

RBMS Newsletter



Issued by the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section
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From the Chair

Ten years ago, RBMS began a concerted effort to make our organization a more welcoming place for new members. Over the past decade, RBMS has launched multiple initiatives to encourage new and diverse members, support their attendance at our conferences, and connect them with a network of more experienced librarians, curators, and archivists.

In 1996 RBMS created a “buddy” system, pairing new members with veteran volunteers who serve as guides to RBMS conferences and meetings. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the Buddy Program is now an institutionalized success that has helped welcome nearly two hundred participants to the Section since its inception.

To help newer members with the costs of attending the annual Preconference, RBMS established its Scholarship Program in June 2000. Thanks to an agreement reached with ACRL in 1999, RBMS may apply 50% of any excess revenue generated by our annual conference towards funding for the next year’s scholarships. RBMS scholarships have provided financial support for fifty first-time Preconference attendees between 2000 and 2005. Last year our Scholarship Program received a big boost: a grant from IMLS will fund thirty scholarships for new or aspiring professionals to attend the upcoming Preconference in Austin, Texas—“Libraries, Archives, and Museums in the 21st Century: Intersecting Missions, Converging Futures?”—and an ACRL strategic plan award will fund up to fifteen scholarships for the 2007 Preconference in Baltimore. We can all help to build the RBMS scholarship program. Last year, our conference registration form added a “check off” box for attendees who elect to donate money for future scholarships. To date, several hundred dollars have come to our Scholarship Program via the Preconference registration form. Your support is appreciated!

RBMS has also increased its commitment to diversity, charging a Task Force in 2002 to investigate ways to ensure that our membership and our collections reflect the full spectrum of our society. Now a standing committee, the RBMS Diversity Committee pursues educational and outreach opportunities aimed at increasing the representation of those from professionally underrepresented backgrounds. The RBMS Scholarship Program is also helping to make RBMS a more diverse organization. Ten of our thirty 2006 Preconference scholarship awards, and eight of fifteen 2007 awards will be reserved for those from underrepresented groups.

Building on the success of its Buddy Program, the RBMS Membership and Professional Development Committee

established a Mentoring Program in 2004. In the two years since its launch, the program has facilitated more than two dozen mentor partnerships, matching junior members with more experienced librarians and archivists.

These programs and initiatives are making a difference. There were nearly 140 first-time Preconference attendees in 2004 and 2005 alone. Thank you to everyone who has helped to make our Section’s outreach programs a success. This work is vital to fostering the next generation of rare book and manuscript professionals and to the success of our organization.

— Katherine Reagan

2006 RBMS Preconference

The 47th Annual Preconference will be held June 20-23 in Austin, Texas, prior to the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans. This year’s theme: “Libraries, Archives, and Museums in the Twenty-First Century: Intersecting Missions, Converging Futures?” invites participants from the library, museum, and archival fields to join together in investigating common concerns relating to their shared missions to acquire, preserve, and make accessible the world’s cultural artifacts and historical documents.

Plenary speakers include Lawrence Pijaux, James Michalko, and Robert Martin. A variety of seminar sessions and facilitated discussions will complement the conference theme. Participants will also be able to take advantage of special tours of the recently renovated Harry Ransom Center and Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, and other local cultural facilities.

A major grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will provide full attendance scholarships to thirty new and aspiring library, archives, and museum professionals, especially from professionally underrepresented backgrounds. We received more than 150 applications for these scholarships; awards will be made in April.

Details are available from the Preconference website at: <http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/rbms2006/>. If you would like to attend, please register and make your hotel and flight arrangements as soon as possible; a \$50 late fee will be added to registrations received after May 17.

