

Heritage Mapping Takes Advantage of New Technology



The theme of this GW issue is the mapping of cultural features. This topic has been brought to public attention recently with the fire at Notre Dame, Paris. The French have a strong record of mapping cultural features and it is to be hoped that they have a good archive of images of Notre Dame.

We include a very varied set of articles which show the range of features covered and the variety of techniques used. We have included articles featuring some of these topics in recent years but to see them together demonstrates the versatility of the techniques and the imagination of the people who have applied them. We see the advantages of drones in difficult environments and the precision and speed of laser scanning in different situations. We also see that geomatic processes can be used by professionals from a variety of other

disciplines. The use of SLAM technology is another tool which proves to be useful for heritage mapping.

The article on BIM also emphasizes that lessons can be learnt from unexpected quarters, in this case the Antarctic. The question 'have accuracy standards been maintained and is proper quality assurance in place?' always has to be asked, but this has to be accompanied by the question 'is the final product fit for purpose?' and 'are the results properly understood?'

The article on surveying the World War I tunnels in France throws light on a little-known activity beneath the trenches. The 1993 novel *Birdsong* by Sebastian Faulks is a very good read on this subject for anyone interested in this fascinating subject.

Societal aspects of geospatial surveys are covered by James Kavanagh in his RICS Policy Watch column on the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty. Whilst running out of superlatives to report on the meeting, James emphasizes the importance of this annual gathering and brings attention to the many global issues to which geospatial surveyors can contribute. These include land registration, land valuation and informal settlements, but also included topics more relevant to surveying in the UK such as use of satellite data and GIS.

Closer to home James announces the imminent publication of an RICS Insight paper on drones. This will be an essential read for everyone using, or looking into using, a drone. This publication also brings out the multidisciplinary application of drones.

Gordon Johnston in his column reminds us of the importance of standards, and particularly developing standards for mapping the oceans which, as discussed in the last issue of GW, presents a major challenge.

This issue of GW is being distributed to GIM International subscribers in the UK. Geomatics World is for geomatics professionals and RICS Members in the UK and Ireland and abroad, and in future we will be sharing more content with GIM International so that by reading Geomatics World or GIM International you will always be up to date as both magazines are covering developments in technology and the business side of geomatics.

Climate change is now a ubiquitous topic and a BBC programme titled 'Climate Change - The Facts' was shown on BBC1 on Thursday 18 April. Although you may have missed this, it is available on iPlayer. So, we urge you to watch it... if only other subjects, you know what we mean, could be presented so clearly!

As we go to press, we have heard of the death of Eric Downer, formerly a surveyor with DOS and Ordnance Survey. We hope to include an obituary in our next issue.

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