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MICHAEL ALDRICH

PRESS CUTTINGS

OCTOBER 1996

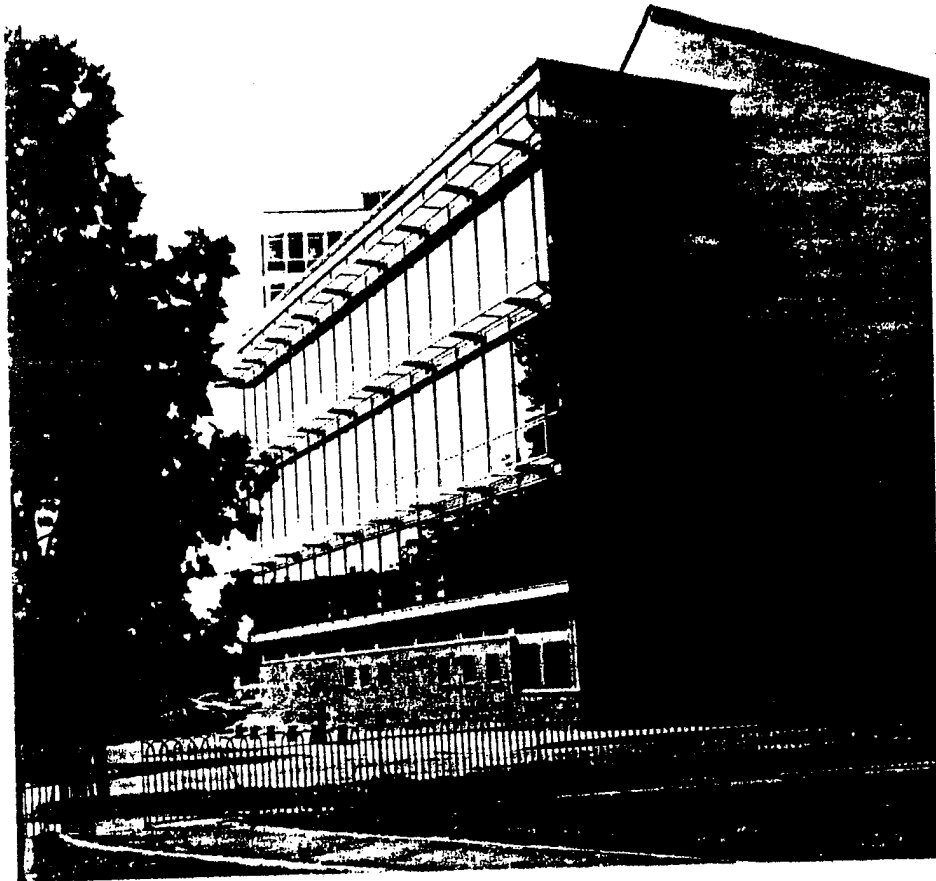


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30 September 1996

A new landmark for Brighton



The university's new state-of-the-art library is now open at Moulsecoomb. The library, which is between the Cockerott Building and Moulsecoomb Place, is equipped with the latest in Learning Resources technology. It will have 600 study places, all connected to the university's computer network, 50 library workstations for accessing the CD-ROM network and the Internet, ten private booths for language learning, seminar rooms, syndicate

rooms and a computer pool. The Library is to be named The Aldrich Library after the chairman of the university's Board of Governors, Michael Aldrich.

Announcing the naming of the Aldrich Library, David Watson said: "This new library represents both a major contribution to the university's work in teaching and research and a lasting tribute to the great contribution that Michael Aldrich has made to our work. He has guided us sensitively and effectively through major institutional transformations - notably incorporation in 1989 and the move to university status in 1992."

The library was designed by Long and Kentish and built by Wates Integra. It incorporates the latest principles of energy efficiency and uses natural materials, produced sustainably wherever possible. The lighting enhances the external appearance of the building at night, making it an inviting and open learning environment.

The library will be opened formally in November. (For the story behind the move, see the article by Christine Moon, Head of Learning Resources, on page 7.)