RBMS Annual Conference Meeting Schedule New Orleans: June 23-27, 2006

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

4:30-8:00 pm

Bibliographic Standards, Thesaurus Subcommittee

7:00-9:00 pm

Hearing for *DCRM(S)*

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

8:00-10:00 am

Membership and Professional Development
Joint Meeting of Collection Development & Curators
and Conservators

8:30 am-12:30 pm

Bibliographic Standards
Exhibition Awards I

9:30-10:30 am

Preconference Program Planning, 2008

10:30 am-12:00 pm

Nominating (closed)

10:30 am-12:30 pm

Security
Preconference Program Planning, 2007

1:30-3:30 pm

Budget and Development
Publications
Seminars
Guidelines on Transfer to Special Collections

4:00-6:00 pm

Conference Program Planning: Anaheim, 2008
Core Competencies for Special Collections
Manuscripts and Other Formats

7:00-9:00 pm

Public Hearing on *Guidelines on Transfer to Special Collections*

SUNDAY, JUNE 25

8:00-10:00 am

Conference Development
Diversity
Exhibition Awards II

10:30-12:30 am

MARC for Special Collections
Joint Statement on Access (RBMS/SAA)
Public Services
Conference Program Planning: Washington, D.C., 2007

1:30-3:30 pm

RBMS Program & Leab Awards Presentation

4:00-5:00 pm

Information Exchange

MONDAY, JUNE 26

8:00 am-12:00 pm

Executive Committee

1:30-6:00 pm

Bibliographic Standards I (Editorial Meeting)

TUESDAY, JUNE 27

8:00 am-10:00 am

Bibliographic Standards II (Editorial Meeting)

This is the schedule RBMS has requested.
Be sure to check the final conference schedule
for any changes.

2006 Annual Conference Program

We had a productive meeting in San Antonio, discussing the June Conference Program, "Reimagining Special Collections: Building Designs and Considerations for the 21st Century." Committee members and panelists were joined by program co-sponsors and visitors. All participants contributed to the discussion and helped shape the course of the program, thereby ensuring that many different perspectives will be represented at the actual event. Points raised for consideration were: the reality of the budget, the evolution of environmental controls, costs involved in moving collections, and the need for open channels of communication throughout the planning and construction process.

The Committee and our visitors collaborated on the revision of

the program's blurb, which will use the following passage for marketing purposes: "How will we house and use special collections in the 21st century? A librarian, an administrator, and an architect will discuss various factors influencing renovation and new construction of rare book and manuscript libraries, including the availability of off-site storage facilities, new technologies, and reduced allocations of space. Panelists are Janette S. Blackburn, Senior Associate, Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson, and Abbott; Pat Bozeman, University of Houston Libraries; and Jeanne M. Hammer, NCSU Libraries. Lois Fischer Black, NCSU Libraries, will moderate the program. The program will be co-sponsored by LAMA's Building and Equipment Section (BES), who will assist RBMS with publicity.

Committee News

Bibliographic Standards

We are delighted to announce that the RBMS Thesauri, as well as the Relator Terms, collectively known as the RBMS Controlled Vocabularies, are now freely available online. They are temporarily at: <http://library.osu.edu/sites/users/russell.363/RBMS%20Thesauri/index.htm>. A more stable URL with an RBMS domain name will be announced soon. The basic thesaurus functions are supported, but the graphical and functional interface still needs a lot of work. The BSC is seeking someone with web design skills to upgrade the look and functionality of this database; the notice on page six provides more information.

The content of the thesauri is the same as the print thesauri, with additions and changes subsequent to publication integrated. The Thesaurus Subcommittee, under the direction of Editor Beth Russell, has started a long-term, thorough evaluation of each thesaurus. Probable results will be the merging of the six thesauri into one, with the current hierarchies preserved in the mega-thesaurus, and the elimination of automatic parenthetical qualifiers for all terms other than Genre Terms.

The invitation for public review on *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)* in the summer of 2005 resulted in extensive comments from the ALCTS CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access, the Library of Congress Cataloging Policy and Support Office, the UK Bibliographic Standards Committee of the Rare Books Group, CILIP, the Yale Rare Book Team, as well as from several individuals. The *DCRM(B)* editors are incorporating these comments, and hope to have a draft to submit to the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service for publication by the time of Annual 2006.

An editorial team has been appointed for *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Serials)*. Watch for invitations to comment and an announcement of a public hearing, which are planned for Annual 2006.

Progress is also continuing on a *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Music)*; a public hearing is planned for Midwinter 2007. Initial murmurings of interest from the ALA Map and Geography Round Table in collaborating on *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Cartographic)* have reached us as well.

