk Maplines / Spring 2009 • 12
I am delighted to welcome two new Corporate Members to the Society. First, and in no particular order, Tom Goodliffe who works for Anglia Land Surveys Ltd which is based in Halesworth, Suffolk and second, Robin Woods, who works for Communicarta Ltd based in Eastleigh, Hampshire. This brings the total number of Corporate Members up to 59. We do hope you both will be able to join us at our Annual Symposium which will be held in Newport Pagnell, 17 – 19 June.

We are in the process of putting together a sponsorship package for Corporate Members but it is early days yet. But in broad terms, the package will relate to sponsorship opportunities at the Annual Symposium and the opportunity to provide “marketing material” for the Symposium delegate bags. However, as soon as the details have been worked out I’ll let you all know.

If there are any issues you wish to raise with the BCS Council please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter Jolly
Corporate Liaison Officer
pjolly@esriuk.com

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**EARTH - UK Launch - Education Day**

The World’s largest atlas, Earth, all 580 pages and 30Kg of it, was launched in Brackley, over four days, in November, beginning with an invitation-only Media Day. The botanist and environmentalist David Bellamy having written the foreword for Earth, was keen to attend. A nice person you couldn’t wish to meet! The second and third days were open for the public to attend; on the Friday we held an Education Day.

Five Brackley schools attended, with ten students from each school having a one-hour workshop on how to produce a map. Each was given an A3 aerial photograph of Brackley plus a sheet of tracing paper and a selection of coloured pencils. Global Mapping’s Mary Spence MBE explained how to identify features on the map and then trace them, starting with roads before adding other features such as drainage in appropriate colours. We asked them to identify their school, then their house to help them understand what they were looking at. Chloe Smith, 7, BCS Junior Map Maker 2008 explained how she drew her winning map; by using her imagination, she took a map based on her favourite place, Centre Parcs, and turned it into what she would like to see there.

Town Hall, Brackley Mayor, Councillor Kevin Dixon, was asked to judge the 5 winning maps giving the emphasis to imagination over cartography. This was a very tough decision but finally by the narrowest of margins Hannah Baker from Waynflete Infants School was adjudged the overall winner and winning a globe for her school and an atlas and certificate for herself. These were presented at her school assembly.

The whole event was a great success with all children really showing a great interest in cartography and focusing hard on producing their maps. Added excitement came with the arrival of the BBC TV film crew to record the event, making stars of some of the children! Teachers from every school, without exception, said how quiet the children were - a sign that they were engrossed in the activity. Certainly, from Global Mapping’s point of view, we all enjoyed the day immensely. It really was very rewarding and we are looking to repeating the exercise in the future.

Alan Smith
Global Mapping

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**London Coach Parking Map 2009**

The 11th of March saw the launch of the 2009 edition of the London Coach Parking Map published by the Confederation of Passenger Transport and Transport for London. ML Design has been producing this map annually for over 10 years and is proud of its continuing involvement in this important project for London.

Each year the map has a different theme. This year’s is Royal London. ML Design takes the photographs used on the map to illustrate the theme, creates and updates the mapping and organises the printing and distribution.

In line with this year’s theme the map launch was hosted at the Tower of London by Historic Royal Palaces.

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**New digital Earth imagery database**

PlanetObserver, one of the leading suppliers of satellite imagery data, has announced the creation of a new seamless global digital Earth imagery database in natural true colours with a resolution of 15m/pixel.

Here are a few figures about this new Earth observation tool: 8,600 scenes collected from the civil observation satellite Landsat 7 ETM+, a 10-terabyte dataset split into 16,200 tiles of 600 Mb each. This dataset was carefully developed to offer an outstanding visual quality, which is PlanetObserver’s area of expertise, while presenting technical features similar to other existing global mosaics (georeferenced and orthorectified data).

It is constructed using true colour input imagery, i.e. the 3 bands of the satellite sensor visible to human eyes. Colours match perfectly the true beauty of planet Earth, both on land areas and on coastlines, and are processed in a seamless and homogenous way.

