

RBMS Newsletter

Issued by the Rare Books and Manuscripts
Section of the Association of College and
Research Libraries, a Division of the
American Library Association

NOVEMBER 1991

NUMBER 16

RBMS at Chapel Hill and at Atlanta

Members turned out in record numbers for the RBMS Preconference June 25-28. Just short of 300 registrants attended the Preconference held at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University.

Speakers and panelist covered the Preconference theme of "Keeping the Facts in Artifacts: Conserving the Physical Evidence of Special Collections Materials and its Impact on Research."

Opening sessions on the use of special collections were held at UNC Chapel Hill. Participants first heard about the special collections research projects of bookbinder and conservator Nicholas Pickwood. Following him came several teaching scholars: Paul F. Grendler, University of Toronto; Amy M. Thomas, Duke University; and Carmine Andrew Prioli, North Carolina State University. Barbara Buckner Higginbotham, Brooklyn College, talked about the history of preservation.

Sessions held at Duke University on June 27 focused on finances and programming. Carolyn Clark Morrow of Harvard covered the changing self-understanding of the library preservation profession. John Townsend of the New York State Library led participants through the process of planning conservation programs, while Margaret Child talked about strategies for funding these programs.

On June 28, participants heard from UNC's Jan Paris about the conservation process and from Michael Winship, of the University of Texas at Austin, about using physical evidence in research.

Seminars included topics such as the methods and downfall of book-thief Stephen Blumberg, the report of the Ethical Standards Review Committee, strategies for collecting popular culture, and the introduction of the new *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books*.

Participants also were treated to a North Carolina barbecue and tours of UNC Chapel Hill and Duke. Some took advantage of the opportunity to catch a performance of Pilobolus Dance Theater at the American Dance Festival.

The 1992 Preconference will be held June 23-26 at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Attendants at Atlanta learned that Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd. (auctioneers) have given RBMS \$1500 to cover expenses and the prize for the upcoming judging of the best recent article published in *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarianship*. Details of the contest will be announced once all plans are finalized. It is hoped that the first award can be made at the 1992 annual conference, but if not, then by the summer of 1993. Also covered in detail at the second Atlanta RBMS Executive Committee meeting was the report of the Conference Planning Committee and

reaction to it. Following from the minutes: "The Committee's draft report, recommending formation of a standing Committee on Program Planning, with membership to include the RBMS chair-elect, chair of the Education and Professional Development Committee, and the three elected members-at-large (the senior member serving as Preconference Chair), was distributed in March. VanWingen noted that this plan would mean selecting members-at-large for their conference planning abilities, a major change from present practice. Schreyer wondered whether the best program chairs might be people uninterested in signing on for three years of RBMS business. Traister noted that the report seems to lock us into the same type of preconference we have had in the past and asked whether we had not established this ad hoc committee at least in part to evaluate whether we wanted to change our approach. Henderson asked whether we might simply forward this report to Schreyer's new Planning Committee to incorporate into its thinking; Schreyer noted that her committee's ad hoc status would make that only partly appropriate. Belanger emphasized the recommendation to establish a standing committee, noting that all recent preconference planning committees have recommended this also. Farren stated he would prefer to have only one committee, not two, looking at the Section's future, and seconded Henderson's assigning its chair to Schreyer's ad hoc committee. It was moved and seconded that Recommendation 1 in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Feasibility of a Conference Planning Committee, to create a standing Committee on Program Planning, be adopted, with its chair assigned also to the Ad Hoc Planning Committee. The motion passed. It was further moved and seconded that the Ad Hoc Committee be discharged with heartiest thanks; the motion passed." The Committee's report is given in full on page 6.

Other topics covered at Executive Committee were joint RBMS/SAA standards and guidelines activities, Preconference rates for seniors, formal resolution thanking the FBI and the U.S. attorney for their successful prosecution of the Blumberg case, Archives and Manuscripts Guidelines Review Committee, the RBMS Archivist's report, IFLA report, the newly created Planning Committee (ad hoc), progress of the Ethical Standards Committee, their hearing at Chapel Hill and the meeting in Philadelphia on November 8, 1991, RBMS triennial report, and a report from the Security Committee. Bob Martin (LSU) reported on plans for the 1992 Santa Cruz preconference focusing on the theme "Scholarly communication and special collections" and Sid Huttner (Tulsa) said that the working title for the RBMS program meeting at 1992 ALA annual is "Toward the universal catalog: National utilities, databases, and the end-user." The deaths of three leading members of the section (Edwin Wolf, Robert Nikirk, and Steve Corey) were noted formally.

