

**Draft minutes, RBMS Membership & Professional Development Committee  
Mid-winter Meeting, Philadelphia, PA  
Saturday, January 12, 2008  
10:30-12:00 p.m.  
Crown Plaza Philadelphia, Independence Room**

In attendance:

Members present: Ellen Ellickson, Chair (Yale); Stephanie Joseph (Haskell Indian Nations University); Veronica Reyes (University of Arizona), Kathleen Burns (Yale); John Cullars, (Univ. of Illinois-Chicago); Susan Fagan; Susan Walker, (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale); Donna Davey (NYU); Sarah Fass (UNC-Chapel Hill)

Members excused: Laila Miletic-Vejzovic, Diane Warner

Visitors: Mary Lacy (Library of Congress); Heather Cole (Harvard); April Brewer; Anne Marie Lane (University of Wyoming); Lois Fischer Black (Lehigh University); Ana Guimaraes (Cornell); Elaine Smyth (LSU)

**1. Welcome and introductions**

Ellen welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves.

**2. Selection of recorder and finalization of agenda**

Stephanie Joseph volunteered to be the recorder.

**3. Approval of minutes from June 23, 2007 meeting at Annual in Washington D.C.**

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

**4. Housekeeping: Committee membership and membership limits, committee roster**

Ellen explained the new understanding of term limits for committee members. No one is supposed to be on a committee more than two terms in a row; that is, four years – including the time of being chair. This will no doubt result in work-arounds of various sorts, such as interim chairs being appointed while someone goes off the committee for a year before being appointed new chair.

**5. Buddy Program – V. Reyes**

Veronica reported that the Buddy Program for Midwinter was very successful. There were six requests, five of which were matched with a buddy.

**6. Mentoring Program**

The Mentoring Program application form was revised over the summer. The new form now asks applicants to declare how long they've been a member of RBMS, as a way to ensure that applicants are actually members of the Section. The option to request a

mentor of the same gender, or from a similar ethnic/racial background or geographic area, has been omitted; the pool of mentors has not been large enough to fulfill such recent requests and the committee agreed it was better not to raise expectations about potential matches. Attendees also discussed the need for an evaluation of the Mentorship Program. Kathleen agreed to draft an evaluation form, and will look at the evaluation process SAA uses for its mentorship program.

The group also discussed creating a FAQ to provide new RBMS members and newly minted professionals with advice and tips related to job searches, participation in RBMS, etc. Attendees also discussed the creation of a referral process that would allow RBMS members seeking guidance about a particular facet of special collections librarianship to ask specific questions which would be relayed to a participating RBMS member who had agreed to provide advice or guidance in the subject area. Both of these ideas were conceived as alternatives to the Mentorship program, aimed specifically at members who might benefit from targeted information exchange rather than a full-blown mentoring relationship. Heather Cole, Donna Davey, and Susan Fagan will work on the FAQ. Ellen Ellickson and John Cullars will work on the referral form and process, and Ellen will compile a list of RBMS members to contact about participation in the program.

Ellen reminded attendees that newer RBMS members make excellent mentors, as they often have first-hand knowledge of the current job market and job search strategies, as well as insight into the experiences of a new professional. Attendees agreed, and a discussion of the value of peer mentoring ensued.

#### **7. Diversity Committee and Scholarship Program – K. Burns**

Kathleen reported that the Diversity Committee continues to work on developing a Diversity Tool Kit for RBMS Members to use in local outreach efforts, particularly for outreach to members of ethnic and racial communities under-represented in Special Collections. The Tool Kit is based on the site visits that the Diversity Committee has conducted at local universities and schools during past Midwinter Meetings. Kathleen reported that the Diversity Committee was unable to plan site visits to local schools in Philadelphia because of the early date of the 2008 Midwinter meeting, but hope to revive the program in the future.

Kathleen also reported the publication of a special issue of *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* (Vol. 8, No. 2, Fall 2007), which she co-edited with Penny Welbourne (Yale), former Diversity Committee member. Penny worked with ACRL to secure funding for additional copies of the issue to be distributed to library programs across North America.

The 2008 Preconference Scholarship sub-committee has a budget of \$11,385 which it will award to at least 12 scholarship recipients to attend RBMS's 49th preconference in Los Angeles. RBMS provided \$5,500 from the 2007 preconference profit share; \$5,000 came from the ACRL Action Plan; and the scholarship program received \$885 in donations. Kathleen noted that the donations have been increasingly steadily and noted the generosity of RBMS members to the program. She gave a brief history of the

program, and then led a brief discussion about criteria for the scholarships. The group agreed that students and new professionals who are RBMS members should be awarded scholarships and be encouraged to serve on RBMS committees. There was a brief discussion of 2009 scholarships, which may be targeted at former members of RBMS who might need a subsidy to be able to attend the celebratory “Golden Conference” that will mark the year of the 50th Preconference.

#### **8. RBMS presence at the ACRL booth**

Ellen encouraged committee members to make a habit of volunteering to man the ACRL booth at upcoming meetings.

#### **9. Liaison reports: ACRL Professional Development Coordinating Committee, ACRL Membership Advisory Committee**

Ellen is the liaison to the ACRL Membership Advisory Committee and is on their distribution list and thus receives their e-mails. However, their meeting is the same time as Info Exchange so she doesn't attend their meetings. Theoretically, she is also liaison to the ACRL Professional Development Coordinating Committee but, not only does it meet at the same time as M&PD but she is not on their distribution list and does not receive their e-mails.

#### **10. Educational opportunities directory**

Ellen will send out this year's queries within the next few weeks. She will create a general distribution list so that the next person who takes on this task will not need to send individual queries but that person will have to make sure each year that the names on the list are still correct.

#### **11. Letters to new members**

Ellen sends out electronic letters to new members every month and will report at Annual on the statistics relating to those new members.

#### **12. Preparations for the Preconference: Introduction to RBMS, new members' events**

The Committee will want to have a PowerPoint presentation consisting of head shots of every member of Exec and the chairs of every committee, discussion group and task force. This presentation would be playing silently but continuously during our Introduction to RBMS at the Preconference Orientation. It used to be that all committee and task force chairs and discussion group convenors spoke during the former, longer RBMS Introduction when it lasted an hour. In recent years, however, we have folded a 40-minute Preconference Orientation presentation into that hour, leaving just 20 minutes for the specifics about the section. Only a representative few of the section officers and committee chairs appear in the Introduction now but if we had such a PowerPoint, they would all be virtually present.

Susan Fagan is assuming coordination of new members' social event at the 2008 Preconference, and will work with Kathleen who has coordinated this event for the past two years.

### **13. ABAA Book Fairs Liaison**

Sarah Fass, the Committee's liaison to the ABAA Book Fairs in Boston and New York annually and, in alternating years, in Los Angeles and San Francisco. This means that she makes sure that the RBMS booth at the fairs are well stocked with such materials as RBMS brochures.

### **14. New Business**

- Discussion on "Expanding Universe" theme: possible dialog among past and present contributors/individuals of RBMS
- ALA/ACRL 101: Veronica attended this event at Annual on behalf of RBMS.