



[< issue toc next >>](#)

Spring 2023 Features

Hi everyone,

Hopefully, your 2023 is starting off well! Please enjoy our first IB Features interview with Matthew Parsons, who is the Geospatial Data and Maps Librarian at the University of Washington Libraries. Then below are the normal event and conference announcements. Don't forget about WAML 2023!

– Georgia Brown (IB Features Editor)

Interview with Matthew Parsons, Geospatial Data and Maps Librarian, University of Washington Libraries

1. How did you find map and GIS librarianship?

I stumbled into map librarianship back in 2001. I graduated with my MLIS in 2000 and began working as a temporary reference librarian at the University of Washington Libraries when the current map librarian (Katheryn Womble, former WAML member) took a job at another institution. I volunteered to fill in at the UW Libraries' Map Collection while they were short-handed. I minored in geology as an undergrad, so my exposure to geologic and topographic maps gave me enough knowledge for the Libraries to agree to this arrangement. I was the temporary map librarian from 2001 until 2003 when the Libraries official posted the job. I applied for the position and was selected to be the official map librarian.

2. How long have you been a map / GIS librarian?

I've been a map librarian for 22 years now. After my appointment to the position in 2003, I was trained to do map cataloging and did that alongside my public facing duties. In 2009, the other Map Collection librarian, who was responsible for GIS, took another position and left. I dropped the map cataloging part of my position to assume the GIS role of my former colleague and that is how I ended up in my current position of Geospatial Data and Maps Librarian.



3. What has changed about the profession most since you started?

A lot has changed since I started. I entered map librarianship just after the introduction of GIS into libraries, therefore I've been a witness to its continual growth and evolution within the profession. The launch of Google Maps was another big change along with the switch from paper to born-digital maps among many of the U.S. federal agencies. These two events had a big impact on my physical print collection. Things are definitely more GIS focused and less paper map focused in terms of user services these days.

4. What's your favorite part of your job?

I have two favorites and they are equal in status. I have found a lot of enjoyment working with my colleagues. This includes both my UW Libraries and my extended professional colleagues in WAML and MAGIRT. Without both these groups, I don't think I could have accomplished the things I've done, nor could I have lasted this long in the profession. I also really enjoy helping the students and staff at the UW with their GIS and map related projects and research. Both these favorites sound trite, but they are true.

5. What advice do you have for newcomers in the profession?

The best advice I have to offer, especially in terms of GIS librarianship, is to look for professional development opportunities that will keep your skill set up to date. This could be through professional associations like WAML, but also local GIS user groups and other venues. The best thing I did when I was first tasked with GIS responsibilities at my institution was to audit an introduction to GIS course in one of our GIS-focused departments. Since then I've participated in various workshops and other learning opportunities to help keep myself informed and ready to help my users. Additionally, don't be afraid to ask for assistance from your professional colleagues. No one is an expert in everything, but our vast and distributed knowledge and experience are here to support you, so be sure to take advantage of that.

Lectures

April 11, 2023 - Denver (Online) Eliane Dotson (Old World Auctions) will present *What's My Map Worth? How to Value Antique Maps* to the [Rocky Mountain Map Society](#) at 5:30 MT. Most of us have maps, whether in drawers, framed on walls or in



our attics. Have you ever wondered what your maps are worth? Join guest speaker, Eliane Dotson, as she shares secrets of the trade on how to value antique maps. Learn the difference between various types of values, such as insurance appraisals, dealer prices, and auction estimates. Discover which key factors most affect the value of a map, including color, state/edition, published format, and condition. Learn where to find information on current and historical prices for maps and how to evaluate the validity of the data. Although valuing antique maps takes many years to master, this lecture will guide both new and experienced collectors to a better understanding of why some maps are worth more than others and will offer a step-by-step process to value your own collection. Contact Naomi E Heiser <Naomi.Heiser(at)Colorado.edu> for Zoom link.

April 19, 2023 - USA (Online) [California](#), [Chicago](#), [New York](#), [Philip Lee Phillips](#), [Rocky Mountain](#), [Texas](#), and [Washington Map](#) Societies are offering a virtual lecture via Zoom. Anyone interested in participating in the meeting must RSVP to John Docktor at washmap(at)gmail.com in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting will start at 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 6:00 PM Central Time, 5:00 PM Mountain Time, and 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Chet Van Duzer (current recipient of Philip Lee Phillips Society Fellowship; and Board Member, The Lazarus Project at the University of Rochester) will present Behold the Mapmaker: Cartographic Self-Portraits. The lives of early modern cartographers are poorly documented compared with those of contemporary writers and painters, yet a source for insights into the lives of cartographers—the self-portraits that they sometimes include in their maps—is largely unexplored. These self-portraits are an important part of the social history of cartography, of how cartographers chose to present themselves; they also function as visual signatures, guarantees of quality, and expressions of pride. In this talk, Chet will examine some of the more striking and evocative cartographic self-portraits from the earliest surviving case in the fourteenth century to examples from pictorial maps of the twentieth century.