In response to the questionnaire distributed by the RBMS Task Force on Core Competencies in Special Collections Librarianship, the BSC formed a task force of its own to formulate a committee response. Its purpose is to ensure that the knowledge and skills needed to provide adequate bibliographic control of rare materials and special collections are appropriately represented.

The LC Cataloging and Policy Support Office and the BSC have decided in principle to issue new working guideline in formulating standard citation forms as contained in Standard Citation Forms for Rare Book Cataloging. Newly-created citation forms will conform as closely as possible to its catalog entry form. A new author-name-only citation form will not be created, and a selective revision of current name-only forms will be carried out.

Budget and Development

The Committee submitted its new charge to the Executive Committee at Midwinter. The charge, which has been approved,

reads as follows: "Monitor Section, Preconference, and other RBMS budgets. Identify strategies for obtaining funding for approved Section activities. Propose and plan both short-range and long-range development opportunities to support RBMS."

Collection Development

At ALA Annual, the Discussion Group launched a series of discussions on the basics of collection development for rare and special materials. Our first topic was the interaction of special collections librarians with the trade, a discussion that was resumed at Midwinter, as we talked about how to find "deals" on the market.

Other subjects of discussion have included collecting history of science material, ephemera, and examples of collaborative collection development. Our next meeting will be held jointly with the Curators and Conservators Discussion Group in New Orleans and it will be devoted in part to issues of preservation involved in deciding whether to accept a collection. In future meetings, we intend to devote part of our time to discussion of a topical issue and part to a continuing discussion of collection development basics.

If you would like to see a particular issue discussed, feel free to contact the Co-Chairs Alvan Bregman (abregman@uiuc.edu) and Caroline Duroselle-Melish (cmelish@fas.harvard.edu).

Conference Development

Both programming and local arrangements planning have begun for the 2007 Preconference in Baltimore prior to ALA Annual in Washington, D.C. The focus of the program will be ephemera. ACRL will also be holding its biannual national conference in Baltimore in Spring 2007. RBMS plans to submit a proposal for a panel and possibly for a roundtable discussion topic.

Looking further ahead, the 2008 Preconference will be held in Los Angeles, hosted jointly by the UCLA Library and the Getty Research Institute. (ALA Annual will be held later in Anaheim.) The theme will be announced later this year. 2008 and 2009 will both be 50th anniversary years for RBMS, with the Section's 50th anniversary in 2008 and the 50th Annual Preconference in 2009. A Subcommittee has begun exploring possible ways to recognize and celebrate these milestones.

In addition, the Committee will be reviewing proposals for Preconference sites for 2009, to be held prior to ALA Annual in Chicago. Potential hosts for this significant anniversary Preconference are urged to submit proposals this spring to Daniel J. Slive, Committee Chair. Preliminary investigations have also begun for a possible international Preconference to be held in Oxford, England, in 2010.

Core Competencies in Special Collections Librarianship

At Midwinter in San Antonio, the Task Force reviewed and clarified its charge, focusing on writing, distributing, and assessing the document that will describe core competencies of special collections professionals. Responses to the Task Force's question-

naire sent out in December to the RBMS membership and to the Exlibris listserv were summarized and discussed. Writing teams were assigned for various parts of the document, and groups that should be invited to respond to the document were identified. The Task Force agreed that the final document will be concerned with all types of special collections environments, encompass all material formats, be intended for a broad audience, address special collections professionals (not support staff), and speak to the future of the profession as it might be in 2010 or 2015.

The goal is to have a first draft ready for distribution by June 1, 2006. There will be a break-out session at the 2006 Preconference to provide an opportunity for members of the museum and archival communities to join with RBMS members in discussing Draft One. That draft will also be shared with other interested parties, including the Oberlin group, IRLA membership, SAA, and ARL. Other avenues for input include publication in *C&RL News* and posting on the RBMS website. Draft Two should be ready for a hearing at Midwinter 2007. The timeline provides for the final draft to be sent to the Executive Committee in 2007.

Curators and Conservators

The Discussion Group focused on two topics at Midwinter. Kristen Laise provided an introduction to the Heritage Health Index Report, and the group discussed its findings, uses, and distribution. The larger report is available online at: <http://heritagepreservation.org/HHI/index.html>. The second topic of discussion was the selection, transfer, and care of rare book and special collections materials in remote/high-density storage. Of note from that discussion is the trend to utilize separate storage facilities to store less precious special collections materials, thus relieving space issues in the rare book room, or to transfer rare items from the circulating collection. The upcoming meeting of Curators and Conservators in New Orleans will be held jointly with the Collection Development Discussion Group.