SCHEDULE for Midwinter 1992

San Antonio RBMS - 25-27 January 1992

(Times are tentative; final times in usual ALA sources issued closer to the end of January)

Saturday, January 25, 1992

8 - 11 am:

Exhibition Catalogues Awards I (closed)

8:30 - 11 am:

Bibliographic Standards I

9 - 5:30 pm:

Guidelines on Interlibrary Loan

9:30 - 11 am:

Security

Publications

Manuscripts and Other Formats Discussion Group

9:30 - 12:30 pm:

Section Planning Committee

11:30 - 12:30:

Conference Program Planning (San Francisco, 1992)

Guidelines on Archives/MSS Review

2 - 4 pm:

Bibliographic Standards II

Education and Professional Development

Curators and Conservators Discussion Group

RBML Editorial Board

4:30 - 5:30 pm:

1993 Preconference Program Planning

8 - 10 pm:

Hearings on "Standards of Ethical Conduct for Rare Book, Manuscripts, and Special Collections Libraries and Librarians"

Sunday, January 26, 1992

8 - 11 am:

Exhibition Catalogues Awards II (closed)

8:30 - 12:30:

Ethical Standards Review Committee

9:30 - 11 am:

Bibliographic Standards III

1992 Preconference Planning

11:30 - 12:30:

RBMS/GODORT/MAGERT Joint Committee

MASC Discussion Group

2 - 4 pm:

Executive Committee I

4:30 - 5:30 pm:

Information Exchange

Monday, January 27, 1992

9:30 - 12:30 pm:

Executive Committee II

New Round of Exhibition Catalog Judging Begins

Exhibition catalogs published since September 1 are now being accepted for the 1993 Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab

American Book Prices Current Exhibition Catalog Awards judging.

Catalogs must represent an exhibition containing books, manuscripts, and other special collections materials that has taken place or is in progress before August 31, 1992. The catalog must be published between September 1, 1991 and August 31, 1992.

Judging is based on criteria such as originality, accuracy of detail, informational content, visual impact, contribution to scholarship, and usefulness to intended audience.

Entries will be divided into three categories based on unit cost for production of the catalog. A first place and honorable mention usually will be awarded in each category. The awards will be announced during the spring of 1993 and presented at the 1993 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans.

Deadline for submission of entries is September 30, 1992. For entry forms or further information, contact Marvin J. Taylor, ECAC Chairperson, at Health Sciences Library, Columbia University, 701 West 168th Street, New York, NY 10032; (212) 305-7931.

The ACRL/RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee, in collaboration with the Library of Congress, is soliciting additions and corrections for a second edition of *Standard Citation Forms for Rare Book Cataloging* (first edition prepared by Peter VanWingen and Stephen Paul Davis, and published by the Library of Congress in 1982). A subject index will be included in the new edition, as well as additional cross-references, and guidelines for citing journal articles and electronic databases. *Standard Citations* includes bibliographies that are useful in verifying, identifying, or describing items held in rare book or special collections and that have been or are likely to be cited in machine-readable catalog records. Bibliographies of or about individuals, printers, publishers, and jurisdictions below the national level are generally excluded.

The editors would be pleased to receive corrections and updates to existing citations. Suggestions for new citations should be accompanied by (1) a bibliographic record for the work or a photocopy of the titlepage, or both, and (2) a bibliographic record in which the work is cited. Specialized lists of bibliographies which have been compiled for local use are also welcome.

To ensure that your suggestions are considered for inclusion in the second edition of *Standard Citations*, please submit them by January 1, 1992 to Peter VanWingen or Belinda Urquiza, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540. -- Laura Stalker, Chair, RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee

ESTC [from their publication *Factotum*, March 1991 issue]

As the last issue of *Factotum* went to press, the ESTC teams were heaving a sigh of relief at the conclusion of a summer of intense editorial work, preparing the file for publication. The microfiche version of ESTC 1990 has now appeared, and is available from British Library Publications at a modest £750 for 300,000 or so records. When the publication schedule was announced last year, it was projected that a CD-ROM version of the file would also be published in spring 1991. We were unable to begin work on this as early as we had planned, but the necessary



development work has now started in earnest and we are hoping to have a CD ready for marketing by autumn this year. It will contain the same 300,000 records as the fiche, held on one disc, with all the searching advantages of an on-line file. It should be easy to use, with the same search and display formats as have become standard on a number of other bibliographical CDs. We hope it will offer exciting opportunities to open up the file to a whole range of users who may find on-line searching inconvenient.