April 27, 2023 - Minneapolis (Online) The [Society for the History of Discoveries](#) will continue to have a virtual lecture series this year. Cameron Strang (History, University of Nevada - Las Vegas) will speak at 2:30 pm (Central). His topic will be related to his recent research on Native American and African-American explorers. Please save the date and expect to receive additional details and registration information soon.

May 2, 9, 16, and 30, 2023 - Denver The [Rocky Mountain Map Society](#) and [History Colorado](#) will be sponsoring [Map May-hem 2023](#) this month. Meetings will be



held on Tuesdays at 6:00 pm in History Colorado Center, 1200 Broadway. It is uncertain at this time if the meetings will be on Zoom. Contact Naomi E Heiser <Naomi.Heiser(at)Colorado.edu> for additional details.

- May 2nd – Wes Brown: *The Cartographic Roots of Colorado*
- May 9th – Chris W. Lane: *Unveiling of the Continent's Spine: the discovery and mapping of the Rocky Mountains*
- May 16th – Steve Hoffenberg: *Drawing the Line: War, Treaty and Exploration*
- May 30th – Tom Overton: *Early Maps of Denver*

May 5, 2023 - Los Angeles The [California Map Society](#) is proud to support UCLA's [Center for Early Global Studies](#) to present a one-day conference: [The Intermingling of Cartography and Literature in the Early Modern Period](#) in UCLA – Royce Hall, 9:00AM – 5:00PM. Registration is free for this event, although you will need to pay for parking at UCLA. Click [here](#) to RSVP. Organized by Chet Van Duzer <chet(dot)van(dot)duzer(at)gmail(dot)com> and Steve McCormick <mccormicks(at)wlu(dot)edu>, the [program](#) of the conference offers rich and diverse perspectives on the interactions between literature and cartography in the early modern period.

May 19, 2023 - McLean, Virginia The [Washington Map Society](#) 42nd annual dinner and lecture will be at Maggiano's Little Italy, 2001 International Dr, in Tyson Galleria II. Andrew Adamson (principal Heritage Charts) and Frank Licameli (Enrollment/Recruiting Operations Officer, Department of Military Science, George Mason University) will speak about F. W. Des Barres' *Great Folly: An Examination of Des Barres' Foray into the Realm of Political Mapping and the Little-known Plans He Created to that End*. Additional details to be announced.

May 19, 2023 - Washington The [Washington Map Society](#), in conjunction with [Philip Lee Phillips Society](#), will meet at 10:00 AM ET in Library of Congress, Rare Books Department's Rosenwald Room. Jackie Coleburn (Library of Congress, Rare Book Cataloger) and Anthony Mullan (Geography and Map Division, Cartographic Specialist [retired]) will discuss *A Globe on a New Plan: Peter Parley's Innovative Teaching of Geography to Children in 19th Century America*. Additional details to be announced.

June 11-16, 2023 - Charlottesville Matthew Edney will be teaching H-65 [Material Foundations of Map History, 1450-1900](#) at the [Rare Book School](#). The course will meet on the University of Virginia campus. Indeed, while the main UVa library (with



RBS quarters) continues its multi-year renovations, RBS meets in Thomas Jefferson's famed rotunda and lawn.

June 14, 2023 - USA (Online) The [California](#), [Chicago](#), [New York](#), [Philip Lee Phillips](#), [Rocky Mountain](#), [Texas](#), and [Washington Map Societies](#) are offering a virtual lecture via Zoom. Anyone interested in participating in the meeting must RSVP to John Docktor at <washmap(at)gmail.com> in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting will start at 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 6:00 PM Central Time, 5:00 PM Mountain Time, and 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Rodney Kite-Powell (Director, Touchton Map Center, Tamp Bay History Center) will present *Key West and the Florida Keys: Mapping the History of the Conch Republic*.

Conferences / Workshops

May 24-26, 2023 - Thessaloniki, Greece The [Commission on Cartographic Heritage](#) into the Digital of the International Cartographic Association, continuing the tradition of its annual Cartoheritage Conferences, since 2006, is organizing the [17th Conference Digital Approaches to Cartographic Heritage \(ICA DACH\)](#), in partnership with the AUTH - Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, supported by the MAGIC - Map & Geoinformation Curators Group. The Conference is kindly hosted by the Museum of Byzantine Culture of Thessaloniki.

May 30 - Jun 9, 2023 - Cambridge, MA GIS Institute Summer 2023: Immersive Training for Spatial Research. Twice a year in January and June, the CGA offers a two-week training course in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and its application to research. The program is designed for Harvard graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, faculty, and staff, as well as external researchers who want to integrate spatial thinking, incorporate GIS methods and tools, and map communication into their research. <https://gis.harvard.edu/>.

August 9-12, 2023 - Vancouver, British Columbia For more information on WAML 2023, check out the conference website <https://waml.org/conferences/waml-2023/> & for more information on submissions, <https://waml.org/conferences/waml-2023/call-for-submissions/>.

Digital Exhibits

Late Ottoman Turkey in Princeton's Forgotten Maps, 1883-1923:



<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/3afc128a641e47eb90b3268c5ffb8d54?item=1>

IB Features Editor: Georgia Brown

[< issue toc next >>](#)