Diversity

The Committee organized two visits by RBMS members to universities with high minority enrollment to coincide with the 2006 ALA Midwinter Meeting. J. Fernando Peña of the Grolier Club, Verónica Reyes of the University of Arizona, and Adán Griego of Stanford University visited history classes at Our Lady of the Lake University and St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. They spoke to undergraduate students about careers in the special collections field and displayed examples or copies of materials from their institutions' collections. Several students expressed an interest in learning more about becoming librarians. The Diversity Committee plans to continue visiting the campuses of universities with high minority enrollment during future Midwinter Meetings and will be examining ways to institutionalize this practice.

In other news, a Diversity button on the top page of the RBMS website now leads to a growing body of material about diversity activities within the Section. Also, Petrina Jackson will be serving as the Diversity Committee representative on the Preconference Scholarship Subcommittee of the RBMS Membership and Professional Development Committee.

Exhibition Awards

During a closed session at Midwinter, the Committee deliberated and selected five winners for the 2005 competition in three categories—expensive, moderately priced, and inexpensive—with one each in the brochures and electronic exhibitions categories. This year's response of ninety entries was impressive. Submissions included twenty-six electronic exhibitions, forty-six catalogues in the expensive, moderate, and inexpensive categories, and eighteen brochures.

Following receipt of the entries in October, three sets of the catalogues and brochures circulated among three EAC subcommittees. Leab Award winners will be announced and receive their certificates during the RBMS session at the ALA Annual in New Orleans.

At the Committee's business meeting, we discussed plans to update the Leab Awards website with another decade of award winners and images. A subcommittee comprised of Sarah Goodwin Thiel, Peggy Price, and Lois Black is currently working on letters to inform past winners of their inclusion (giving them the option to opt out of participation in the website) and on accomplishing the additional scans with the gracious assistance of Rich Oram and staff at the University of Texas at Austin. Finally, we reviewed plans for a seminar at the Austin Preconference to mark the twenty years of the Leab Awards.

Guidelines on the Selection of General Collection Materials for Transfer to Special Collections

The Task Force plans to submit a first draft revision to the RBMS Executive Committee in early spring. With the permission of the Executive Committee, the Task Force will submit the draft to experts at the same time.

At Midwinter, the Chair, Charlotte Brown, asked that RBMS members send suggestions about experts, especially book dealers and former RBMS members who may not be aware of the *Guidelines* revision work with which the Task Force is now engaged. Katherine Reagan, RBMS Chair, asked that the Executive Committee also be sent the list of experts via email.

The Task Force will aim to hold a hearing at Midwinter 2007 in Seattle.

Manuscripts and Other Formats

The joint meeting of the Manuscripts and Other Formats and Public Services Discussions Groups was attended by over thirty participants in San Antonio. After introductions and announcements, participants discussed the problem of "other formats" and implications for public service in special collections reading rooms. Halvorson led off the discussion by sharing the management of formats initiative undertaken at the Newberry Library. Because of the blending of collection management across all library services (including reader services, technical services, conservation services, and staff involved in collection development), the library services management team used categories by "format" to form teams including librarians from each department and developed a template for documenting current practices.

(continued on page 6)

MARC for Special Collections

The Discussion Group met in San Antonio with fifty-two participants in attendance. The meeting was the first to be led by incoming Co-Chairs Sarah Schmidt Fisher and John Overholt, who began the meeting by extending their thanks to E.C. Schroeder for his long service to the Group.

Deborah Leslie reported on behalf of the Bibliographic Standards Committee on the imminent completion of *DCRM(B)* and the rapid progress of related manuals for serials and music cataloging. Juliet McLaren reported on exciting changes at ESTC, most notably its upcoming move to a free, publicly-accessible platform at the British Library in Fall 2006. Eileen Smith announced the availability of a website (still undergoing enhancement) called "Resources Available at Yale for Establishing Authoritative Forms for the Names of Pre-1800 European Book Trade Personnel" (<http://www.library.yale.edu/cataloging/authorities/eurobooktrade.htm>). Although produced primarily for the use of Yale's catalogers, it is freely available to all.