After many months of negotiation, ESTC has secured the agreement of the copyright holders of STC and Wing, the short-title catalogues covering 1475-1640 and 1641-1700 respectively, to augment ESTC by incorporating their records in the file. The metamorphosis from the *Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue* has already begun, and cataloguers at ESTC/NA are creating full records for STC material, based on books in the Huntington Library. Work has been going on in the British Library to convert an automated file, based on the published STC, created by David Bank and generously provided by Glasgow University, to MARC format. Records for the period 1475-1700 will not be publicly available on ESTC for a few years to come, but our ultimate aim is to produce a comprehensive file 1475-1800 with all records upgraded to the full ESTC standard in terms of titles, headings, notes and locations. We hope to see this published on CD in 1995.

Meanwhile, work carries on with the eighteenth century. The editorial offices in London and Riverside have great quantities of material which did not arrive in time to be included in the 1990 publication, and new reports are still being received. New locations and records are being added all the time and the file has now grown by at least 4000 records since publication.

In a new initiative, ESTC at the British Library are holding an open day on 15 May It is intended primarily for contributing libraries and answering our queries for years, without ever having had the chance to see what happens to the ESTC team, and ask questions. The day will incorporate demonstrations of the on-line file, and a trial version of the file on CD (as shown to those who attended the *Eighteenth century books* course in Oxford last September), and lunch will be provided. The sessions will take place partly in the ESTC office. Numbers will be limited to 30, purely on practical grounds, but we hope to be able to repeat the event on another day if interest exceeds available places.

Call for Papers -- Huntington Conference, April 1992

The Huntington Library is organizing a symposium in April 1992 as part of a series of Los Angeles events honoring Dr. Franklin Murphy, former chancellor of UCLA. The focus will be the celebration of the role rare book collectors have occasionally - - if not invariably -- played as benefactors of scholarship. William A. Moffett, Director, is interested in receiving expressions of interest, as well as suggestions of collectors whose contributions merit recognition. Address: W. A. Moffett, Huntington Library, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108; E-mail: moffett@caltech

THEFTS

Kathleen Wilkerson was sentenced to seven years' psychiatric probation January 31 for the theft of some \$1.8 million in rare books and documents from the University of Pennsylvania's Van Pelt Library. Wilkerson, a former part-time assistant at the library, was also instructed to pay \$45,860 in restitution and to cooperate with authorities in locating any other rare books found to be missing from Penn's collection. Characterized by Assistant District Attorney Denis Cohen as Van Pelt's "most trusted employee," Wilkerson had pled no contest last November to charges that she stole materials and documents from the library during her eight-year employment there. She had escaped detection by altering records, and was ultimately caught when a

Baltimore book dealer browsing in a Philadelphia shop grew suspicious over seeing a rare edition of *Henry V* available for purchase there. [from *American Libraries* April 1991, p. 288]

Also, the July/August issue of *American Libraries*, p. 615 carried the story "Lawyer and doctor arrested in separate LC thefts" detailing two unrelated incidents at LC involving prints, historic letters, signatures, and photographs. The case involving the lawyer was also reported in the *LC Information Bulletin*, July 15, 1991, page 273. Total value of materials for both incidents may be more than \$80,000.

In the *New York Times*, Sunday, September 1, 1991, p. 45 appeared "Librarian helps foil the theft of Irish artifacts." Robert O'Neill, librarian of Boston College's John J. Burns Library of Rare Books and Special Collections, helped FBI and Immigration and Naturalization Service catch Peter Kenney, 68-year-old Irish citizen. Kenney was sentenced by a federal court in Boston at the end of August for trying to sell Boston College stolen Irish artifacts with a value estimated at up to \$150,000.

