

Getting ready for the next generation:
Renewal of the International Library of Children's Literature

Planning and Cooperation Division
International Library of Children's Literature

*This article is a partial translation of the article in Japanese of the same title
in NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 652/653 (August/September 2015).*

● Contents

1. Outline of the renewal of the International Library of Children's Literature
 2. Details of the facilities of the International Library of Children's Literature
 - Brick Building (existing building)
 - Arch Building (new building)
 3. Future Efforts
- Column: Excavation! History found in the examination of buried cultural assets



● 1. Outline of the renewal of the International Library of Children's Literature

The International Library of Children's Literature (ILCL) passed its 15th anniversary this year, since its establishment on Children's Day (May 5) in 2000. The year 2015 has

become a significant milestone for the ILCL, with the completion of a new annex building at the end of June, after approximately three years of construction from February 2012. The annex building, the "Arch Building," stands in face to face with the existing building, the "Brick Building."

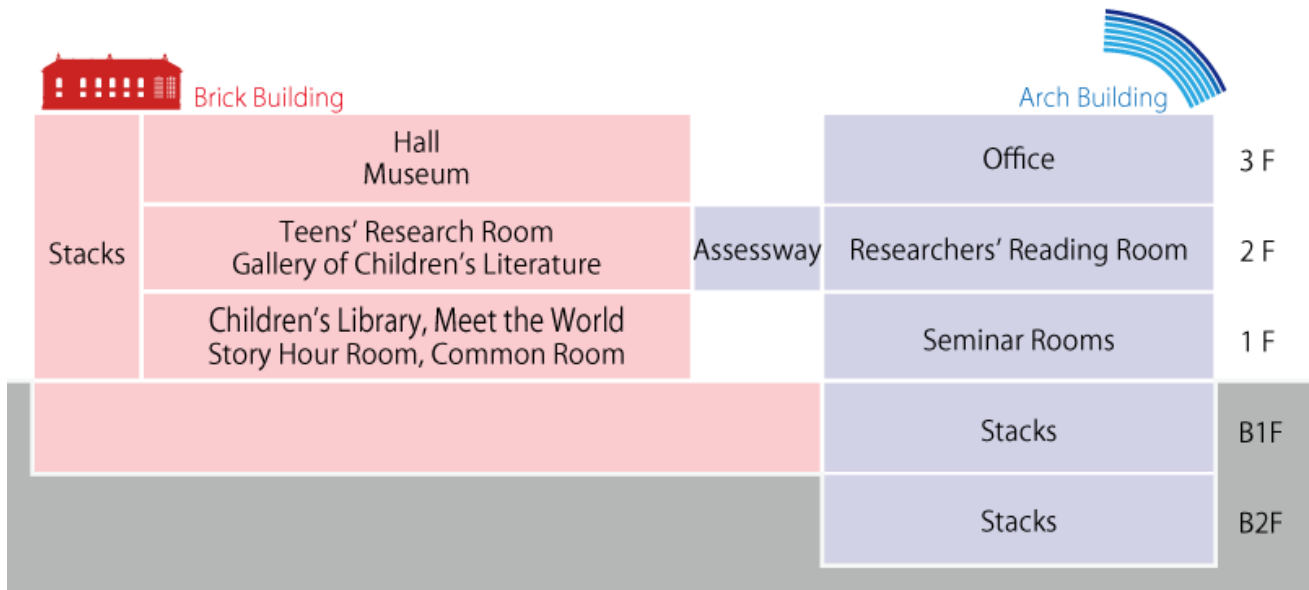


<<The two ILCL buildings. Left: Brick Building, Right: Arch Building>>

The original ILCL building was renovated on the basis of the former Imperial Library, and has been providing library services in this place. However, the library lacked space to hold all the children's books published in Japan and from other countries. So, it could not rightly claim to be the "International" Library of Children's Literature. Moreover, we found out that the existing facility was not sufficient to further enhance its library services to meet the great changes in the social environment surrounding children's reading activities.

In establishing the Arch Building, we decided to classify the functions of the ILCL facilities into three roles. The Brick Building, with the users' entrance, will be a place for everyone to get in touch with children's literature. It is assigned (1) the role to provide a venue to enhance interaction between children and books, and (2) the role as a museum of children's literature. The Arch Building, which is reached through the Brick Building, assumes (3) the role as a library specialized in children's literature.