The first discussion topic concerned MARC coding of information in the holdings record about items transferred from general to special collections. The majority of respondents who record this information do so in the 852 field (located either in the holdings or bibliographic record), with a few using the 583 "Action" field. One library reported using the item record as the location for this data. Next, we discussed adding geographic and chronological subdivisions to form and genre headings. Most participants who add form and genre headings reported that they apply these subdivisions, although there was no clear preference for the level of specificity.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a wide-ranging conversation on the training of new special collections catalogers. The cataloging course at Rare Book School was recommended as a good place for a novice to start, but several supervisors emphasized the importance of learning by doing. One suggestion was to have new catalogers "deconstruct" the records they create, explaining the rules and reasoning behind each choice they make. There was agreement that the length of training depends on the type and duration of the position and also that training may be constrained by external demands for rapid productivity. "You can turn them loose," one participant offered, "when they know enough to know when they're out of their depth and need help." We welcome suggestions for topics to be discussed at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Please feel free to email the Co-Chairs with your ideas.

Membership and Professional Development

We had a busy meeting at Midwinter, reviewing the recent history of the RBMS Mentoring Program and planning for an expanded Buddy Program at the Preconference. The Mentoring Program continues to be so popular that more people are needed as mentors. To address this need, the Committee will be asking more Section members to volunteer as mentors. The Buddy Program will also need more volunteers than usual at the Preconference in Austin because of the thirty IMLS-funded scholarships and because people outside the library/archive community will be in attendance. Section

members will be requested by the Committee to volunteer their services for this program as well.

Public Services

All are most welcome to join our meeting in New Orleans. We will start by focusing on age policies, handling younger readers, outreach to younger populations, dealing with the history fair deluge, and other related issues. Please send other ideas for discussion to Hjordis Halvorson at: halvorsonh@newberry.org. (A discussion of our joint meeting with the Manuscripts and Other Formats Discussion Group at Midwinter may be found under that Group's report in the Newsletter.)

Publications

Many changes are afoot in the world of RBMS publications. First, the RBMS electronic mailing list is now hosted by ALA, as part of the ALA Mailing Lists Service. Everett Wilkie continues as list manager. If you have not yet migrated to the new list, please do so at: <http://lists.ala.org/wws>.

At our meeting at Midwinter, there was much discussion of other changes to our online presence. The Section produces several valuable web-based resources, such as the controlled vocabularies pages from the Bibliographic Standards Committee, which require a new level of web savvy and support. We are eager to tap (exploit) the talents of RBMS members proficient in website design and maintenance. Please contact Mike Kelly (mike.kelly@nyu.edu) if you want to offer your services to the Committee.

In the world of print, a thoroughly overhauled version of *Your Old Books* is imminent, pending final approval of the text by the RBMS Executive Committee. Our journal, *RBM*, is also thriving, as reported elsewhere in this Newsletter. Another development in the web world that is coming our way is the new ALA Online Communities Service. This service includes a host of features, among them, online discussion forums, real-time chat, calendars, and space in which to post documents. While this service will in no way replace the public functions of the current RBMS website, it will provide a simple way for committees to share drafts of documents under revision, post comments, and keep track of deadlines and schedules for section business. ALA is currently doing a "soft rollout" of this service, so keep an eye out for developments in the near future.

RBM

The Spring 2006 issue marks a milestone for *RBM*: it is an expanded issue offering twice as many articles as usual. Drawn from the 2005 RBMS Preconference in St. Louis, "Bridging the Gap: Education and Special Collections," guest editor Eric Holzenberg has assembled nine excellent articles. *RBM* is greatly indebted to John Hoover, director of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, who provided funding for the increased size of this issue.

This issue also marks the use of a new *RBM* typeface: Dante, designed by Giovanni Mardersteig at the Officina Bodoni in 1954, a remarkably beautiful and legible face, which seems most suitable.

Two new members have joined the *RBM* Editorial Board: Martha Lawler and Beth Russell. Several openings remain on the Board. If you are interested in serving a three-year term, please contact Editor Richard Clement at: rclement@ku.edu.