In a recent issue, *Maine Antiques Digest* reported that "on August 12, [1991], Clive E. Driver, now director of the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum of Provincetown, Massachusetts, was charged in U.S. District Court in Boston by the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts, Wayne Budd, and the U.S. Attorney for eastern Pennsylvania, Michael Bayson, with interstate transportation of stolen property valued over \$5000 and with two counts of filing false income tax returns. Driver is alleged to have understated his income by more than \$40,000 in 1985 and \$22,000 in 1986.... Driver is charged with knowingly selling [a] stolen document to rare document and autograph dealer Paul C. Richards..."

HAIL, EXLIBRIS@RUTVM1

Farewell, Exlibris@zodiac

Peter Graham writes on 28 September 1991:

ExLibris at Zodiac is now shut down; current subscribers know why (the mail loops have become intolerable). Please send no more messages; in any case they won't be distributed. We are now moving to Bitnet Listserv technology which will handle the particular problem better; no doubt it will give us new problems, but at a more interesting level. In any case it will be more automated which will make signons and signoffs easier.

If you wish to continue as an ExLibris subscriber you must yourself take action to subscribe again: To resubscribe, send to LISTSERV@RUTVM1 the message: `SUBSCRIBE EXLIBRIS yourname, yourbriefinstitution` (Capitalization is unimportant; spaces are OK; use the comma; be sure the message is contained in a single line.) You may leave the list at any time by sending the message

`SIGNOFF EXLIBRIS` to LISTSERV@RUTVM1.

The address of the GROUP for MESSAGES is either of ExLibris@rutvm1.bitnet or ExLibris@rutvm1.rutgers.edu (capitalization is unimportant).

Please note that the signon command must NOT be sent to the list address (ExLibris@rutvm1) but to the [LISTSERV](mailto:LISTSERV@RUTVM1) address (LISTSERV@RUTVM1). You may also wish to use the SET

NOMAIL EXLIBRIS (and SET MAIL EXLIBRIS) commands (again, sent to listserv@rutvm1, not to ExLibris) to temporarily suspend (and resume) your participation, e.g. for vacations or other absences.

ExLibris is an unmoderated news and discussion group for the purpose of discussing matters related to rare book and manuscript librarianship, including special collections and related issues. Membership is open to anyone who wishes to subscribe. The contents are archived as is usual for listserv groups (see below). The full membership list will be circulated from time to time unless objections are heard.

Please be aware that your local system REPLY mechanism may or may not direct your message to ExLibris; it may only go to the email address attached to the message you are replying to. In such a case (you'll be able to see) you should MAIL to ExLibris rather than REPLYing to the message. It is considered a courtesy to include your name and institution at the top of your message for identification (our email addresses are often a bit terse).

This notice will be circulated regularly for the reminder of old members and the edification of new. Feel free to forward this message to those who might be interested in joining the discussions. Please direct questions (but not subscriptions) to the undersigned at graham@zodiac.rutgers.edu. Thank you and enjoy yourselves.

This discussion group has been set up and is maintained through the good offices of staff members of Rutgers University Computing Services at Rutgers -- The State University of New Jersey. Rutgers reserves the right to discontinue or modify this service for any reason. Contributions sent to this list are automatically archived. You can obtain a list of the available archive files by sending an "INDEX EXLIBRIS" command to LISTSERV@RUTVM1. These files can then be retrieved by means of a "GET EXLIBRIS filetype" command, or using the database search facilities of LISTSERV. Send an "INFO DATABASE" command for more information on the latter.

Please note that it is currently possible for anybody to determine that you are signed up to the list through the use of the "REVIEW" command, which returns the network addresses and names of all the subscribers. If you do not wish your name to be available to others in this fashion, just issue a "SET EXLIBRIS CONCEAL" command.

More information on LISTSERV commands can be found in the "General Introduction Guide", which you can retrieve by sending an "INFO GENINTRO" command to LISTSERV@RUTVM1.

New Exhibits Discussion Group formed in ACRL

Exhibits and displays are the focus is a new ACRL discussion group now open for membership and in need of suggestions and input.

Formed at the ALA Atlanta conference, the Exhibits and Displays in Libraries Discussion Group will meet for further planning at the ALA Midwinter conference in San Antonio.

Plans for the discussion group include development of a

clearinghouse of traveling exhibits, sharing of ideas and techniques, future workshops, and censorship issues.

