

# THE WORD

THE LATEST ON THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER TWO 2010

## BUILDING WORK BEGINS

BUILDING WORK STARTED ON THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY AFTER PLANNING PERMISSION WAS GRANTED AND THE COUNCIL'S CABINET GAVE FINAL APPROVAL FOR CONSTRUCTION TO GO AHEAD AT THE END OF LAST YEAR.

Machinery moved on to the site at Centenary Square in the first week of January 2010 to commence groundwork on the foundations signalling the start of the build project for this groundbreaking landmark for the city, which is scheduled to complete in 2013.

With the building work underway, Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council commented: "The Library of Birmingham will be an iconic landmark and a testament to the role we will play in the 21st century as a truly global city.

"We have brought together the finest contractors, architects and library professionals to deliver a world-class new facility that will set new standards for a library's place in the 21st century, acting as a social, cultural and learning hub.

"This project is a reflection of the optimism in Birmingham's future as a progressive city where cultural developments underpin civic pride and act as a catalyst for regeneration."



Mike Whitby, Leader, Birmingham City Council, Charles Baldwin, Carillion, Brian Gambles, Assistant Director, Culture, Birmingham City Council and Mike Woolley, Capita Symonds at the start of building work in January 2010.

The stunning design for the new building by award-winning Dutch architects Mecanoo features glazed and patterned facades that will flood the building with daylight, providing a calm welcoming interior.

An open air amphitheatre at the lower ground floor will be an exciting feature in Centenary Square for live performances such as poetry readings, music and storytelling, bringing the library out into the public realm.

The new building has been designed to function flexibly around rapidly developing new digital technologies, creating new opportunities for learning and access. New exhibition galleries will showcase for the first time the city's outstanding and internationally important archives and special collections. Treasures include one of the world's largest Shakespeare libraries, including a rare copy of Shakespeare's First Folio, the archive of the Matthew Boulton and James Watt steam engine partnership, an excellent collection of early and fine printing, and extensive photographic archives, including the work of Sir Benjamin Stone, Francis Bedford and Francis Frith.

The new library will be built to the highest standards of sustainability, incorporating a range of features to deliver environmental and energy saving benefits. Two outdoor terraces at the upper levels will create new public green open spaces, with quiet places to read, study or relax, while planting will create a haven for wildlife. A rooftop rotunda will house the historic Shakespeare Memorial Room and offer fantastic views over the city.

Future issues of The Word will keep you updated with each exciting stage of the build project as it progresses.



“I APPRECIATE ALL THE HELP AND SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL'S EMPLOYMENT ACCESS TEAM AND CARILLION IN RECOGNISING MY POTENTIAL AND GETTING ME ON THE APPRENTICESHIP COURSE. THE SKILLS I'M DEVELOPING WILL HELP ME FIND EMPLOYMENT IN THE FUTURE.”

LOUIS INVERARY - APPRENTICE  
CASTLEVALE

Library of Birmingham apprentices Carl Bettan, Dean Capewell, Sean O'Farrell, Louis Inverary, Waquar Shabbir, Corey Fitzgerald, Jamal Bramwell, Charlie Johnson and Dwane Gerald.

## YOU'RE HIRED! LIBRARY APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

YOUNG PEOPLE FROM BIRMINGHAM WHO ARE MOST MARGINALISED IN THE CURRENT LABOUR MARKET ARE BEING GIVEN PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM THANKS TO AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S EMPLOYMENT ACCESS TEAM AND CONSTRUCTION PARTNER CARILLION.

A training and employment agreement will see at least 25 apprenticeships created over the course of the build project. The first nine successful apprentices from intakes in August and November 2009 have already picked up their hard hats.

The apprentices first go on a 14-week training period at Carillion's Training Centre in Erdington to widen their skills in either joinery or bricklaying. On the successful completion, Carillion offer them an 18-month employment contract. It is at this point that they can start to get some hands-on experience of the construction on site.

Carillion Piling, the first permanent works contractor on the Library of Birmingham site, has taken on two of the first intake of apprentices as part of its workforce, with many more opportunities to follow with other contractors on site.

As part of the regeneration of Birmingham, Carillion will continue to offer such opportunities over the next three years of the development of the new Library, helping more young people forge a career in the construction industry.

### CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE

January 2010 - Commence the piling work to form the basement walls around the site and complete levelling of the ground following the archaeological dig at the end of 2009

March 2010 - Start first phase of demolition of The REP's conference facilities and Scenic Workshop

May 2010 - Basement construction begins on the Library

February 2011 - Refurbishment of The REP gets underway, to include updated back of house facilities, new workshops and new staff accommodation, while the construction continues on the nine floors of the Library

April 2011 - Start fit-out of the completed internal floors of the Library

August 2012 - Complete the Library elevations, including external glass envelope and surrounding metal frieze

August 2012 - Commence commissioning of services to the site and check environmental features

Spring 2013 - Construction works on Library complete ready for relocation from Central Library to begin

Summer 2013 - Library of Birmingham opens

## THE REP/LIBRARY UPDATE

### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE COMING MONTHS?

#### NEW OFFSITE PROJECTS



Birmingham Repertory Theatre recently announced more about its plans to produce work in and around the city once it closes its doors in 2011 to enable the Library of Birmingham construction work to take place. From 2011, the theatre will produce a variety of work in different venues across the City, including The Old Rep, the Crescent Theatre and the mac. In addition to performing in these traditional spaces, it will also be producing several large-scale events in non-theatrical spaces in the city and increase its work within neighbourhoods, developing relationships with communities. In partnership with community libraries across the city, it will be working on theatre projects that promote community cohesion and celebrate those neighbourhoods. As project ideas and the necessary funding to enable these ideas is secured we will bring you more detail in future issues of The Word.

