

Lets be Creative!



Kingsgate Footbridge in Durham is a grade 1 listed reinforced concrete bridge structure built in 1963. The bridge spans the river Wear and links the University and Durham Old Town.

It was designed by Ove Arup the founder of the consulting engineers that for some years I worked for. It was the last structure Ove Arup designed himself and he considered it his finest work.

Ove planned every detail, including the unusual way it was constructed. The need for scaffolding on the river was eliminated by casting the bridge in two halves along each river bank. The halves were then swivelled out from the banks to meet.

The two halves pivoted on revolving cones, their meeting point marked by an understated bronze expansion joint. Bearings were designed at the base of each part to allow rotation, robust but cheap enough to be used only once.

This is an amazing example of Ove Arup's engineering skills and his creative thinking.

It started me thinking about that verse in Hebrews encouraging us to "Discover creative (inventive) ways to encourage others and to motivate them toward acts of compassion, doing beautiful works as expressions of love". Hebrews 10 v 24 (Passion Translation). *Not staying on one bank but turning and reaching out to others on the other bank?*

Ove Arup was a man who was supremely gifted in the sphere of engineering and he passionately loved his work - a lesson for all who worked for him. He was brilliant at resolving unusual problems in unusual ways. He was a genius at thinking "outside the box".