Phoenix rising

The first phase of the new Phoenix Brewery halls of residence opened its doors at the start of term, with 76 freshers moving in on 21 September. Delays in the building programme meant that the other 136 students who had been allocated rooms at Phoenix began their university career in the comfort of hotels in town, with the additional costs (including transport, breakfast and dinner) being met by the developers, Kajima. As we go to press, these students are due to transfer to their rooms in Phoenix shortly, once the university is confident that everything on site is safe, fully equipped and functioning.

Student Services and other support staff are on hand until the students are well settled into their new rooms to ensure that any problems that might arise during this initial period, either in the hotels or at the Brewery site, are dealt with quickly.

According to Chris Thornton, Head of Student Services, "A great deal of planning has gone into preparing for the arrival of the students who have been allocated rooms in Phoenix; we have tried to anticipate everything that might cause problems both for those in hotels and for those moving into newly-completed rooms in hall. Although we realise that some freshers were apprehensive about the uncertainties the late completion of the building has caused, we hope that they will find that any disruption caused during their first week or so is more than made up for by the excellent facilities at Phoenix, which are intended to offer an improvement on the high quality of even our most recent accommodation at Moulsecoomb Place and Varley."

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Autumn term issue no 1

The Aldrich Library – a moving story

Three years ago, the Aldrich Library was little more than a nice idea – an immensely desirable development but one which depended on funding creativity, on a convincing rationale, the identification of a good architect and a huge amount of hard work by many people inside the university and quite a few outside. Now a reality, the building has emerged from behind the hoardings and the service is up and running in time for the new academic session. One of the most attractive buildings in the university, the Aldrich Library gives an exciting architectural lift to the Moulsecoomb campus and sets a standard for future library planning elsewhere in the university.

The whole project has been accomplished within an impressive time-scale. Back in the late summer of 1993, the Funding Council called for building proposals for libraries and similar services. Within just a few weeks our proposal was drafted but it took until the following March to hear that we had been one of a relatively few successful contenders. Long and Kentish, the architects, were selected in June 1994, and then Wates Integra was selected as the main building contractor. Work began on site at the end of January 1995 – with the demolition of the old Cockcroft huts – and the building was handed over to the university early in July this year.

Space on the Cockcroft mezzanine previously used for classrooms and the Boardroom was converted and linked by a bridge to the new building to form a completely unified space. The building was designed to be energy-efficient and low on maintenance and to provide a modern study environment which would allow access to the most up-to-date technology as well as to the more traditional stuff of libraries. Located close to Student Services, to the Moulsecoomb Place residences, the new Blackwells book cafe, the refectory and Students' Union, the library now forms part of a complex of services for students at Moulsecoomb. Open over long hours, including Saturdays and Sundays, and with the computer pool open to midnight every day of the week during term, we expect the library to



play an important part in the lives of all students at Moulsecoomb and, indeed, those based elsewhere in the university.

Over 600 students can work simultaneously in a variety of spaces. Fifteen group study rooms allow students to work noisily away from those who want peace and quiet. These rooms are networked and equipped with various pieces of audio-visual kit – for group projects, practising presentations and so on. There are also two seminar rooms, designed for staff working with students using printed, computer-based or AV materials.

The individual study places were designed by the architects to enable students to work from traditional printed materials but at the same time to connect to remote information sources or to locally-produced courseware over the network. Each study place therefore has a network connection and power outlet and individuals can bring in their own lap-tops or use the computers provided. They can control the lighting and seating to suit their needs and enjoy working with a fine view of the Manor

House and gardens or the urban landscape of the Moulsecoomb estate.

Moving in all the stock of the Watts and Mithras libraries and some stock from Falmer, furnishing and equipping the rooms, commissioning the computer network and loading software has occupied staff from Learning Resources, Estates and the Computer Centre throughout the whole of the summer vacation. As I write, drills are drilling, furniture is on the move, crates are being emptied and we are all wishing there was just another couple of weeks in the vacation so that everything could be in place before term starts. Actually, there are only two days left, so I'm afraid we shall all need to be a bit patient while final details are sorted. We've now got to learn to run the service in its larger, more complex form so bear with us if there are a few hitches in the early days. Do come along and use the services – or just drop in to see us if you're passing.

Claudia Mum