

Benchmarks!

Personal News of WAML Members

Roy Vernon Boswell, Honorary Life Member of WAML, died at the Anaheim (California) Memorial Hospital on August 26, 1990, at the age of ninety-six.

The WAML Executive honored Boswell by naming him Honorary Life Member at its Berkeley meeting, September, 1983 (WAML *Inf Bull* Nov. 1983 15:1:110-111). The citation noted his contributions to WAML, his establishment of the Collection for The History of Cartography at California State University, Fullerton (later renamed The Roy V. Boswell Collection for the History of Cartography), and for his pioneering efforts in cartobibliographic description: "His Collection is recognized by curators for its care, preservation, and organization and serves as one of the world's superior models for

organization and serves as one of the world's superior models for collections of rare maps."

Boswell served as Curator of The Collection from its founding in 1971 until his resignation in 1985. This was at a time when then University Librarian at CSU-Fullerton, Alan Schorr, dismantled the long-established administrative structure of Special Collections (which included the Boswell Collection), and withdrew all funding. This inexplicable situation left the Collection without public service, technical support, nor collection development. Boswell fought to rectify this situation up to the time of his death. Long-time friend, Stanley Stevens, talked with Boswell on his 96th Birthday, May 9, 1990, and reported that "Roy said he was giving up

the fight, he didn't see any possibility of change, and he didn't want to spend the rest of his life fighting a losing battle. I think that decision killed him; he said he had accomplished all he could; and I think he just gave up. But we will always remember him for this major lifetime accomplishment, regardless of what the library administrators at CSU-Fullerton choose to do. In hindsight he realized that he had made a mistake establishing the Collection at Fullerton, but he agreed that no one could have predicted its fate. All exploratory efforts to relocate The Collection, which is what Roy would want today, and place it where it would be used and appreciated have been unsuccessful."

The ten exhibits that Boswell mounted were each accompanied by a fine-press catalog, and he

mounted were each accompanied by a fine-press catalog, and he wrote other works describing his methodology and philosophy. Some of these works may be found republished in the WAML *Information Bulletin*. His last work (1990), as yet unpublished, was co-authored by his long-time colleague at CSU-Fullerton, Linda Herman, former Head of Special Collections: **THE ROY V. BOSWELL COLLECTION FOR THE HISTORY OF CARTOGRAPHY California State University, Fullerton: A description with some notes on Cartography and Maps**. Its content is summarized by Roy in its introduction: "The object of this monograph is to make known the resources of the Collection, concisely, to: (1) one who has an Early Map and desires to identify and study it; (2) one to whom Early Maps and Cartography are

a new field of interest; (3) scholars, working in many fields, who may find use for Early Maps as historical documents, scientific documents or objects of art; (4) the knowledgeable scholar in the discipline, the History of Cartography."

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, Mr. Boswell came to San Francisco with his parents just after the Great Quake of 1906. At the age of nineteen he qualified as a public accountant. He served as private secretary to the President of the Braun Chemical Company for several decades. Later, with a shop in Beverly Hills, Boswell dealt in antiques, rare books, and early maps. In the 1970s he continued collecting and selling rare books and maps from his home in Gilroy, California, and at the same time he commuted to Fullerton to care for The Collection. Later he

ma, and at the same time he commuted to Fullerton to care for The Collection. Later he moved to Fullerton to spend full-time as the sole volunteer-curator of The Collection.

On September 28, 1990, the University of Nevada, Reno Library honored **Mary Ansari** and her husband Nazir Ansari by the naming of the Map Collection as the **Mary B. Ansari Map Library** in celebration of their major gift of support to the University Library. Mary is a former President of WAML, and formerly Map Librarian at UNR. She is currently Assistant University Librarian for Administrative Services and Branch Libraries. She, and current Map Librarian Linda Newman, compiled WAML's O P No. 11: *Nevada Directory of Maps and Aerial Photo Resources* (1984).