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NEWSLETTER

[1968]

writes through passage/ écrire à travers passage

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Mac Mapping in the Map Library by Colleen Beard

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Note from the Editor:

Welcome/Bienvenue to the inaugural *writes through passage/écrire à travers passage*.

Fifty seven years in the making, this spatial, in the vaulted Bulletin, is a play on that "rite of passage" of ACMLA members contributing an article during the early (nudged gently) stages of their professional career. Articles evoked in this section will draw upon from 175 seasonal issues marking the *passage* of time. These written *passages* (and graphics) are not only reintroduced but their contents virtually refurbished with associated links and OJS indexing, and thus resurrected from the banal static of a pdf file. Bringing back articles, that etched the profession's transitional temporals, while shining a light on a community of authors that stitched a continuous corpus of material comprising the association's unfolding epitaph.

The geometrics of this column are open ended, and community driven. Everyone is encouraged to contribute. If there is an article from the past that you found fascinating and feel it needs a dusting-off, let us know. Still in contact with an author whose work you found inspiring? Reach out and inquire if they would personally like to reacquaint a new generation to their work?

At other times, as curator of this liminal slice of the Bulletin, there may be a mosaic of papers that are thematically linked, or composed to represent some of the more prolific contributors, especially during those early stretches as Newsletter gave way to Bulletin.

So enough from me (my own professional lectern drawing to dim) and pass(age) this over to Colleen Beard who in 1990, five years before ArcView 3.x made it second nature, was scribing about GIS layers as "object oriented base maps," and a year before grunge broke, was breaking new ground in the map library through a DIY approach. All captured in an article that exemplifies experiential learning. Learning that is still ongoing. When the map/gis curator chords institutional time to

investigate software and code, increasing the tonals of one's professional knowledge, and during the process, fine-tunes accessibility, discovery and engagement with our collective map collections.

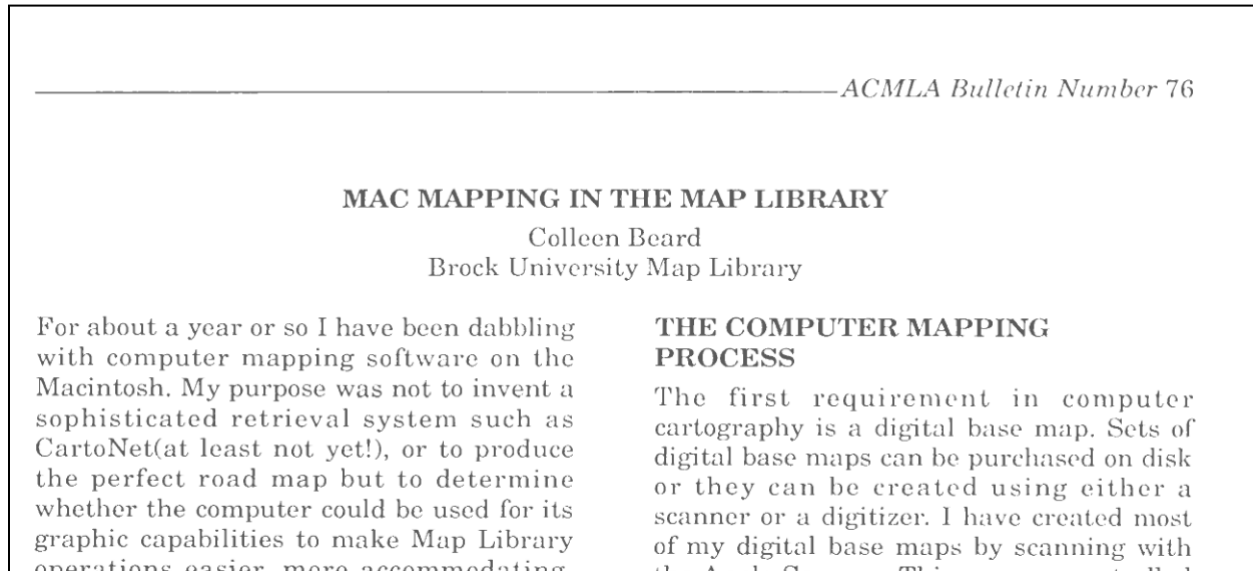


Figure 1: Beard, C. (1990). *Mac Mapping in the Library*. Bulletin - Association of Canadian Map Libraries and Archives (ACMLA), (76). <https://doi.org/10.15353/acmla.n76.6745>

Author Reflection

It was a day in 1988 that changed our Map Library forever – we acquired a Macintosh SE computer! The typewriter was finally archived. Needless to say, I embraced this new technology with enthusiasm – especially the part about no more white-out. What a revolution! I was already taking advantage of the Geography Department's computer for emailing (another revolution), although there were very few of us who had jumped on that bandwagon. Yes, I am from the ACMLA generation who transformed from paper to digital. After months of indexing maps and air photos with pencil and paper, I replaced the procedure with index maps created in SuperPaint and Superbits. I thought this was all very innovative at the time and didn't hesitate to "show and tell" to my colleagues. The result landed me an ACMLA Paper Award in 1991. In the Library profession, I was on the map – and never looked back.

Although I was relatively new to the library world at the time, one thing I did well as an undergrad at Brock was making maps, the old way. Soon after I became acquainted with the new Macintosh I was introduced to computer mapping software by the Cartography Professor, Alun Hughes. I was convinced this could be a good thing for two reasons: one, I just found my dream job!; and two, it could make map library tasks much easier. The second was key! The much fun in dabbling with this "on-the-cutting-edge" mapping technology, I had to justify time well spent. Sure enough, the applications where computer maps assisted with the management of map library collections and

information retrieval are essential tools still used today. This is the underlying pedagogy, if you will, that hopefully resonates in Mac Mapping in the Map Library (1990).

It is extremely important, in our profession, to take the time and experiment with technology that interests you. The outcomes can be beneficial in many ways. As we know, and some may have initially argued this fact, that providing computer instruction as a "service" is now accepted as a major part of our job. The more familiar we are with the technology that our patrons use, the more useful we become.

Fast forward 35 years – same mindset! I continue to do the same thing today that I was so passionate about – computer mapping. In my case, reconstructing history of the Welland Canals. The [Historic Welland Canals Mapping Project](#) has been hailed by the community as the most comprehensive visual account of the canals to date. Although I have graduated from Mac to Dell and from SuperPaint to ArcGIS, the underlying philosophy for its creation is the same – have fun with a cause. The only difference is... my maps are a whole lot prettier!

-Colleen Beard