Revision of the “Joint Statement on Access”

The Task Force on the Revision of the ALA/SAA “Joint Statement on Access” held its first meeting at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio. Task Force members William L. Joyce (Chair), Rachel Howarth, Laura Micham, John Pull, and Suzy Taraba attended the meeting.

The due-date for the revised “Statement” is the January 2007 Midwinter Meeting, scheduled for Seattle, Washington. Two review cycles have passed without review of the statement, and the ALA committee that approved the original statement no longer exists; the Task Force assumes, however, that the ACRL Standards and Accreditation Committee will now review the statement. Chairman Joyce reported that he will contact the Society of American Archivists (SAA) to explore how best to insure SAA’s participation in the revision.

The Task Force members reviewed the statement section-by-section, and assignments were made for revision of the respective sections. The Task Force will continue its work at its next meeting at ALA Annual in New Orleans.

Security

The Committee will be sponsoring a seminar at the Austin Preconference entitled “Getting It Together on Stolen Property,” which will explore the possibility and desirability of working with other organizations to produce a guide to identifying stolen rare books, manuscripts, and archival materials. The speakers will be: Susan Allen, Getty Library & Museum; Alvan Bregman, University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign; Chris LaPlante, Archivist of the State of Texas; and David Szewczyk, Philadelphia Rare Books & Manuscript Company, Co-Chair of ABAA Security Committee. Everett Wilkie will moderate the session.

The Committee also continues to work on compiling its proposed manual for special collections security. Another two chapters have been written, and the work is about two-thirds in draft at this point. After the complete draft is ready, the Committee hopes to post the entire work on the RBMS website for public commentary and reaction. The Section’s *Guidelines for the Security of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and other Special Collections* is being revised as part of the five-year cycle required by ACRL. The proposed revision may be found on the RBMS website under “News & Events.” Comments are welcome and sought and should be sent to Everett Wilkie at: ewilkie@netcom.com. In general, almost nothing has been changed, except for updating Appendix II.

Finally, the Committee is revisiting the state laws project to ensure that the URLs linking to individual state websites are still valid and to see if more states have passed laws relating to library theft.

Seminars

Plans for the seminar offerings for the 2006 Preconference are complete, and the array of topics is exciting. Many of the seminars will be of interest to museum and archives professionals, as well as to special collections librarians. Topics include: acquisition and

ownership of cultural property: legal and ethical considerations; outcomes-based evaluation; developing a collaborative model for researching 19th century books; the WATCH file; the past, present, and future of the sale and purchase of cultural materials; cataloging artists’ books; getting it together on stolen materials: old problems, new plans; authors’ libraries; and the Leab awards: twenty years of special collections exhibitions. Additional information is available on the Preconference website.

At the June meeting in New Orleans, the Committee will consider proposals for seminars to be presented at the 2007 RBMS Preconference in Baltimore. The Committee invites you to submit proposals, with a submission deadline of June 1, 2006. It is not necessary to be a member of the Seminars Committee to make a proposal. For information about what to include in a proposal, please see the electronic form available on the RBMS website at: <http://www.rbms.nd.edu/committees/seminars/index.shtml>. You may also contact the Chair, Elizabeth Johnson, at: johnson1@indiana.edu.

Committee member Arvid Nelsen reported at the Midwinter Meeting that he has now finished entering seminar data into the Seminars Presented Database for all Preconferences. Plans are underway to post a report from this project on the RBMS website.

Manuscripts & Other Formats (continued from page 4)

Discussions ensued about space, equipment, furniture and special tools needed in reading rooms and storage facilities. Of particular interest are sound recordings and moving image recordings, which raise questions of listening/viewing facilities, and re-formatting and how costs for this are handled. Retaining and using artifacts was another area where practice varied widely.

Please join us in New Orleans to welcome the new Co-Chair of the Discussion Group, Lois Fischer Black. If you have ideas for discussion topics, please contact either Mary Lacy (mlac@loc.gov) or Lois Black (Lois_Black@ncsu.edu).