2. Details of the facilities of the International Library of Children’s Literature



<<Diagram of the two buildings>>

Brick Building (existing building)

For both adults and children

Floors and Rooms		Overview
3F	Hall	An exhibition which introduces the history and attraction of the library will be newly available. Events such as concerts will also be held here.
	Museum	Exhibitions which cover a variety of subjects on children's literature will be held.
2F	Teens' Research Room (former Researchers' Reading Room 1)	A new room with materials mainly useful for teens' research will be available. (Feb. 2016-)
	Gallery of Children's Literature (former Researchers' Reading Room 2)	A gallery to show the history of Japanese children's literature will be newly available, where you can handle and enjoy the books. (Feb. 2016-)
1F	Children's Library, Meet the World, Story Hour Room	A new area where you can take off your shoes and read books will be available in the Children's Library. (Mar. 2016-)
	Common Room (former Office)	A room for resting, eating and nursing will be newly available. (Nov. 2015-)

Arch Building (new building)

As a library specialized in children's literature

Floors and Rooms		Overview
3F	Office	
2F	Researchers' Reading Room	Two existing reading rooms (Researchers' Reading Room 1 & 2) were unified into one spacious and practical room. (Sep. 2015-)
1F	Seminar Rooms	Lectures, trainings, and events for children will be held.
B	Stacks	Stacks for approx. 650,000 volumes will be newly extended in the Arch Building basement in order to ensure the future preservation environment, in addition to the existing stacks in the Brick Building with a capacity of approx. 400,000 volumes, which is close to full.

3. Future Efforts

In order for the renovation to be successful, the ILCL will suspend part of its training and cooperation activities this year. However, from FY2016, the new ILCL will resume lectures, events for children, and training programs, and provide support for activities related to children's literature. Moreover, we are planning to conduct basic training for librarians as a project related to cooperation for promoting children's reading activities. In FY2016, the annual Lecture Series on Children's Literature will feature primary topics. And from FY2017, we will hold basic training sessions related to children's literature and library services. We also plan to increase our events for children, such as research practice programs for teenagers. For those who cannot visit the ILCL, we will enrich the information about children's books on the ILCL website.

The ILCL will enhance its cooperation with people related to children's books, under the slogan "Children's books link the world and open up the future." Please look to the future activities of the ILCL.

Column: Excavation! History found in the examination of buried cultural assets

Takaaki Yasuda
Then member of Planning and Cooperation Division,
International Library of Children's Literature, NDL

(participated in the excavation led by the Tokyo Archaeological Center)
Based on an article in Japanese from the NDL Monthly Bulletin No. 638, May 2014

The Ueno Park area, where the ILCL was built, is part of a cluster of historical landmarks known as the Uenoshinobugaoka Isekigun (上野忍岡遺跡群), which is registered as a historic site by the Taito Ward Office. It was necessary to perform an archeological survey prior to the start of construction of the new Arch Building, in conformance with the provisions of the Law for Protection of Cultural Properties.

From August 2011 to March 2013, the Tokyo Metropolitan Archaeological Center performed excavated buried artifacts on a commission from the Kanto Regional Development Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.



<<Excavation in progress at the area where the Arch Building is scheduled to be constructed>>

Here is a brief explanation of some of the cultural artifacts which were unearthed by the excavation work.

During the Edo period, Ueno Park area was a part of the *Kan'ei-ji* Temple (寛永寺) and its related temples. The grounds of the ILCL were thought likely to be the site of the *Myooin* Temple (明王院), which was part of the *Kan'ei-ji* complex. In fact, the excavation uncovered the remnants of this temple as well as a large quantity of related artifacts. These included underground facilities called the *chikamuro* (地下室) and the stairs leading to them as well as coins and pottery.



<<Coins and pottery found from the remains of the *Myoo-in* Temple>>

Remains from the Imperial Library, completed in 1906, were also found. A number of brick structures were unearthed, which are thought to have been catch basins that were part of the library.

A water pipe from the Meiji era with the date 1900 embossed on its surface was also found. Since Tokyo's first modern waterworks opened in 1898, it is likely that this pipe is one of the earliest parts of that system. The markings also indicate that the pipe was likely produced at a foundry in Liège, Belgium.



<<A brick structure and water pipe from the Meiji era>>

Some events were held in which an in-situ exhibition of the historical landmarks was made available to students attending related university seminars or to people who attended lectures sponsored by Taito Ward Office, and was very popular with those who saw it. The ILCL staff also had an opportunity to hear a lecture by a researcher from the Tokyo Metropolitan Archaeological Center.

This excavation provided a fascinating opportunity to shine a new light on the history of the site where the ILCL now stands.



<<In-situ exhibition of the historical landmark>>