



# NEMO Newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter of the North East Map Organization

NUMBER 41

January 2001

Welcome to the Third Millennium!  
Welcome to the Twenty-first Century!  
Happy New Year!

## From the Bridge

**N**EMO has met more times in Massachusetts (seven), and this seems to be the center of our professional organization. The maritime history of Massachusetts is a topic we have featured in past meetings, and a book related to this state is the *American Practical Navigator*. Known today as "Bowditch" the work has an interesting history.

Nathaniel Bowditch of Salem compiled this in 1802. It was called the *New American Practical Navigator*, and was printed by E. Blunt in Massachusetts. Bowditch added to it until 1838, when he died.

The United States government bought the copyright in 1867 and they have published 52 editions, including the current one in 1995. The huge work contains information on piloting, electronic navigation, nautical charts, celestial navigation, and cartographic tables.

An great tool to study cities is Dr. William Bowen's **Digital Atlas of New York City**

<http://130.166.124.2/library.html>

Also at this site is the **Digital Atlas of Boston and Vicinity**. Last year I requested this California professor to do Buffalo. He told me he was going to do Honolulu next. Of course Buffalo is not as large today (fifty-fifth), but it was the sixth or seventh largest city in America in 1900. In 1951 it was fifteenth according to Abbey Michaels.

**Captain Ernie Woodson**  
University at Buffalo Libraries

## NEMO 2001 — A Map Odyssey!

**G**reetings everyone. As was mentioned in an earlier *NEMO Newsletter*, NEMO 2001 is scheduled for June 7-8, at Mount Holyoke College (located in Western Massachusetts). A special thank you to Nancy Kandoian for getting the location and dates confirmed.

As I type this, NEMO 2001 is only six months away and, before we know it, it will be here. So, I am asking everyone to please take a few minutes and think about speakers, topics, themes, etc. which you would like to have at the 2001 meeting and send them off to me in an email. I have received a couple of suggestions, but need more. Your input is appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you. Thanks in advance.

Hope you all had Happy Holidays!

**Jim Walsh**, Captain Elect  
NEMO 2001 Program Planner  
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**In the next issue!**  
Annual Meeting  
information and  
registration materials.



*"The shortest distance between two points is under construction."*

Noelie Altito

Harvey, Miles. *The Island of Lost Maps: a True Story of Cartographic Crime*. New York: Random House, 2000. xxiii, 405 p. Bibliographical references and index.

Geography and cartography as themes in books appear to be more popular today than one would expect. Who would have guessed that a book about longitude and time keeping would be successful and interesting to more than a small group of enthusiasts. To most, the World of cartography does not conjure up much excitement, but perhaps this is why some of the newer publications are attracting followers.

For my birthday, my wife gave me a book that is much more than the title indicates. The main story is about a man named Gilbert Bland, Jr., an antique dealer from Florida, who is known to have stolen maps and atlases from at least seventeen libraries in the United States and two in Canada. The author states that "He was... the greatest American map thief in history."<sup>1</sup> While this is the main plot, the author goes beyond just documenting the man and his crimes.

Miles Harvey started on this story as a magazine article, but became so interested in the topic of maps that he continued research to produce this book. Harvey tells the reader that his work is on "the extraordinary power of maps and the lengths to which human beings will go in obtaining them."<sup>2</sup> The route the author took to gather the entire story was through every aspect of the world of geography and cartography. He entered "a curious subculture made up of map historians, map librarians, map dealers, and map collectors—all gripped by an obsession both surreal and sublime."<sup>3</sup> Like the author, readers will enjoy wandering through the text "Like the explorers of old," and will be "heading farther and farther into strange waters, never quite sure" if they find what they are "looking for, but endlessly filled with bemusement and wonder."<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the book, the journey moves between modern experiences and stories of the topic of maps, map making, the power of maps, and their effect on the economies of nations, the lives of individuals, and many additional aspects. This book tells a much greater story, namely the history of cartography and of those that created and used maps throughout history.

The writing is lively and the author shows a true enthusiasm for the work. He has a good grasp of the significance of maps, as well as the people who are involved in the map world. The book winds its way through a variety of places, people, and events, providing glimpses into the realms of cartographers, map publishers, map collectors, auctions, map librarians, map collections, explorers, kings and politicians, and to intrigue, and crime.

Also described in the book are the problems facing special collections, especially security of materials, and the reasons why this has become essential. The market for rare maps and atlases created the security nightmare for institutions worldwide. Incredible prices paid on rare materials have made theft more lucrative than ever. The book explains how this happened and it also describes map theft through the ages.