In June of 1991, a message was sent on an electronic mail network to assess interest. After many favorable responses from those working in libraries, archives, and special collections, the discussion group idea developed. Librarians met at the Atlanta conference, where a questionnaire was developed. To receive the questionnaire, write to Chris Whittington, 410 Pattee Library, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802 (FAX 814-865-1015).

The discussion group will meet at the ALA Midwinter conference in San Antonio on Saturday, January 25, 1992, from 2-5:30 p.m. See the midwinter conference program for location. Sandra Roff of Baruch College of City University of New York will be the featured speaker in San Francisco in the summer of 1992.

To receive further information and to be placed on the mailing list, contact Michael M. Miller, Chairperson, ACRL Exhibits & Displays Discussion Group, NDSU Libraries, Fargo, ND 58105-5599 (FAX 701-237-7138; Bitnet nu021140@ndsuvml).

Summer Rare Book Courses continue at Lilly Library, July 12-24, 1992

Rare book courses will continue at Indiana University's Lilly Library, with Joel Silver teaching Reference Sources for Rare Books and The History of the Printed Book. A third course, yet to be finalized, also will be offered. Housing will be available in an air-conditioned, graduate dormitory or a moderately priced hotel. Rates for housing and tuition are still to be determined. For more information, contact Alice Fleming at the Bloomington Division, School of Continuing Studies, Owen Hall 204, IU, Bloomington, IN 47405, (812) 855-6392.

Joel Silver, the instructor, is head of public services at the Lilly Library. Silver also teaches courses in analytical bibliography and rare book libraries and librarianship at the IU School of Library and Information Science. He joined the staff of the Lilly in 1983 after working in the antiquarian book trade.

The History of the Printed Book

This course will be held July 12-27, 1992. It is intended to be an introductory overview of the Western printed book, from the fifteenth to the twentieth century.

Topics will include the introduction and spread of printing in the fifteenth century, the scholar-printers of the Renaissance, the rise in literacy and its effect on book production, and the private press movement. Attention will also be given to developments in printing technology, typography, illustration, and binding.

Examples selected from the Lilly Library collections will be used extensively in class presentations.

Reference Sources for Rare Books

This course will be offered July 19-24, 1992. It will give participants a systematic introduction to a variety of bibliographies and other reference sources used in working with rare books. It is intended for librarians (with or without rare book experience), researchers, collectors, and those in the antiquarian book trade.

The course will begin with an introduction to the most useful

general sources, followed by coverage of the principal bibliographies and reference works in specific fields, including British and American literature, early printed books, Americana, voyages and travels, science and medicine, and auction records and price guides.

Class sessions will include lectures, discussions of different approaches to the selection of sources, and practical experience with the sources. Participants also will have opportunities to meet individually with the instructor for further discussion of class material, or to talk about subject areas or sources outside the scope of the class sessions.

Summer Rare Book Courses will also be offered in London during 1992. Write to Robin Alston, Director, Graduate Library School, University College, University of London, London WC1, England, for details.

PUBLICATIONS

Preserving Harvard's Retrospective Collections: Report of the Harvard University Library Task Group on Collection Preservation Priorities. (74 pages, April 1991). \$15.00 from the Harvard University Publications Office, 25 Mt. Auburn St., Cambridge, MA 02138. From the final chapter of the report:

"In summary, among the recommendations in this report, the following are those that have particularly broad-ranging consequences:

- Bring up to preservation standards the storage environment for all Harvard library collections in order to prevent the accelerated aging that results from extremes of temperature and humidity. Also store more books in the Harvard Depository. Another macro-level measure that should be implemented is mass deacidification.
- Take measures to improve physical handling, especially through offering enhanced staff photocopy services that preclude the need for public machines.
- Convert and enhance cataloging records.
- Because defining priorities is an on-going process, ways must be found to further think about the relationship among the types of material, the types of use, the varieties of preservation actions and funding resources. It seems essential that librarians periodically prepare Preservation Priority Inventories.
- Aggressively compete for federal and private funds to increase the resources for preserving Harvard's extraordinary collections, in concert with other libraries, publishers, and professional associations.
- In choosing what to film or preserve as a participant in the national and international preservation effort, emphasize what humanists term primary or source materials. Given Harvard's historical strength in those materials that underlie new directions in many scholarly fields, emphasis on them is the means by which the library can most effectively add to what others are also accomplishing."

