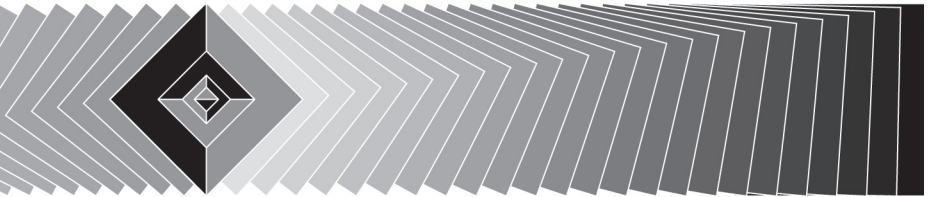


# SPEC



## Flyer 244

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Library Buildings:

Renovation and Reconfiguration

Transforming Libraries 9

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### INTRODUCTION

Renovation refreshes building spaces to make them useful again, while a reconfiguration allows building occupants to engage in new behaviors in old spaces and may not involve construction at all. This issue of *Transforming Libraries* discusses projects that fit into either or both of these categories. This issue looks at the various building projects themselves and also at the impetus behind the change and the points that must be considered before becoming involved in library building renovation/reconfiguration. Included in this issue is a useful checklist of questions for campus and library administrators considering such projects.

### OBSERVATIONS

Several common observations were noted by respondents. There was a perception among those interviewed that renovations, once planned to be sufficient for 20 years, can no longer project so far into the future. The assumption that the future will be like the past has been replaced by a healthy skepticism that planning for more than 15 years would be pointless. Another observation was that remote storage must be considered once collection growth results in the displacement of user seating. The reemergence of the library as a center for intellectual life on the campus and the changing ways people work with information have given spaces devoted to people a new importance. There is a renewed sense that environmental and ecological factors need to be recognized, and a heightened awareness exists of the importance of green space on campuses. Master planning that coordinates the library needs and goals with those of the institution as a whole was mentioned as vital to successful renovation, and, finally, the role of faculty

and the user community in influencing design decisions is an essential one.

Whatever the reason for undertaking these various projects, the Reports from the Field show that renovation results in marked improvement in the quality of work space and leads to substantial increases in use by the library's clientele.

### REPORTS FROM THE FIELD

*Emory University.* Following a decade of rapid development and campus expansion, Emory University found its Woodruff Library lagging behind the growth of other campus programs and facility improvements. Construction planned in three phases introduced new library space and renovation of existing space in Woodruff, the upcoming renovation of old Candler Library, and the opening of a connecting bridge between the libraries. Emory is working to make Woodruff a more central part of the campus while preserving open green space on campus grounds.

*Kansas State University.* KSU's library had been originally constructed in three phases—in 1927, 1955, and 1969—each in a different style, and with poor continuity architecturally (e.g., dead ends and floors that didn't meet up). In 1994, work began on a design to bring together the different architectural styles and create a cohesive building, with new wiring, consistent interior design modeled after the 1927 interior, 24-hour study space, and other amenities.

*University of Washington.* The need for structural improvements and concern for human safety and access are driving the projected remodeling of the University of Washington's Suzzallo Library. The

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major focus of the remodeling is to provide structural reinforcements that will withstand strong seismic activity. At the same time, improvements in handicapped accessibility will bring the library into conformity with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations.

*Aaron Cohen Associates.* Aaron Cohen, a library space planner, feels that there are three key elements to be considered in planning useful space: 1) function, 2) content, and 3) behavior.

*National Agricultural Library.* NAL is unlike the other libraries highlighted here because it is a federal research library, with a different role and different kinds of users. In the planning stages for renovation, the administrators want to enhance the functionality and adaptability of the building so that it will have the flexibility to respond to changing needs .

*Shepley, Bullfinch, Richardson and Abbott.* The architectural firm of Shepley, Bullfinch, Richardson and Abbott has been designing libraries for over a century, and it is involved in the renovation of several of the libraries described in this issue of Transforming Libraries.

*University of Chicago.* The University of Chicago Regenstein Library project is a reconfiguration rather than a renovation—the primary goal is to provide for more effective use of the building through the applications of new technology, while at the same time replacing some of the mechanical systems that are at the end of their natural lifetime.

*Yale University.* The renovation of Yale's Sterling Memorial Library is only one of a number of extensive and important projects directed at improving Yale's building environment. The first library renovations focused on the integrity of Sterling as a building; future renovation planning will closely attend to the role of the library as a central factor in the social and learning lives of Yale students.

*Columbia University.* Planning for Butler Library's renovation included two goals: restoring the 1934 building and solving the problem of insufficient shelving for the library's collections. Once planning was begun, everyone involved realized that an offsite depository would be needed, so essentially there have been two projects proceeding in tandem.

*West Virginia University.* West Virginia University is undertaking three major library projects, driven by changes in the use of space resulting from technological developments and the need to improve the quality of that space.

*This SPEC Kit was written by William G. Jones, Assistant University Librarian and Associate Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago, with editorial advice from George J. Soete, ARL/OLMS Organizational Development Consultant.*

The electronic component of this issue of Transforming Libraries can be found at <<http://www.arl.org/transform/buildings/index.html>>.

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