



THE NEW YORK MAP SOCIETY
1978 - 1988

THE NEW YORK MAP SOCIETY
c/o The Map Division, New York Public Library
42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018

The beginning

1988 MARKS THE FIRST DECADE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF The New York Map Society, an organization whose purposes are to support and encourage the study and preservation of maps and related materials.

WERNER ELIAS, ENCOURAGED BY THE THEN CURATOR, Gerald L. Alexander, of the New York Public Library's Map Division, and with the active assistance of our current president, founded the Map Society, calling together folk with kindred interest in map collecting. Exploratory discussions in 1977 led to the first meeting held at the New York Public Library in January 1978.

EARLY ON, A COMMITMENT WAS MADE TO MONTHLY meetings on the first Saturdays. We would come together at a regular meeting place, charge \$10.00 per year dues, and maintain a membership of around 40 or so members. Dues and membership have since increased, the American Museum of Natural History is our regular meeting place, with NYPL's Map Division as our permanent mailing address. With this stability, the Society has been able to provide its members and guests a remarkable array of programs. Its newsletter, *Rhumb line*, was founded as *Rhumblines* by Alice Hudson and continued by Mark Larkin and Miklos Pinther.

The activities

PROGRAM MEETINGS HAVE BEEN OF THREE TYPES: GUEST speakers, field trips and members as speakers.

GUEST SPEAKERS AT THE NEW YORK MAP SOCIETY meetings have included John Noble Wilford, science writer for *The New York Times*, and author of *The Map Makers*; O. A. Dilke, University of Leeds, and author of *Greek and Roman Maps*; Seymour Schwartz, author of *The Mapping of America*; Lincoln Diamant, author of *Bernard Romans*; George Snyder of Sotheby's, author of *Maps of the Heavens*; Don Cresswell, author of *The American Revolution in Drawings and Prints*; Bob Tollett of B. Altman's Map Department; Caroline Komer, paper conservator; Daniel Traister, rare book librarian; Barbara Nimri Aziz, expert on Buddhist cartography; Elaine Haas of Talas; Dahlia Varankha of The Newberry Library; Dr. Heinz N. Roth of AT&T; Eric Nooter of The New-York Historical Society and Sandra Sider of The Hispanic Society.

VISITS HAVE TAKEN US TO THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Society; the United States Library of Congress; the battlefields of Gettysburg and the museums of Philadelphia with the Delaware Valley Map Society; The New-York Historical Society; The New York Public Library; Yale University; John Carter Brown Library; The Explorers Club; the Jewish Museum; Sotheby's Auction Rooms; The Military Academy at West Point; Princeton University; The Hispanic Society; South Street Seaport; The Brooklyn Museum; the navigational instruments museum of the United States Merchant Marine Academy; and the Map Library of the United Nations. Several establishments of dealers have been visited: Graham Arader III, Richard Arkway, B. Altman's, Walter Reuben, The Old Print Shop, and H. P. Kraus.

MEMBERS AS SPEAKERS PROVIDED FULLY HALF OF OUR programs. Topics have been universal: California as an island; map collecting; old road maps; maps on stamps; women mapmakers; New Jersey maps; Prester John; Holy Land maps; South Asia maps; postal route maps; the history of map societies; Iceland; slides from The Newberry Library, George Kish and the Maritime Museum of Greenwich, England; coastal charts; the mapping of Chelsea and Clinton neighborhoods of New York City; real estate maps of New York; the Northwest Passage; wall maps; globes; the growth of New York City; celestial maps; Islamic maps; NYPL treasures; map-pae mundi; Valentine's Manuals; Great Britain's Ordnance Survey; map projections; Marshall Island stick charts; guidebooks; and the discovery of the New World. "Show and tell" programs allowed members the opportunity to bring in their favorite maps. In these presentations treasured pieces were displayed followed by intense, informative discussions.

The officers

NUMEROUS OFFICERS SERVED US OVER the years. The following is a brief survey:

PRESIDENT: Werner Elias, Karl Kasner, Eugene Grossman, Sy Amkraut.

VICE PRESIDENT: Sy Amkraut, Eugene Grossman, Marshall Green.

SECRETARY: Alice Hudson, Leslie Simmons, Carol Dmytryshak, Ruth Hirsh, Miklos Pinther.

TREASURER: Sy Amkraut, Phil Merker, Marshall Green.

ARCHIVIST: Penny Barckley, Bruce N. Spring.

CONSULTANT: Gerald L. Alexander, Alice C. Hudson.

EDITOR, *Rhumb line*: Alice Hudson, Mark Larkin, Miklos Pinther.

Howard Welsh, while never filling any of these offices, has been a notable contributor to our success from the very beginning.

THE DECADE HAS BEEN FULL. WE HAVE made valuable friendships. We have been exposed to all facets of cartography. We have developed invaluable skills by which we may better evaluate maps.

We are challenged by our first 10 years as we seek to grow, and to continue educating ourselves and others about the beauty, research value, collectibility, and enjoyment of maps old and new. We invite all those with kindred interests to share with us the years to come.

SY AMKRAUT, President
ALICE HUDSON, Compiler