This new Earth dataset is truly global and includes Antarctica and all islands. The imagery provides an extensive discovery of the planet, both in 2D and in 3D thanks to a 90m resolution Digital Elevation Model, originating from the NASA Shuttle Radar Topographic Mission (SRTM) data enhanced by PlanetObserver.

PlanetObserver global Earth imagery constitutes the perfect resource for IT applications, 2D and 3D navigation and simulation solutions, webmapping, museographic applications (large format prints, interactive animations, thematic exhibitions), media, etc.

PlanetObserver data are already online in www.viamichelin.fr and www.geoportal.fr.

Contact:
Marie-Pierre Boutin
PlanetObserver
Tel. +33 (0) 4 73 44 19 00
Email: mp.boutin@planetobserver.com
Website: www.planetobserver.com

UK Contact:
Alan Grimwade
Cosmographics Limited
Tel: +44 (0) 1923 219099
Email: alan.grimwade@cosmographics.co.uk
Website: www.cosmographics.co.uk

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**LPS Wins Prestigious Mapping Award**

Land & Property Services (LPS) came up trumps at the International Map Trader Association Dinner in February. The Lough Erne Activity Map, produced by LPS, won international recognition by receiving a Gold Award at the International Map Trader Association Dinner in February.

The ‘Best Folded Map’ Gold Award was presented to LPS for the map which caters for outdoor enthusiasts visiting this region of Fermanagh.

The Gala Dinner in Belfast marked the end of the first International Map Traders Association’s Conference and Trade Show to be held in Belfast. Visitors from across the world were attracted by the event which was hosted by LPS, the agency responsible for mapping and geographic information (GI) in Northern Ireland. The Lough Erne Activity Map is one of a series of five activity maps produced under the banner ‘Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland’. Other maps in the series are Glens of Antrim, the Sperrins, Strangford Lough and the Mourne.
Memories of an old Cartographer

How many draughtsmen/cartographers out there can remember the old days when everything was drawn by hand?

Do you remember the large heavy plastic girded sheets that you used in conjunction with an ordinary matt plastic sheet for plotting the base map from a Geodetic Spheroid tables book? The plastic was then cleaned with acetate to get rid of any grease and finger prints. Once the outline latitude and longitude crosses were plotted, then hyperbolic curves and a straight edge were used to draw in pencil the actual lat & long line base map.

Now to really test your memory. Hands up who remembers ruling pens?

Similar to the ink attachment on some compasses, they were the most awkward thing to use; I hated them. They had to be sharpened and you usually ended up with ink all over your fingers trying to get the ink flowing.

The ruling pen was the next stage of making a base map. You would trace the coastline or any areas which needed a Cartograph which was a contour tripod which used graphs nibs. We also used a drop bow/pump compass to draw small circles for seismic positions on a map.

The next big step in the pen revolution, and probably easier to remember, was the Rotring pen. These came in different sizes with a larger reservoir for ink. With this invention came another equally exciting drawing aid, the Lettering Set, which made drawing text to a standard size and thickness easy.

The next milestone in my cartographic career was with a Twin Headed Microstication workstation with a very large digitising tablet. Microstication in various editions took me through to the end of my career as an old cartographer.

If anyone out there, like me, is getting on in years and remembers hand drawing maps, or anything mentioned in this article, please share your experiences and write to Maplines. Perhaps this will become a regular feature for the oldies but goodies.

Richard Elliott, FBCart.S.

Editors’ note — We absolutely agree with Richard. Send us your memories, descriptions, share your skills. See page 2 for contact details.

Fellows at the RAF Club

How do you ensure the quality of a World atlas? How do you choose which places to show, not to raise problems surrounding local and international rivalries and sensitivities? Do people buy atlases to look at the areas they know or the ones they don’t?

Mick Ashworth, Consultant Editor to the Times Atlas of the World, led us through the intriguing, complex process, guided and illustrated by the letters received by the Atlas’s Editors over the decades.

Today’s atlases are the product of a long association between the Times and Bartholomew, beginning in the 1920s. In the 1950s, Times atlases set the standard for how World atlases should look. However, the overlapping geographies of the five volume format made them very difficult to maintain. Morphing the atlases into the new famous single volume Comprehensive, improved the situation.

