

# Rare Books and Manuscripts Section

## Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

### Goal Area: Learning

*3. ACRL increases member abilities to create and manage physical and virtual spaces and services as environments for discovery.*

As a result of the highly successful half-day workshop at the 2009 RBMS Preconference “Beyond the Show and Tell: Teaching Strategies for Special Collections Professionals,” the workshop organizers created an ALA community group called “Teaching Strategies for Special Collections Professionals” at <http://connect.ala.org/node/85063>.

## Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

### Goal Area: Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

*4. Strengthen ACRL’s relationships with learned societies to expand membership knowledge of disciplinary practices in scholarship.*

RBMS has liaison relationships with the Bibliographical Society of America (BSA; a member of the Council of Learned Societies), and the Society for the History and Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP).

## Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

### Goal Area: Advocacy

*2. Increase ACRL’s communication on major trends and issues in libraries and higher education.*

RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage is available on the RBMS website, with a three-issue delay. In addition to digital audio files from the 2009 preconference plenary sessions, visual content for them and for a number of other programs are available at <http://rbms.info/conferences/preconfdocs/2009/2009docs.shtml>

## Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

### Goal Area: Advocacy

*3. Strengthen partnerships with other organizations.*

RBMS members participated on the review task force for ACRL on the ACRL/SAA Joint Statement on Access to Research Materials in Archives and Special Collections Libraries, approved by the ACRL Board July 2009 <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/jointstatement.cfm>. RBMS has the responsibility of nominating members for the IFLA standing committee on Rare Books and Manuscripts, and endeavor to keep two ALA representatives on the committee at all times. We have two members at present, and will be nominating other RBMS members for the 2011-2014 term. RBMS is co-sponsoring in name only the ACRL AAMES program at the 2010 conference: Teaching Asian, African, and Middle Eastern Resources by Using Primary Source Materials from Special Collections: An Innovative Approach to Library Instruction. RBMS conference program To Catch a Thief: Cataloging and the Security of Special Collections is being co-sponsored in name only by ALCTS and MAGERT. RBMS is routinely represented at the Antiquarian Booksellers of America Association (ABAA) bookfairs, with brochures on joining ACRL/RBMS.

## Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

### Goal Area: Advocacy

*4. Increase ACRL’s influence in public policy affecting higher education.*

An RBMS member has been appointed to represent ACRL on the ALA Presidential Task Force to develop a statement on Traditional Cultural Expressions.

## Strategic Area: The Profession

### Goal Area: Continuous Learning

*1. Expand ACRL’s alignment of programs and other learning opportunities based on data, member needs, and strategic priorities.*

RBMS is presenting a program at the 2010 conference “To Catch a Thief: Cataloging and the Security of Special Collections.” It is in part a response to some of the recent high-profile thefts and recoveries of library materials, in part to a growing administrative pressure to catalog more quickly, cheaply, and shallowly (expressed emphatically in a plenary address at our 2008 preconference), and in part to explore this relationship to help our members and others make better appropriate choices. The annual RBMS preconference, now in its 51st year, is a major and effective tool for providing our members and others with research, knowledge, skills, and opportunities for informal conversation, networking, and idea-building. We believe that this four-day preconference is instrumental in attracting and retaining new talent to the profession, as well as keeping things fresh and engaging for the older hands. The theme of the 2010 RBMS Preconference is “‘Join or Die’: Collaboration in Special Collections.” There are a great many goals of the strategic plan to which the preconference contributes, but we are to only mention each activity once. Nevertheless, I will point out specific programming that contributes to very specific goals.

### **Strategic Area: The Profession**

#### **Goal Area: Continuous Learning**

##### ***2. Increase the accessibility of learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of members by relying on research and best practices for design, delivery, and accessibility.***

This year, RBMS instituted a new Regional Workshops committee, which works to take successful and popular Preconference workshops to different parts of the country. We relied on the successful Society of American Archivists’ model for the same, as well as our long experience in conducting workshops immediately preceding RBMS preconferences.

### **Strategic Area: The Profession**

#### **Goal Area: Continuous Learning**

##### ***4. Expand ACRL’s continuous learning opportunities on advocating the value of the library, the value of the librarian, and the value of information.***

RBMS is assisting Ms. Oakleaf in the ACRL value of academic libraries project, by directing her to research about special collections.

### **Strategic Area: The Profession**

#### **Goal Area: Continuous Learning**

##### ***5. Continue to play a leadership role in promoting research and publication in academic and research librarianship thereby creating and disseminating tools and a body of knowledge for the field.***

RBMS created Guidelines Regarding Security and Theft in Special Collections, which replaces the separate “Guidelines for the Security of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Other Special Collections” and “Guidelines Regarding Thefts in Libraries.” Approved in 2009 by the ACRL Board. RBMS has charged a Guidelines for Interlibrary Loan and Borrowing and Lending Special Collections Material for Exhibition Task Force to review, update, and revise the 2004 revised Guidelines for the Interlibrary Loan of Rare and Unique Material; and to review, update, and revise the 2005 revised Guidelines for Borrowing and Lending Special Collections Material for Exhibition, combining these two documents into a single set of guidelines for borrowing and lending rare and unique materials and special collections material. Combining and integrating these documents will make them easier to use. Through ACRL, RBMS publishes a journal titled RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts and Cultural Heritage. This semi-annual publication publishes articles on current research in the field of rare books and special collections. RBMS annually presents the Leab Exhibition Award, which recognizes outstanding printed catalogs, guides or electronic exhibitions, produced by United States and Canadian libraries. Exhibition catalogs play an important role in teaching, publicity, and as a source of scholarly research. RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee has already published two components of its Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials: the books component in 2007 and the serials component in 2008. Active preparation is ongoing for Graphics, Cartographic, and Music components. The RBMS publication Your Old Books continues to be available on our website. <http://rbms.info/yob.shtml>. This information about old books and the antiquarian book market provides an extremely important resource educates both librarians and the general public.