W. Thomas Taylor (1906 Miriam, Austin, TX 78722) has published his long-awaited *Texfake: An Account of the Theft and Forgery of Early Texas Printed Documents*. The illustrated 140-page book gives a definitive account of the history and impact of the Texas forger and his wares, such as bogus 1836 Texas Declarations of Independence. Larry McMurtry's introduction gives an account of the dealers involved in the affair, John Jenkins (a.k.a. "Austin Squatty") and Dorman David.

The American Antiquarian Society has published *The Judgment of Experts: Essays and Documents about the Investigation of the Forgery of The Oath of a Freeman*, edited by Jame Gilreath, American history specialist at the Library of Congress. The *Oath*

is recorded to be the first United States imprint (1638-39), but no copy is known to exist. In 1985, a now-proven-bogus copy came on the market at \$1.5 million. *Judgment* documents the forgery analyses of the *Oath* done at the Library of Congress and the American Antiquarian Society. It also includes reports of various scientific, forensic, historical, and police investigations concerning the *Oath* done at sites from Massachusetts to California. (\$32.50 from University Press of Virginia, Box 3608 University Station, Charlottesville, VA 22903.)

From the Summer 1991 issue of *SELECT*, the Newsletter of the British Library's National Bibliographic Service, news that "at the instigation of the Library Association's Rare Books Group a number of extensions to the UKMARC format are to be proposed in a forthcoming consultation paper. Copies of that paper will be mailed shortly to interested bodies; additional copies will be available from Brian Holt, Bibliographic Standards Officer, NBS, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7BQ.

G. Thomas Tanselle's *Libraries, Museums and Reading* (Sol. M. Malkin Lecture in Bibliography, 17 December 1990) Published by Book Arts Press, Columbia University School of Library Service, 1991. \$10.

Tanselle has set out to provide a comprehensive rationale for the work of librarians. It is impossible to summarize this theory in a few lines, for it carries to their logical conclusion a number of considerations regarding books with artifactual importance for understanding our past. Tanselle seems to be striving to define a comprehensive theory that will accomplish a number of objectives, including the following:

- explain the split in academe between librarianship and information science
- show how this split could have been avoided
- explain the split between those who think that intellectual content has meaning apart from artificial value and those who inseparably link these two notions

The outcome of his effort is remarkable but raises further questions. For example, even though we may generally understand what led Tanselle to the statement that "If the past does interest us, then every detail of every object is valuable as our primary basis for imagining the lives and thoughts of those who produced and possessed those objects," it is still not clear what Tanselle means in this sentence by the term "the past."

The January 1991 issue of *Preservation Issues*, a publication of the State Library of Ohio, contains an article by Dina Schoonmaker on "Oberlin College Libraries: A History of Preservation," in which she describes the growth of the preservation program at Oberlin. To obtain a copy of this issue or be placed on the mailing list, contact Miriam Kahn, Preservation/Conservation Consultant, State Library of Ohio, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43266-0334, (614) 644-1972.

The May 1991 issue of the *Newsletter* of the Commission on Preservation and Access contains a list of publications available from the Commission. The form should be used to help expedite

orders for the Commissions's reports. To request copies, call or write Trice Cece, Commission on Preservation and Access, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 313, Washington, DC 20036-2117; (202)483-7474.

Bibliography on Mass Deacidification, a 32-page report by Carole Zimmermann is available from the Library of Congress Preservation Office at no charge. Contact the Preservation Office, Library of Congress, Madison Building, LM-G21, Washington, DC 20540.

The Association of Physical Plant Administrators of Universities and Colleges (APPA) and the Commission on Preservation and Access have published the proceedings of their highly successful seminar on environmental conditions for housing library and archival materials. *Preservation of Library and Archival Materials* is available for \$35.00. Send check with order to APPA Publications, P.O. Box 753, Waldorf, MD 20604.

"Ideas for Preservation Fundraising," a fundraising support package from the Commission on Preservation and Access is available for \$10.00 by writing the Commission on Preservation and Access, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 313, Washington, DC 20036-2117.