The Bartholomew Archive at the National Library of Scotland, provides an insight into the world of people’s geographical concerns, often longhand amusing, varied letters, imparting a very serious perspective on maps. The errors detailed are many and varied, covering themes including geographical rivalry, content errors, ownership and place names. Rivalry is seen between missing and existing atlas places; it is essential that local rivalries be documented accurately so as to avoid bias.

Mistakes can put the Editors in the news. In 2003, the Atlas showed Jerusalem as the capital of Israel ‘outraging Muslims around the World’. This appeared on the home page of the Al Jazeera website causing an influx of 250 emails. Pacification by HarperCollins on the subject simply resulted in more emails from the Embassy of Israel disputing the change of stance while Al Jazeera marked the change of stance as a U-turn!

Sometimes policies are needed to pacify situations, as with the Sea of Japan/Sea East question, where dual

ing naming and common usage are recognised with East Sea in smaller type next to the Sea of Japan title.

The status of Jammu & Kashmir in the 1960’s, the impossibility of verifying information accurately and accommodating all the sensitivities in mapping; the same questions are still valid today. On one occasion the Editors received an eight-page email detailing objections to the depiction of the area. The Indian government will not allow importation of mapping showing depictions differing from the approved version, impounding a whole consignment of the Atlases which did not comply.

Even the World’s capitals can also go astray. Omitting the Benin capital Porto Novo may well have led to a nose-dive in the sales in Benin!

Place names are a highly sensitive subject; names can change over time because of local usage or new, translocation scheme choices. Ten local variants may exist for a place. How do you account for these? If you choose how do you justify it?

Occasionally impossible questions are posed such as ‘How many miles between Germany & France’ or ‘How high would you have to fly to see the World as you see it in your map?’ The Editors’ answer in this last case was based on focal length of human eye and lot of blinding with science.

So long as the Editors receive correspondence there will be answers to give and decisions to make regarding content. And as long as this happens the Times World Atlas will remain the pre-eminent atlas.

Lynda Bailey FBCart.S.
Back in October last year a message was posted on the BCS website by a mum asking for help for her son. Her words were ‘He has a great fascination for maps and recently directed me to Kent from Ludlow using the Road Atlas. He has a great awareness for the world around him and knows where places are which is unusual for a boy of his age. He would very much like to spend some time with a cartographer as he would love to see how maps are made.’

This was a job for the ‘A-team’...

I contacted the lady, Clare Reader, and arranged for her son Ben, to spend the afternoon in my office. Now, we have all heard stories about children who love maps and I was prepared to spend an afternoon with an enthusiastic little boy tracing over an aerial photograph or something of that ilk, drawing some pictures and adding a few place names. But my plans for the day were soon abandoned when Ben proudly produced several of his own hand drawn maps which were as good as any that I have seen entered for the BCS’s own Junior Mapmaker Award or the Barbara Petchenik Award sponsored by the International Cartographic Association. But what was more remarkable was that the author of the maps before me was the six year old standing beside me. Quick fast forward to an alternative to the six year old standing beside me. Quick

A few minutes later I was sitting at my tracing that I had in mind...

layers and after a second demonstration of digitising he was away! I would set up a layer and, according to Ben’s instructions, create a graphic style – then he would draw his imaginary detail. He knew he wanted blue roads, green roads etc and built up areas with smaller towns. And beaches. And tunnels to an imaginary mainland.

So I did what I was told and the result is what you see in the picture. When the island was completed I asked him if there was anything else he needed – ‘yes please, there should be a key’. Yes! A born cartographer! I added that a title and scale were also necessary and he was happy to let me add those to finish the map in style. A full three and a half hours after we began, he left with several prints of his own map, eager to show his teacher next day.

In her thank you letter Clare said ‘Ben had a wonderful time this afternoon and still really wants to be a cartographer when he grows up’. I too had the most fabulous afternoon and I look forward to hearing from Ben again in the future. Meanwhile, let us all take cheer from the enthusiasm of one little boy for our discipline, and do what we can to encourage others like him.

