



by Riley Moffat

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I returned to America from the Kingdom of Tonga in 1976 and became the Map and Geography librarian at Brigham Young University in Provo. Major culture shock. Loved my job and soon heard about WAML. Looking back forty years I can honestly say WAML was the professional organization with the most fun and interesting people. I'd always had a love affair with maps but finding fellow enthusiasts was hard, I'd always felt like some weird loner at state and national meetings. At WAML I was in my heaven. For the next 38 years I found a way to get to most meetings and even hosted a few as well as served in the leadership of the organization. Of course there were other professional organizations. But ALA was too eastern and too political for my taste and SLA G&M was kind of fading out. But WAML was alive and well and having fun out west.

The conferences were a chance to hear not only technical map librarianship presentations but also hear about interesting local research. The workshops were uniformly informative. The dinners and field trips and talking to the vendors were a great way to get to know each other in informal settings and we always talked shop. It's surprising how much we could learn in those informal settings. Of course, visiting each other's collections was good to get ideas of how to improve your own.

Repping WAML at CUAC was heavy. One of my assignments was supposed to get the CIA to open up and make more maps and atlases available. I felt I had some



successes there that were apparently short lived.

Four summer projects at LCG&M were awesome, generally working in the rare maps vault. Those days at LCG&M picking and packing dupes was like being a pig in mud. No one could out hustle and out me except Dan Seldin. Over the years those summer projects built up BYU's map collection from 150,00, mostly depository sheets to 250,000 sheets and 5,000 atlases. Now it's how much digital data and how many computer work stations a collection has that count.

My graduate training in cartography was old school. Think scribing and process cameras. What I was able to learn about GIS was largely due to seminars and presentations at WAML.

At WAML I was able to hang out with some of the real pioneers in the field like Stan Stevens, Mary Larsgaard, Larry Cruse, and many other pioneers who helped develop the field and even the mysterious Carlos Hagan.

To really make the most of WAML meant hosting meetings. There were two in Provo where we bumped into Robert Redford at dinner at Sundance at one. After moving back home to Hawaii in 1986 I was involved in hosting ten year meetings in 1992, 2002, and 2012 with the help of Mabel Suzuki and Ross Togashi at University of Hawaii. For those who were able to get there I'm sure you have great memories of our field trips: the VIP treatment at the Kilauea volcano including bunking at Kilauea Military Camp and freezing atop Mauna Kea at the observatories.

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