Another aspect of map theft that is described is the relationship of telecommunication to crime. The author shows how criminals use the Internet to locate target items for stealing. These are the same resources that those institutions have developed to allow access to these materials for serious research and legitimate use. He also shows how this same network can be used to track down these criminals, as well as how the global

community can unite to protect the legacy of maps and other source materials from loss.

The book is a pleasure to read and is loaded with information. If you are looking for an interesting book, *The Island of Lost Maps* is definitely worth reading.—David J. Bertuca

<sup>1</sup> xxi. <sup>2</sup> xii  
<sup>3</sup> xxiii <sup>4</sup> xxiii

## 2001 Walter W. Ristow Prize in the History of Cartography and Map Librarianship

The annual Walter W. Ristow Prize recognizes achievement in cartographic history and map librarianship and is offered by the **Washington Map Society**.

**Who May Apply:** Competition is open to all full or part-time upper-level undergraduate, graduate and first-year postdoctoral students attending accredited colleges or universities.

**Entry Criteria** Entries are to be research papers or bibliographic studies related to cartographic history and/or map librarianship. In the case of undergraduate and graduate students, the entries shall have been completed in fulfillment of requirements for course work. A short edition of a longer paper is permitted; papers of shorter length have been highly competitive. The text may not exceed 7,500 words, in English. Papers must be fully documented in a style of the author's choice (endnotes preferred). Inclusion of clear graphics supporting the paper is appreciated.

**Deadline:** Entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2001. Send to John Docktor, Ristow Prize, 150 S. Strathcona Drive, York PA 17403-3833.

**Format:** Entries must be submitted in four unbound copies with appropriate title page and cover sheet. The cover sheet must include the entrant's name, address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address (if available) for timely contact. Please be certain that identifying material does not appear on any page except for the cover sheet.

**Judging Criteria:** Entries will be judged on three broad criteria: importance of research, (e.g., originality, sources); quality of research (e.g., accuracy, source reliability); quality of writing (e.g., clarity, command of cartographic terms).

**Judging Methods:** three judges of suitable cartographic background will assess Entries. Judges will receive anonymous copies of entries, read them independently, and report their assessments to a collator.

**The Award** The winner receives \$500, a one-year membership in the Washington Map Society, and the paper will be published in *The Portolan*, the journal of the Washington Map Society.

Walter W. Ristow, co-founder and first president of the Washington Map Society, is Chief, Emeritus of the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress.

For further information contact John Docktor (address above). A copy of this notice is available at:

<http://users.supernet.com/pages/jdocktor/ristow.htm>

For information about the **Washington Map Society** contact Hubert O. Johnson, Membership Chair, 2101 Huntington Avenue, Alexandria VA 22303-1547.

### Current Officers (2000-2001)

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Treasurer	Heather Hoffman	jaquith@thecia.net

## Map Resources

### CD-ROM Atlases from Russia CD-ROM Atlases from Russia

CD-ROM atlases from the nations of the former USSR are available, which cover in detail the Ukraine, the Baltics, Russia, Belorussia, the Caucasus, and the countries of Central Asia. Many city street maps are included. Scales range from 1:10,000 to 1:100,000.

The atlases are in vector format for fast, accurate, and flexible display of information. Many of the atlases also show longitude and latitude of any point selected by the user. All atlases are shipped from stock in the USA, and they will run on any PC using Microsoft Windows 95 or later. Visit the Web site for details and sample map screens:

<http://www.mdres.com/AtlasCatalog/>



### Historical Maps of New York City's Subway System

<http://www.nycsubway.org/index.html>

"Welcome to the premiere unofficial site about the history of New York City's subway system— and other transit systems around the world."

This great Web site is perfect for locating maps and images of the New York subways. It is run by the New York City Subway Organization. The site is listed as an "unofficial" site, but they have a collection of maps from the earliest to the most current publications. There are route maps and related maps, as well as NYC Omnibus Corp. maps. In addition, the site has links to related sites, including subway systems worldwide. The historical map page is:

<http://www.nycsubway.org/maps/historical/index.html>

## GEO TRIVIA

Turkey's largest city, Istanbul, played a central role in Greek history. Called Constantinople, it was capital of the Byzantine Empire. The name Istanbul was not officially adopted until 1930.

Twenty-three states in the U.S. border an ocean.

Two thousand years ago, the ancient Roman city of Pompeii was a thriving commercial port of 20,000 people.

