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Known for his bold, brutalist designs, John Andrews AO is one of Australia's most internationally renowned architects. The Library is in the process of acquiring the archive of John Andrews' company, John Andrews International, comprising thousands of drawings and architectural plans, photographs and job correspondence.
Andrews, born in New South Wales in 1933, studied architecture at the University of Sydney, and upon graduation, won a scholarship to complete his masters in architecture at Harvard University in the USA.

Andrews commenced his working life as an architect in Toronto, Canada. From 1962 until 1967 he was chairman of the University of Toronto's program in architecture. He was propelled into the spotlight in 1963, when he won the job to design the entire campus for Scarborough College, University of Toronto - from scratch - at the age of only 29. The building he created has become an icon of brutalist design (a popular architectural style for institutional buildings in the 1960s and 70s) with its sculptural concrete form and masses of interior meeting space for students. Known locally as the ‘Andrews Building’, it is still much loved by its occupants.


In 1973, John Andrews returned to Sydney, renaming his firm John Andrews International Pty Ltd and setting up office in Palm Beach. In Australia, he continued his work on large-scale buildings, completing the Cameron Offices in Belconnen, Canberra (1973-76), King George Tower in Sydney (1976), Sydney Convention Centre (1988), Octagon Offices in Parramatta (1989), World Trade Centre, Melbourne Convention Centre and RMIT University in Melbourne and many other office, educational and institutional projects.

The Library has acquired the entire archive of Andrews' works completed since he returned to Australia in 1973 (the drawings of Andrews' pre-1973 works are held in the Canadian Architectural Archives at the University of Calgary).

We have just started sorting through thousands and thousands of design sketches and architectural plan to find the hidden treasures, which will then be catalogued and made available to researchers. Amongst the very first finds are sketches and plans for the Melbourne Convention Centre, completed in 1989 (now the Crowne Plaza Hotel, on the corner of Spencer Street and the Yarra River). As well as architectural plans, the archive also includes job progress photography, correspondence files and buildings specifications. The archive will become a rich resource to those interested in late modernist and brutalist architecture in Australia. We will update our progress on processing the archive, and the works we find in there, through this blog.
Andrews International

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Links