

# Peabody Museum

Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

**Role:** Architect for Museum Expansion

**Building Area:** 35,000 sf addition

**Description:** The Peabody Museum at Harvard University, founded over a century ago, contains one of the world's greatest collections in archaeology, ethnology, and physical anthropology. This University museum has primary roles in research, education, collections, and exhibitions.

An Architectural Project Program for the expansion and renovation of the Peabody Museum, which describes its quantitative and qualitative long range space needs, was completed in 1968. As part of this study, basic planning models were developed as options for solving the museum's future space needs for administrations, research, instruction, archaeology and ethnology collections, exhibition, and library areas. The firm provided basic architectural planning and design services for the Tozzer Library which is an addition to the Peabody Museum.

Tozzer Library, completed in 1974, is 25,000 sf research library building organized on three levels. The middle level, containing the circulation desk and card catalogue, establishes a direct link with the main level of the Peabody Museum. This arrangement creates a split level scheme with intimate reading areas dispersed throughout the stacks located on the first and third levels. A continuous ramp connects the main library level to the street level 5 feet below, thereby providing easy access to the facility by the physically handicapped.

The specialized nature of study is immediately apparent at the entrance by the prominence of a two-story high Mayan stela and display of other anthropological artifacts throughout the building. The entire building is air conditioned, and special humidification devices have been provided to protect rare artifacts. Special care was exercised in the choice of the brick, the scale of window treatment, and the stepped form of the building on the courtyard side in order to establish compatibility with the neighboring buildings and preserve the courtyard space. In order to solve the problem of public accessibility to the Peabody Museum's exhibitions, a separate study was begun to find a public accessible site for a new museum which would exhibit artifacts from all the University museums' collections.