And one for the winter:

The whirlpool below Niagara Falls iced over for the first time on record, on March 25, 1955. A huge ice jam in Lake Erie caused more than \$6 million in property damages near Niagara Falls, New York.

## Carto Clips

The Maps Library of the University Libraries, Penn State, had a major map exhibit in the Pattee main lobby from November 1st through January 2nd. The exhibit consisted of World War II vintage maps from the Library's collection as well as some over-view maps designed for the exhibit. Some of the text, photographs, posters, and the over-view maps may be viewed from the Maps Library website at [www.libraries.psu.edu/crsweb/maps](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/crsweb/maps). The exhibit was organized by Derrick Beckner, Maps Library Assistant, formerly of the University Libraries' Historical Collections and Labor Archives.

—submitted by Joanne Perry, Maps Librarian

**Barb Seekins** has taken a position with the National Marine Fisheries Service and has moved west to Portland, OR. She's working with their Habitat Conservation Group. Her first project was to produce a dam map for the Pacific Northwest. Her work now is more concerned with inland waterway conditions for anadromous fish than the seafloor. *Congratulations and Good Luck, Barb!*

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NEMO member **Paige Andrew** recently had a brief article about the map collections at the Pennsylvania State University Libraries, titled "Maps at the Pennsylvania State University Libraries: A Special Collections Story" published in *CPC-SLA Keynotes*, 21:4 (Nov. 2000): 5-6.

### Virtual World... Continued from page 4

the creations that computers provide. Few consider that much of the data began with human effort. People still collect, compile, and arrange concepts, to express findings, thoughts, and conclusions. A human is still necessary to interpret data and to add intellectual value to it. No machine is capable of performing such tasks. Output data is designed for human interaction. Computers are tools to assist humans in processing data into recognizable information. They have organizing capabilities that are faster and more consistent than humans, but the concept of organization is still provided by people. In our daily work and lives, we need to remember this. When communicating what we do, we need to clearly explain the same principles, otherwise we will devalue our careers, and our existence.

True, printed maps, with hand-drawn imagery will always exist because people still want and need them. We will always enjoy seeing and using good maps and charts. But, we also need to maintain the map's status as a human tool that is produced by humans for humans. This will help us to chart our courses in the new age of maps and cartography. —DJB

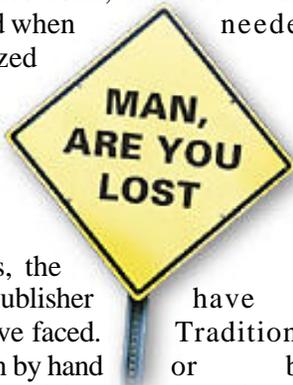
## Maps in the Virtual World

Maps and cartography are evolving in an uncharted world. Not the physical World, though most maps still represent the tangible, but the virtual, electronic world, in which road signs and mile markers are not indicative of the actual road to take. Getting lost on the "virtual highway" is the norm, rather than the exception.

The word "map" is no longer seen as a guide to the physical World, as there are many new meanings and many new people who do not understand the maps as we do. There are "site maps," which are really Web site directories, "computer maps" (a coded array of data for programmers to use in setting parameters), and there are GIS-created maps, which are created on demand, and which may not exist in printed form, but are merely data sets that are used when needed to create maps of customized feature groups that may be viewed for a short time onscreen or printed onto paper for purpose-specific use.

In all these developments, the cartographer and the map publisher have a challenge unlike any they have faced. Traditional maps, printed on paper, drawn by hand or by machine-assisted composition techniques, still have a role in geography and human endeavors. All maps, whether printed or computer-generated, on-demand images, still require cartographers and skilled editors to produce the data. But now many people do not view the human role in map production (or in many other fields), and few appreciate the fact that people are even involved in map making at all. The digital world is to some, an automated environment with machines performing most of the tasks, in which humans interact and benefit from

Continued on page 3



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We invite and welcome contributions and suggestions. Please submit all materials to the editor using e-mail, 3.5" PC or Macintosh disk (in Word, RTF, or ASCII format), or by sending a typewritten document. Newsletter submissions and questions on submissions should be directed to:

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**NEMO** (North East Map Organization) is a group dedicated to serving as a unifying body for all who use, produce, collect, and market maps and cartographic information in the Northeast; increasing communication between all interested in maps; and working with state, regional, and national organizations and government agencies in dissemination of maps and cartographic information. NEMO's principal region is CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT.

**Subscriptions** are included with membership in NEMO, which is fifteen dollars per year. Back issues for the current year will be included with new memberships.

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