

# Bank of England Museum

## Summary of Relevant Projects *United Kingdom*



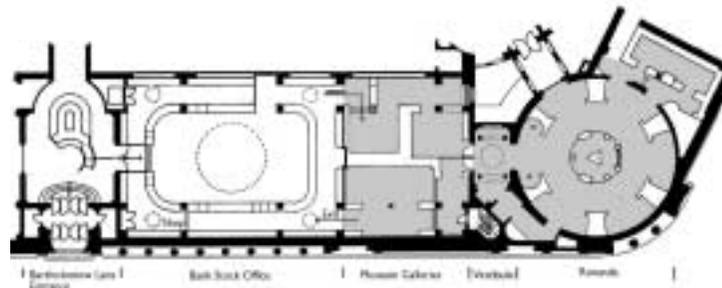
**Left** Perimeter showcases,  
Bank Stock Office

**Above** Restored plaster pen-  
dentives

The decision by The Bank of England to enlarge its existing museum and make it accessible to the public was taken in 1986. Previously confined to the Rotunda, the museum has been extended to include Sir Herbert Baker's 'Soane Hall' with a separate visitor entrance in Bartholomew Lane.

The museum comprises three parts

- Accurate reconstruction of Sir John Soane's 18th century Bank Stock Office.
- Creation of new gallery spaces with distinct historical themes.
- Refurbishment of the Rotunda to form a central gold display surrounded by twelve caryatids reclaimed from Baker's interior.

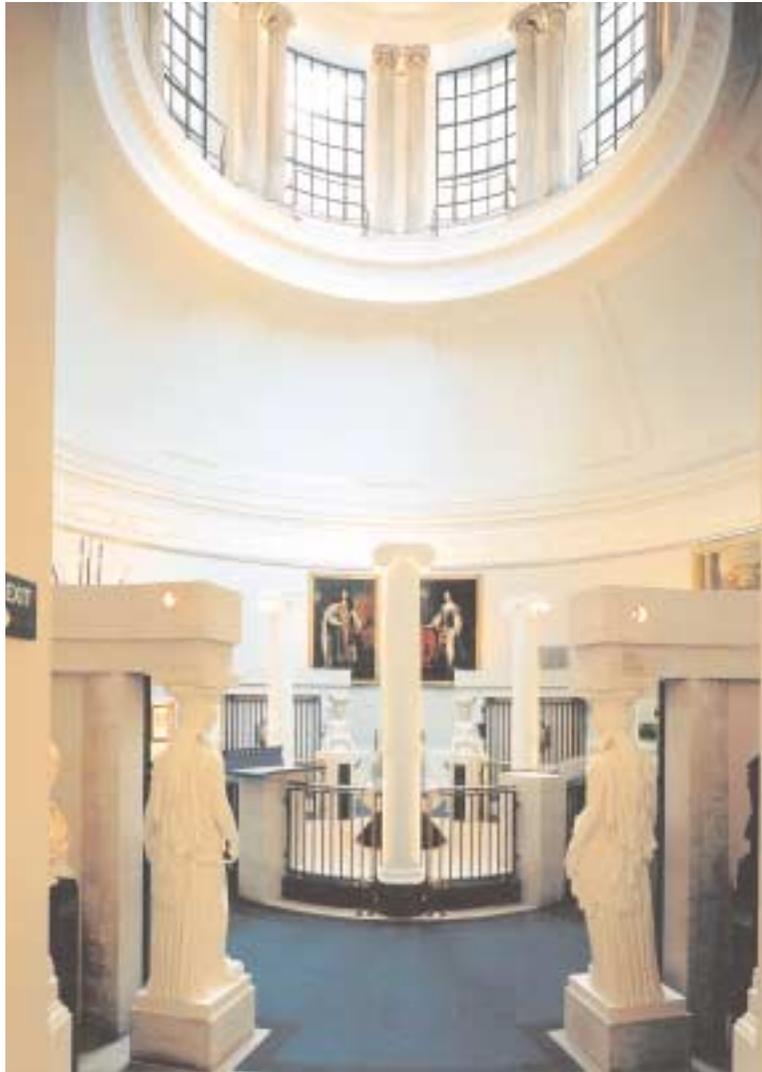


**Left** Plan of Museum

The hatched area represents indi-  
vidual display galleries culminating  
in the Rotunda Gallery

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**Left**  
*General view of  
Rotunda Gallery*

**Below**  
*Central Gold Display,  
Rotunda Gallery*

**Right**  
*'The Bank Today' Gallery*

The Rotunda Gallery represents the most dramatic architectural space within the Museum. At its centre is a raised display of gold flanked by Ionic columns retrieved from Baker's original Soane Hall. Perimeter wallcases contain displays on the recent history of the Bank, flanked by 18th century reclaimed caryatids to symbolise 'guardians' of the gold.

Leaving the Rotunda Gallery, visitors enter an exhibition area describing the functions of 'The Bank Today'. Audio-visual installations are used extensively, including a dealer's desk enabling the visitor to experience the working environment of modern banking, and interactive video units describing the role of a central bank in the modern economy.



*Opened by Her Majesty the Queen, the museum won the 1988 City Heritage Award and 1989 Stone Federation Award for Outstanding Craftsmanship.*

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**Right**  
*'The Founding of the Bank'*  
Gallery

**Far Right**  
*'The Eighteenth Century'*  
Gallery

The reduced width of the reinstated Bank Stock Office enabled a series of new display galleries to be created in the remainder of Baker's Soane Hall, with a first floor area for curatorial and administrative offices. Starting with 'The Founding of the Bank', the interiors of the new display galleries use materials and crafts normally reserved for

restoration work, reflecting the historical settings for each display theme ranging from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

All showcases are custom-made as an integral feature of the design, with full environmental control and fibre-optic lighting to meet the strictest conservation standards.