Meanwhile, The REP has just announced its season of work for Spring-Summer 2010 – find out more by visiting [birmingham-rep.co.uk](http://birmingham-rep.co.uk) or pop into the theatre to pick up a season brochure.

#### SCENIC WORKSHOP RELOCATED



Last month The REP made its first big step towards moving offsite. With the theatre's Scenic Workshop due for demolition, the theatre has relocated its workshop to a specially converted warehouse in Kyotts Lake, Sparkbrook. To mark this historical moment the theatre will be holding two special events in its Scenic Workshop:

##### **Thursday 21 January 7.45pm Mohammed Ali's Writing On The Wall**

Join Birmingham's world famous aerosol artist, Mohammed Ali, and friends for a one-off evening of live graffiti-art and poetry in The REP's due-to-be demolished workshop!

Tickets: £12 advance, £15 on the doors, £3 off for concessions

##### **Wednesday 27 January 7.00pm, 8.15pm, 9.30pm In The Dark**

Imagine waking up in a prison cell with absolutely no recollection of how you got there? You find yourself totally in the dark! Come and along and watch this performance by The REP's youth theatre company, The Young REP.

Tickets: £7, concessions £5.50

**Box Office 0121 236 4455 /  
[birmingham-rep.co.uk](http://birmingham-rep.co.uk)**

#### SCHOOL CHILDREN WIN A TRIP TO HOLLAND

The REP ran a special education project with pupils from Starbank Primary School and Waverley Secondary School in Small Heath to give an insight into theatre and library design. Funded by Bright Space, which delivers Creative Partnerships projects in Birmingham schools, with the help of under-graduate and post-graduate architect students from Birmingham City University, the pupils from the two schools learnt how spaces and buildings are designed through a series of workshops. Waverley Secondary school

were given the challenge of designing a theatre or library, whilst Starbank Primary were given the task of designing a public square, using Centenary Square as inspiration.

The designs were judged by Steve Ball, Associate Director (Learning & Participation) at Birmingham Repertory Theatre, Patrick Arends, Architect at Mecanoo, designers for the Library of Birmingham, and Kevin Singh from Birmingham City University. The group of pupils who produced the winning design from each school were then treated to a fantastic day trip to Holland to spend a day with Mecanoo.



Year 6 pupils from Starbank Primary (Kiyah Langley, Rafa Hussain, Ashima Begum, Asad Ur Rehman and Adil Ali Shah) with their fairground inspired public square design. Photo credit: Ian Tennant

## ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM, THE COUNCIL HAS BEEN TALKING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ABOUT WHAT KIND OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCLUDED IN THE NEW BUILDING.

A six week consultation period in Spring 2009 provided an opportunity for individuals and groups from all over Birmingham to meet with staff from Library and Archive Services and The REP to share their views and ideas. This follows extensive early public consultation and research that told the Council what citizens want from their new library and informed the brief that the Council gave the architects, Mecanoo, for the new building.

A number of events aimed at children, young people and families also took place in Autumn 2009:

**September 2009: Artsfest.** Two open air 'Building Stories' storytelling events were held in Centenary Gardens where children and young people had the opportunity to draw pictures representing how they would like to use the new library.

**October 2009: Meet Bob The Builder.**

Bob The Builder arrived at the Library of Birmingham site to raise awareness and give introductions to the planned new building. Supported by library staff and Carillion, children, young people and families were provided with storytelling sessions in The REP, fun activities and tours of the site.

**December 2009:** 30 school children and 16 adults attended an Archaeology Open Day, with stories and tours given by the City Archaeologists.

More events are being planned for 2010 – information will be available at [www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraryofbirmingham](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraryofbirmingham)



## WHAT'S ON

### NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY LIBRARIES



While the Library of Birmingham project forges ahead, there are many activities ongoing at the Central Library and Community Libraries.

February sees the launch of the new Community Connection facility in Erdington Library, a re-fitted and re-furnished area providing a computer and general adult and family learning facility tailored to local community needs, and funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

And there's just a couple of weeks left to catch Birmingham Seen, a superb free exhibition in the City's Gas Hall (Edmund Street, until 31st January) which contains a wide range of photographs, plans and works of art showing the changing landscape and people of Birmingham since 1820. There's a fascinating sequence of photographs by Derek Fairbrother (1931-1999) which show the clearance of buildings in Edmund Street to make way for the

current library. The stills from the Central Library collection were taken between 1963 and 1986 and have been edited into a short video sequence by 7inch cinema, making for a fascinating insight into the changing face of Birmingham. Well worth a visit before it closes.

Later in the Spring, **Young Readers Birmingham**, the annual book festival takes place between 22nd May and 5th June throughout the city's Central Library and Community Libraries. This tremendously popular event promotes reading and books as a source of pleasure and enjoyment. To keep abreast of half term events and full festival details as they appear, go to [www.birmingham.gov.uk/youngreaders](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/youngreaders)

### GET IN TOUCH

To receive future issues of The Word by email, or to receive it in a different format, please contact us on **0121 303 2454** or e-mail us at [library.of.birmingham@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:library.of.birmingham@birmingham.gov.uk)  
For more details on the Library of Birmingham project, including artist's impressions, videos and facts and figures visit [www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraryofbirmingham](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraryofbirmingham)