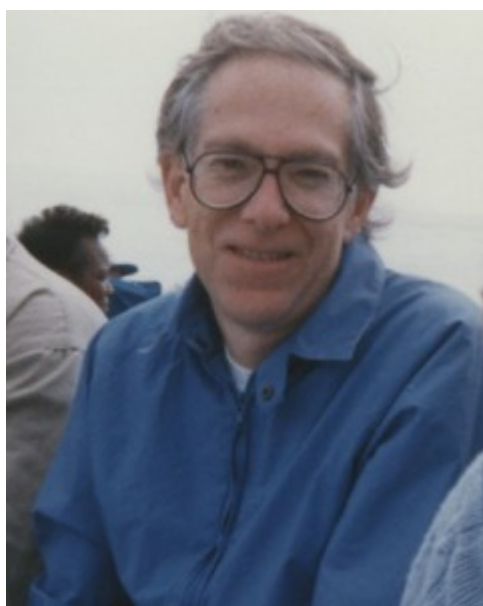




by Kathy Rankin

[<< issue home](#)

I have written a summary of Phil Hoehn's career in map librarianship and his thoughts on WAML and map librarianship based on his answers to a series of questions.



Phil was a geography major at UCLA, and like his grandfather, he always loved maps. He received a library degree from UC Berkeley. In 1969 he was hired as map librarian at Berkeley's Bancroft Library. Later he ran the Earth Sciences and Map Library at UCB. His favorite accomplishment in map librarianship is overseeing a California map cataloging and conversion project at Berkeley, and two decades later, a complementary, ongoing project at the California Historical Society. Later after he retired from Berkeley, he was the map bibliographer at Stanford. Phil left Stanford and went to work as the David Rumsey Map Collection's librarian. He is now retired but does volunteer map cataloging at the California Genealogical Society and the California Historical Society.

The weirdest request he ever received was the patron who found the perfect map (a large rolled map) and then wanted to see the 8.5 x 11 inch version. Phil says that patrons frequently need a lot of guidance in discovering and using maps, but less so now that they can consult large numbers of maps online.

Phil joined WAML in 1969, which was just two years after its first meeting. He feels



that the benefits of belonging to WAML are getting good practical advice from friendly, experienced colleagues, and therapy: WAML meetings are good places to voice local problems among like-minded individuals. Phil also says that by attending WAML meetings, he has gotten a great deal of invaluable information and advice, and he obtained many great maps for his libraries' collections at WAML duplicate exchanges. Phil also enjoyed opportunities to visit interesting places that he would probably otherwise not have seen, and to observe first hand (and borrow) good practices in other collections. The field trip that stands out in his mind is the Santa Catalina field trip in 1989. Although he grew up in Southern California, he somehow skipped seeing Catalina. The unusual flora impressed him the most.

Phil says that some of the WAML members whom he feels have been important to the organization are Stan Stevens, Mary Larsgaard, and Larry Carver. Stan Stevens organized and kept WAML running for many years and was a source of good ideas and sound advice. Mary Larsgaard vigorously pushed for shared cataloging. Larry Carver opened our eyes to the growing importance of remote sensing imagery and trying to organize and control it.

Phil believes that the way WAML has changed over the years is that there is less news about individual collections because MAPS-L has largely usurped that role, and there is more emphasis on formal presentations at meetings. He belongs to other map-related groups because they supplement WAML in areas such as new cataloging and OCLC developments. Phil sees WAML's future as being the same as always: a formal and informal information exchange and mentoring new members.

Phil sees the future of map librarianship as continuing to move toward more emphasis on digital spatial data, on rare or special collections (at least for some institutions), and library instruction.

[<< issue home](#)
[next feature >>](#)