Mary Spence MBE
BCS Immediate Past President

Great minds of the past grapple with the big issues of today: #5 Albert Einstein

Einstein adopt a dynamic solution to the four colour map problem by applying a literal folio of ‘Uncle Albert’s Patent Convivial Red Shift’.

By the Rivers of Babylon...

On a recent visit to the Babylon exhibition at the British Museum I was interested to come across an early example of our craft. On a small clay tablet was what is described as the oldest world map. On this Mappa Mundi Babylon is shown as the centre of the universe and all other known places, both real and mythical are shown to radiate from it.

This is a clear example of how our ancient profession is vital to visualising the world we live in. I wonder what the archaeologists of the future would make of any remains of early 21st century cartography if they were to survive for so long!

The photograph bottom left is the clay tablet as it is today and the diagram below right is the interpretation of the map.

Martin Lubikowski FBCart.S.

These images are reproduced by kind permission of the British Museum. Photograph © The Trustees of the British Museum. The diagram created by Paul Goodhead, © The Trustees of the British Museum.

The Lost Rivers of London #3

Counter’s Creek arising in Kensal Green and flowing south through Little Wormwood Scrubs, Olympia and Earls Court to Sands End, where it flows into the Thames. Counter’s Creek can still sometimes be spotted by commuters on the westbound platform of West Brompton tube station, but only after heavy rainfall. Its tidal mouth is known as Chelsea Creek. Chelsea FC’s football grounds is known erroneously as Stamford Bridge because of confusion between Counter’s Creek and Stamford Brook.

Courtesy of www.strangemaps.wordpress.com

David Irvine – Travelling Cartographer

As some of you know, I have recently escaped the clutches of AA Publishing to take a 24-month career break and travel the world. For a little more detail and to follow my progress see http://davetrekks.blogspot.com (still under construction). I may stop at a few places en-route, for a week or two, and have a “little” holiday! Best wishes to all at BCS, dave Irvine1@gmail.com

2 for 1 from Black Dog

Black Dog Publishing is currently offering a ‘buy one get one free’ offer on Mapping London: Making Sense of the City and Mapping England.

These two lavishly illustrated hardback books, from acclaimed author Simon Foxell, offer a glorious sense of place, time and history and are both perfect for gifts and for all those serious about maps and cartography.

Mapping London: Making Sense of the City is a beautiful anthology of over six centuries of London maps, tracing the evolution of the city through its cartography – including over 200 maps alongside essays exploring the history of the maps and how they have been used for social, political and commercial purposes.

In Mapping England, Foxell turns his attention to the country as a whole. It is a beautiful cartographic journey through maps from the origins of cartography right up to present day with ancient hand-drawn maps to the latest technology in computer generation/3-D modelling. Through a comprehensive collection of compelling maps, both historic and contemporary, this book reveals how England has scrutinised itself, been regarded by others and how its ever-changing identity has been recorded.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer then contact Jessica Atkins on the following email:
jess@blackdogonline.com

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

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Omnium Gatherum

A miscellaneous collection of people or things
BCS Administration Report

Subscriptions for 2009

- Corporate Member £180.00
- Small Corporate Member £75.00
- Fellow £50.00
- Ordinary Member £35.00
- Associate Member £15.00
- Optional annual supplement for Overseas members £15.00

Members have a choice of four methods of payment:
- On-line at www.cartography.org.uk
- By Visa/Mastercard/Delta credit card
- By personal cheque payable to The BCS Administration
- By Standing Order (UK bank account only)

A form for nominating another person to stand for election is included with the subscription renewal notice. If you wish to stand, please find two members who are willing to propose and second you and ensure the enclosed form is completed and returned to the address on the form by 1 July 2009.

As reported on page 15, a successful £100,000 grant has been awarded to the British Cartographic Society to support the standing order scheme.

Admission is free.

Meetings are held on selected Thursdays at The Warburg Institute, University of London, Woburn Square, London WC1H OAB at 5.00 pm.

BCS Map Curators’ Group, University of Reading, UK.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 12 February 2009, and will be followed by a tour of the BCS Map Curators’ Group, University of Reading, UK.

For further information see www.mapcurators.org.uk

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

Calendar

23 – 24 April 2009
Map Cataloguing for the Terrified BCS Map Curators’ Group, University of Liverpool, UK. A training event for map librarians, curators, archivists, cataloguers and all those charged with caring for or cataloguing cartographic materials. £95 for BCS members and £115 for non-members. For further info and booking form including online booking see www.cartography.org.uk

2 – 4 September 2009
6th International Symposium on LBS & TeleCartography Centre for Geopolitical Science, University of Nottingham, UK. For further information see www.bcs.org.uk

8 – 10 July 2009
First International Open Source Geospatial Research Symposium Ecole Centrale de Nantes, France For more info see www.ogis2009.org

September 2009
Society of Cartographers 45th Annual Summer School, University of Reading, UK. For further info see www.soc.org.uk

Have you considered applying to become a Fellow of the British Cartographic Society? Visit our website or contact BCS Administration for further information

'Maps and Society'

The Warburg Institute

18th – 19th August 2009
6th International Symposium on LBS & TeleCartography Centre for Geopolitical Science, University of Nottingham, UK. A one-day interdisciplinary symposium for postgraduate students and new researchers. For further information contact Laura Hanson

17 – 19 June 2009
British Cartographic Society 46th Annual Symposium Presentations, workshops and social events. Harbet House, Newport Pagnell, UK. For more info contact BCS Administration admin@cartography.org.uk

20 June 2009
Maps and Surveys 2009 The Defence Surveyors’ Association seminar. Royal School of Military Survey, Hermitage, Newbury, UK. £15. For more information contact Mike Nolan maptnolan@googlemail.com

29 June – 1 July 2009
Perm, Russia

3 – 6 July 2009
Ghent, Belgium

16th INTERCARITO-INTERGIS Held in two cities. This yearly event includes presentation sessions and workshops under the umbrella of the International Cartographic Association (ICA). For more info see www.intercartogis.org

23 – 24 September 2009

23 April 2009
Portraying the Mediterranean: Sixteenth-century Books of Islands (Isolarii) and the Venetian Maritime Empire Eva Stamoulou (Art History and Visual Studies, University of Manchester)

14 May 2009
'The greatest map ever published': The American Geographical Society and the Map of Hispanic America at 1:1 Million Scale, 1922-1945 Dr Alastair Pearson (Department of Geography, University of Portsmouth)

For further details and a map see: www.mapstory.info/warburggr.html

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

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Mapping at Work

17 – 19 June
Harben House, Newport Pagnell, UK

Highlights from the draft programme
Full details and a booking form will be circulated and available on the website from early April

17 Wednesday June From 1pm onwards
• Special Interest Group Sessions

18 Thursday June
Talks Session 1: New Horizons
• The BCS: A Fresh Vision, Bob Lilley, BCS President
• Interactive Integrated Media and Visualising Geography: Reflecting on Lessons Learnt
• New Directions in Mapping Place

Talks Session 2: Mapping the Environment
• Geo-Enabling Local Communities in Brazil
• Atlas of the Island of Ireland
• Modelling, Mapping and Data Creation in a Web 2.0 World

Workshop Session 1:
• Generating effective softcopy output from ESRI ARCGIS
  GeoPDF and ESRI PMF
• Better Mapping for the Terrified!
• Making the Most of OS MasterMap®
• 3D Geological Mapping

Helen Wallis Memorial Lecture
• Communicating with maps: did the message get through?

Gala Dinner and Annual Awards Ceremony

19 Friday June
Talks Session 3: Mapping on the Web
• Virtual Worlds: Maps, Territories and National Identities
• Tom Tom Route Planner from Sat Nav to the Web and back again
• An Evaluation of Publicly Accessible Geographic Information Websites

Workshop Session 2:
• Making the Most of OS MasterMap®
• What’s Hot? What’s Not? Using Thermal Mapping
• We the People – Getting Stuck into the People’s Map
• 3D Geological Mapping

Talks Session 4: Symbology and Representation
• Maps of the Underworld – a case for Aesthetic Design
• Designing for Multiple Outputs – the process and obstacles
• The Design and Application of the ‘Stop-Specific’ Bus Map

20 Saturday June
• Optional visit, information to be confirmed

See you there!

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