

Architecture and its Presentation by Anthony Stivala

April 2017

At the April meeting of the Science and Technology Group, Antony Stivala – an Associate Director of a large firm of London architects – presented an overview of the varied range of buildings on which he had worked during his career. These included Thame-side apartments and office blocks, an iconic development in Sheffield and a building within a business park complex which incorporated underground car parking – innovative in its day - so that the surrounding area close to the building could be preserved for ‘green’ landscaping.

Antony then presented a series of photographs to illustrate the variety of design concepts incorporated in a number of iconic buildings: firstly, the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh (with elements of its roof structure representing upturned boats on a beach and windows in its ceiling shaped like leaves); the Guggenheim Museum in New York (a clever combination of form and function) and also the Marin County Civic Center in California (integrating the building into three surrounding hills) – both of these buildings designed by Frank Lloyd Wright; Portcullis House in London (incorporating complex engineering work in order to construct it over the existing Westminster Underground Station) and, finally, The Dancing House in Prague designed by Frank Gehry - perhaps the most quirky of innovative ideas for blending a building into its surroundings.

In conclusion, Antony explained the way in which the independent professions of architecture, structural engineering, construction and operational management must coalesce at a very early stage, using the latest techniques in Computer Added Design technology, in order to eliminate design conflicts within the project as a whole, bearing in mind the legal minefield of who ‘owns’ an error if it arises during subsequent construction!

Thank you to Colin for finding such an engaging speaker and thanks also to Erica for providing the usual high standard of refreshments at the conclusion of the presentation.

Janet Cato

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