The SOLINET Preservation Program has announced the publication of *Choosing and Working with a Conservator* by Jan Paris. Order for \$10 from SOLINET, Preservation Program, 400 Colony Square, Plaza Level, Atlanta, GA 30361-6301.

Latin American Frontiers, Borders, and Hinterlands: Research Needs and Resources, edited by Paula Covington (494 pages, March 1991) consists of the papers of the 33rd annual meeting of the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials, University of California, Berkeley, 1988. Forty-nine contributors cover diverse historical, geographical, and literary topics on Latin American history including building research collections and cataloging and cooperation. Copies may be ordered for \$50 (plus \$2.50 shipping) from the SALALM Secretariat, General Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131-1466. ISBN 0-917617-24-X.

Black Bibliophiles and Collectors: Preservers of Black History, edited by Elinor Des Verney Sinnette, W. Paul Coates, and Thomas C. Battle. Washington, D.C., Howard University Press, 1990. (Recently reviewed in *College and Research Libraries* May 1991, Vol. 52, no. 3, p. 301.)

The Guide to the Manuscripts Collections at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, by Dennis F. Walle with Carolyn J. Bowers, 1990, is available for \$15 plus \$1.25 handling from the University of Alaska Press, 1st Floor Gruening Building, UAF, Fairbanks, AK 99775-1580.

Kaleidoscope of History: Photographic Collections in the

Golda Meir Library, edited by Ellen M. Murphy and Jeanne M. Knapp, 1990, is available for \$12.50 from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Golda Meir Library, P.O. Box 604, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

RBMS Standing Committee on Conference Planning

Their report at 1991 ALA annual conference:

The Ad Hoc Committee on Feasibility of a Conference Planning Committee was charged to review the need for a standing committee on conference planning and to recommend its conclusions to the RBMS Executive Committee.

What looked to be a self-evident need (based on the Ad Hoc Committee's members' recent and projected experience of program planning and on the oft-repeated suggestions of other RBMS members) came to be seen, in the course of the Committee's deliberations, to have implications as well for the process of selecting section and program chairs. We therefore recommend the establishment of a standing committee and suggest its make-up. Additionally, we recommend a revised procedure for selecting preconference program chairs. The two recommendations can be considered separately, but the committee finds them inter-related in their implementation.

The thirty-one annual RBMS Preconferences have been, by many measures, quite successful. The machinery that has brought them into being must therefore, one assumes, be adequate or better. Why tinker with it? There are, we think, several reasons; but it is necessary first to sketch the current procedure.

Each year a Nominating Committee headed by the Past Chair of the Section puts forward the names of two candidates for each of two offices, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect and Member-at-Large, and the Section elects one of each pair to three-year terms. Six people (plus a Secretary) thus make up the Executive Committee which has overall responsibility for Section business, including conference planning. It has also become traditional, however, for the person not elected Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect to be named Program Chair for the Preconference scheduled two years hence (i.e., the Preconference which will occur at the end of the year the person elected Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect serves as Chair). It is a further, more recent, tradition that the Member-at-Large similarly serves as Conference Program Chair in his/her second year (i.e., develops the program the Section offers at ALA). In a quite direct sense, therefore, the Nominating Committee each year puts forward a team which must of necessity work together closely over two years to plan, budget and conduct a Preconference (and who, at the time they agree to nomination, have an additional nine or ten months to work up preconference themes).

The system has worked well but not perfectly: not all candidates have been informed of the tradition when agreeing to stand for office (since the tradition is nowhere recorded, it seems safe to say that most RBMS members are unaware of it); and since it is generally impossible for the Nominating Committee to tell each candidate in advance whom he or she will oppose, not all pairs have seen themselves as teams. When the losing candidate will not or cannot serve, Chairs must find someone (as they must find program chairs for conferences other than preconferences). Still, on the whole, it is the Nominating Committee which has in this way "found" Preconference chairs. Preconferences are, in fact, the major RBMS activity; it would seem reasonable for Section membership overall to understand, even to influence, how they are organized.

A more central question for RBMS, however, is this: Regardless of the mechanism for selecting program chairs, could the Section better plan more, more varied, and more interesting Pre- and other conferences? If so, would the existing machinery do the job? The question stems from long-standing discussion of, e.g., small regional conferences, international conferences, thematic conferences requiring long incubation, and development of program components that reach out to inactive members or untapped constituencies (It is principally via conferences that we attract new people: can we do more to hold their interest beyond an individual conference?). There is also minor but perennial, and appropriate, dissatisfaction with preconferences: themes are too bookish, not bookish enough, too administrative, not theoretical enough, the interests of some groups are ignored or too well represented, etc.