### **Strategic Area: The Profession**

## **Goal Area: Leadership**

### ***1. Develop leadership opportunities for ACRL members and increase professional development offerings on leadership.***

RBMS this year has 24 committees, five discussion groups, an archivist, and six liaisons to other organizations. Each of these first two groups are chaired or convened or by one or more people, and while in the latter two, individuals are responsible for reporting to RBMS on activities. Some chairs and conveners are relatively new in their career, and committee chairmanship provides excellent leadership training.

## **Strategic Area: The Profession**

## **Goal Area: Leadership**

### ***4. Increase ACRL's efforts to support recruitment of new and diverse talent to academic and research librarianship.***

RBMS offers a mentoring program, which pairs those new to the profession with established professionals in structured communication.

## **Strategic Area: The Profession**

## **Goal Area: Information Technology**

### ***3. Support members in their exploration, research on, and implementation of new and emerging information technologies and their application for library services in educational environments.***

The Guidelines for the Digitization of Special Collections Task Force has completed their work and issued a 3-part report, available at [http://rbms.info/committees/task\\_force/digitization/index.shtml](http://rbms.info/committees/task_force/digitization/index.shtml)

One discussion session in the 2010 preconference will be devoted to Marketing, Branding, and Outreach, which will focus on the use of social and electronic media

## **Strategic Area: The Association**

## **Goal Area: Membership**

### ***1. Expand the appeal of ACRL membership among current members with a special focus on those new to the profession and early in their careers.***

RBMS offers scholarships to the first-time attendees of the RBMS Preconference, at increasingly higher levels. The preconference starts with a conference orientation and introduction to RBMS. A New Members' Social is held after the opening reception of the preconference at a nearby restaurant. This enjoyable event is open to everyone, but the focus is on introducing first-time attendees to senior RBMS members and to each other. RBMS offers a Buddy Program, which links established RBMS members with those new in their careers, during both RBMS preconferences and ALA conferences. This successful program is instrumental in easing new professionals into the Section.

## **Strategic Area: The Association**

## **Goal Area: Membership**

### ***2. Increase the number of academic and research librarian members.***

A FAQ on careers in rare books and manuscripts is in development; a draft is available at <http://new.rbms.info/?q=node/6>. The committee is working to incorporate the many good suggestions given during a public review, and should be ready for unveiling soon.

## **Strategic Area: The Association**

## **Goal Area: Membership**

### ***3. Increase ACRL's membership from underrepresented ethnic and racial groups.***

RBMS preconference scholarships (described above) intentionally target members of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. RBMS Diversity Committee members presented a program at the Boston Public Library just before the 2010 Boston Midwinter Meeting.

## **Strategic Area: The Association**

## **Goal Area: Membership**

### ***5. Increase efforts to support recruitment of new and diverse talent to ACRL.***

The RBMS Diversity Committee has created a Diversity Recruitment Toolkit, an online guide for RBMS members and library professionals who wish to make presentations about careers in special collections librarianship to students and paraprofessional staff, particularly those from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. Available at <http://rbms.info/committees/diversity/index.shtml>. The Diversity Committee is presenting a seminar at the 2010 RBMS Preconference on “Recruiting Members -- of Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Groups-- to the Special Collections Library Profession”

### **Strategic Area: The Association**

#### **Goal Area: Membership**

*6. Support and encourage research and programming on the changing workforce in academic libraries and the implications for library education and training, leadership and middle management development, and staff recruitment and retention.*

RBMS has contributed comments to the draft ACRL document on cultural competencies.

### **Strategic Area: The Association**

#### **Goal Area: Organizational Vitality and Effectiveness**

*2. Increase the mutual benefits of the ACRL/ALA relationship.*

The creation of an on-going donation option for RBMS Preconference scholarships through the Friends of ACRL

### **Strategic Area: The Association**

#### **Goal Area: Organizational Vitality and Effectiveness**

*3. Increase and improve ACRL’s organizational use of information technology.*

Several RBMS units, including the Executive Committee, has started using ALAConnect for inter-conference business, which promotes transparency in discussing issues and making decisions. RBMS has purchased two digital audio recorders, and will be recording all plenary sessions at the 2010 preconference, as well as a selection of seminars, case studies, and discussion sessions. Digital audio recording was done for the first time at the 2009 preconference, and the content is freely available at

<http://rbms.info/conferences/preconfdocs/2009/2009docs.shtml>

At the 2010 RBMS Preconference, a two-part seminar on Digital Tools for Collaboration will be presented, one focusing on virtual meetings and other association business, and the other on collaborating in writing and editing documents .

### **Strategic Area: The Association**

#### **Goal Area: Sustainability**

*1. Expand commitment to adopting green and sustainable business practices for ACRL offices, conferences, continuing education and operations with business partners.*

The newly-formed Scholarships Committee has been charged as a “virtual” committee, that is, allowing for member participation without requirement to travel to conferences. Committee chairs are urged to carefully consider whether their committee really needs to meet twice a year, or whether they can effectively replace one of their face-to-face meetings with other means of communication. The 2010 preconference will issue an appeal to “bring your own mug.”