Web Designer Sought by Bib. Standards

The Bibliographic Standards Committee is seeking a web designer to upgrade the look and usability of its online database of controlled vocabularies. The database in use is MultiTes, which generates HTML pages and has the capability of exporting XML pages.

This position is intended to: design a clear, easy to use, and attractive web interface for RBMS controlled vocabularies by modifying pages output from the MultiTes database files; enhance the structure and functionality of the database by manipulating the XML output; establish means of converting XML output to MARC XML.

Desired qualifications include: extensive experience with HTML, including designing database-driven webpages; experience with XML and other file formats; ability to articulate technological concepts clearly and intelligibly; familiarity with MARC authority records.

To express interest or for more information on the job, please contact Thesaurus Editor Beth M. Russell at: russell.363@osu.edu.

Chair's Report: 2004-2005

With fifteen committees and five discussion groups, the activities and achievements of members on behalf of RBMS are too numerous to relate in a brief "Chair's Report." Here are just a few highlights from the year.

At ALA Annual Conference, the Bibliographic Standards Committee's hearing on the draft document *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials* drew an interested and vocal crowd of sixty attendees, who commented on the "Delta" version of the document. The Committee has clarified its relationship with the Library of Congress and will work with it to produce a text agreeable to both RBMS and LC, as well as consulting with groups in the UK and elsewhere. LC will publish the standards if it accepts them. The Membership and Professional Development Committee continued to live up to its name, this year, initiating a mentoring program that matched people new to the profession with more senior members. Current Chair, Ellen Ellickson and the entire Committee are to be congratulated on another successful effort to welcome new people into the profession.

Two task forces completed their work and were disbanded. The Task Force to Revise the *Guidelines for Borrowing and Lending Special Collections Materials for Exhibition* won ACRL Board approval of the revised *Guidelines* at Midwinter 2004. Also at Midwinter, the Task Force to Implement the RBMS Diversity Plan received approval from the Executive Committee for its proposed insert to the RBMS brochure. The insert was available for distribution at both the 2005 Preconference and the RBMS Conference Program at Annual. At Annual, the Diversity Task Force concluded its work by moving that the Executive Committee create a Diversity Committee to carry forward promotion of diversity in the Section. The motion carried unanimously. Everett Wilkie and Julie Grob deserve thanks and congratulations for their efforts as respective Chairs of these Task Forces.

During the year, the Executive Committee charged three new task forces. The Task Force on Core Competencies, chaired by Katherine Beam, is tackling the formidable job of formulating a statement on that topic. Facing somewhat less daunting undertakings, the Task Force to Review the *Guidelines on the Selection of Materials for Transfer to Special Collections* and the Task Force on the Joint Statement on Access to Original Materials were constituted to take care of ACRL-mandated reviews.

Program planning efforts also moved forward. In a first for RBMS, Vice-Chair/Chair-elect Katherine Reagan and 2006 Preconference Program Planning Chair Christian Dupont submitted a highly successful IMLS grant proposal to help fund the 2006 Preconference (described elsewhere in the Newsletter). Kudos to them!

Looking to the future, the Conference Development Committee brought forward a proposal submitted by Cynthia Reardon for Johns Hopkins University to host the 2007 Preconference in Baltimore, which was approved by the Executive Committee and the ACRL Board.

Firmly in the present, the 2005 Preconference Program Planning Committee, chaired by Eric Holzenberg, together with Local Arrangements, chaired by Anne Posega, held a highly successful Preconference in St. Louis. "Bridging the Gap: Education and Special Collections" achieved a new record for attendance, bridging the gap to the future with thirty new members and sixty first-time attendees. A

selection of papers presented at the Preconference will be published in *RBMS*. Financially, the Preconference was also a success, with excess revenues of \$5,300. Congratulations to Holzenberg, Posega, and their committees, and special thanks to John Hoover of the St. Louis Mercantile Library at the University of Missouri. Attendees will long recall a notable evening at that august institution.

At ALA Annual, the Conference Program emphasized diversity. "Collecting World Cultures: African, Asian, Caribbean, and Native American Materials in Chicago Institutions" was co-sponsored by the Asian, African, and Middle Eastern Section (AAMES) and the Literatures in English Section (both ACRL) and by the American Indian Library Association.

RBMS had a presence at the ACRL National Conference in Minneapolis, thanks to Susan Stekel Rippley and Hjordi Halvorson, who led a well-attended roundtable on recruitment for special collections librarianship.

On the political front, the Executive Committee joined the leadership of archival organizations across the country, writing to the chairs of the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations committees requesting that funding for the NHPRC be restored, and using the RBMS listserv to urge members to do likewise. The effort was successful, but at this writing, funding is once again at risk.

Finally, on a sad note the Section mourned the passing of Peter Graham and Gerald Wager, conveying condolences to their families and loved ones. They will be missed.

— Elaine B. Smyth

RBMS Executive Committee Resolutions

The Executive Committee passed several resolutions at Midwinter:

- Resolution of warm congratulations to Terry Belanger on his being named a 2005 MacArthur Fellow;
- Resolution of formal thanks and acknowledgement to John Neal Hoover for his support of the 2005 Preconference;
- Resolution regarding the lifelong contributions to the field of Thomas L. Amos, and of sympathy to his family upon his death;
- Resolution regarding Greer Allen's life's work as printer, designer, and teacher, and of sympathy to his family upon his death.

The full citations are reproduced in the online HTML *Newsletter*.

"Newsletter" Assistant Editor Sought

The incoming editor of the *RBMS Newsletter* is seeking candidates for the position of Assistant Editor. Primary responsibilities of this position include soliciting articles, editing text, and proof-reading. Experience with desktop publishing software is desirable. Particularly busy periods of activity include the months of March/April and September/October, when the Spring and Fall issues are in production.

Candidates should be willing to begin serving a two-year term immediately following this summer's ALA Annual Conference and also be willing to serve a subsequent two-year term as editor. This is an excellent opportunity for newcomers to RBMS to become involved in the Section's activities and come into contact with other RBMS members throughout the country. Interested parties should contact incoming editor Marianne Hansen (mhansen@brynmawr.edu) to learn more about this position or to apply.

Transitions

Jean Ashton has retired as director of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Columbia University but has assumed the position of vice-president and director of the library at the New-York Historical Society. **Nathan E. Bender** is now head of special collections and archives at the University of Idaho Library in Moscow, Idaho. **John Bolcer** is university archivist at the Oregon State University-Corvallis Library. **Donia Conn** has been appointed head of conservation at Northwestern University Library. **Gerald Cloud** is now reference/instruction librarian in the Mandeville Special Collections Library at the University of California, San Diego. **Greg Cuellar** has been hired as Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts for the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives at Texas A&M University. **Adriana Cuervo** has been named assistant archivist for music and fine arts at the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. **Tom W. Dillard** has been appointed head of the special collections department at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. **Christian Dupont** is now director of the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia. **Maria Fredericks** has been appointed Drue Heinz Book Conservator at the Pierpont Morgan Library. **John D. Haskell, Jr.** associate dean and director of Manuscripts and Rare Books at the College of William and Mary, has retired. **Cathy Henderson** is now associate director for exhibitions and education and Fleur Cowles executive curator at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas-Austin. **Ryan Hildebrand** has been named special collections and archives cataloger at the University of California-Irvine. **Amanda Langendoerfer** is now special collections librarian/archivist at Truman State University. **Jaime L. Margalotti** has joined the manuscripts unit in special collections at the University of Delaware Library. **Heidi Davis Marshall** has been named Columbia College Chicago's first college archivist.

Christopher George Mullin has retired from the University of Montana's Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, where he was head of special collections. **Timothy G. Nutt** is the new manuscripts and rare books librarian in the special collections department at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. **Suzy Szasz Palmer** is now associate dean for collections, preservation, and digital initiatives at the University of Louisville Libraries. **Greg Prickman** has been hired as special collections librarian at the University of Iowa Libraries. **Katherine Reagan** was appointed assistant director for collections and Ernest L. Stern Curator of Rare Books & Manuscripts in Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections. **Louis Reith**, humanities/rare book cataloger at Georgetown University's Lauinger Library, is one of fifteen faculty and staff members with twenty years of service receiving a vicennial medal at the University's annual spring convocation. **David Spadafora** is now president and librarian of the Newberry Library. **Diane Worrell** has been named special projects librarian in the special collections department at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville.

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