Regular survey of the Section to evaluate past conference planning and seek suggestions for future conferences would be useful. In any case, systematic and regular thought should be given to themes or program components that attract specific audiences (e.g., archivists, booksellers, collectors) balanced against programs that encourage institutional funding of travel expense. Everyone should take responsibility for welcoming newcomers to RBMS and for getting new faces onto programs; but these things are far more likely to happen when a person or committee is made responsible for monitoring them.

Conference planning requires that a program chair and his or her institution commit considerable time and other resources. The presence of a Standing Committee on Conference Planning may lend weight to the importance of this commitment, and thereby make it easier for institutions to recognize. It might also reinforce arguments for the appropriateness of institutional support for attendance at preconferences.

The response to the question, then, is surely a resounding yes, we could do better. Work could be shared more equitably; routines and expectations could be established more firmly; memory could be made deeper. But all these efforts require a continuity which cannot be laid atop the shoulders of a particular preconference program chair (who must have considerable discretion to use intelligence and creativity to pull together theme, speakers, seminars, schedule and local arrangements on relatively short notice). Nor is the Executive Committee itself, its composition of necessity changing each year, well-suited to the task.

The question, then, is this: If these long-range issues require attention, who is responsible for them?

We recommend, **FIRST**, appointment of a Standing Committee on Conference Planning charged to adopt a long range view of the following activities:

1. Identifying potential themes, topics, and sites of program interest to RBMS;
2. Facilitating the conversion of these ideas into conference programs;
3. Initiating and responding to program proposals shared with other Sections or organizations;
4. Serving as an agent of continuity for conference planning;
5. Addressing issues of participation in conference programs.

We recommend, **SECOND**, the following membership and mechanism for the creation and operation of the committee:

Standing Committee on Conference Planning

Chair (3 year appointment)
 Chair-Elect, RBMS (ex officio)
 Chair, Education & Professional Development Committee
 Members-at-Large (3, ex officio)
 Appointed Members (3, with staggered terms)
 Interns (optional)

We recommend, **THIRD**, that selection of the Preconference Chair be made explicit by formally lodging it with the elected Member-at-Large rather than the losing candidate for Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. This would structure Preconference Planning Committees as follows:

3 years from Preconference: Member-at-Large candidates accept nomination.

2 years from Preconference: 1st year Member-at-Large becomes Preconference Program Chair; recommends to Section Chair a Conference Program Chair. Local Arrangements Chair and supporting members to both committees are appointed by Section Chair.

1 year from Preconference: Preconference Program Chair (now Member-at-Large in 2nd year), Local Arrangements Chair, appointed members. Conference Program Chair and Chair, Education & Professional Committee, brought in ex officio.

The ballot for election of Section officers currently includes brief biographical information provided by each candidate. **FOURTH** and finally, we recommend that the ballot also include a single paragraph statement from each candidate for each office. The candidates for Member-at-Large might use this opportunity to suggest general areas of program interest.

Two concluding notes: if recommendation one is adopted but recommendation three rejected, recommendation two could be amended to include the program chairs of the upcoming, current, and immediately past preconferences rather than the Members-at-Large.

There was brief discussion in the Chicago Executive Meetings of a need for a Section Planning Committee (composed largely, perhaps, of past Section chairs) which, parallel to the Standing Committee we recommend, would take a long view of RBMS activities. The kinds of reasons in support of such a committee would, one expects, look quite similar to those we have advanced for a program planning committee. While parallel, however, we think two such committees speak to quite distinct needs: while the program planning committee takes a long view of programs, it is very much in the center of section activity. A Section planning committee, by contrast, should be largely removed from immediate Section activity.

Rosemary Cullen
Sally Leach

Cathy Henderson
Barbara Paulson, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee

Sid Hutner

TRANSITIONS

Material for this column is gleaned from selected periodicals and newsletters. People with knowledge of relevant transitions are encouraged to contact the editor.

Pennington Ahlstrand has been appointed assistant librarian for special collections at the California Academy of Sciences Library, San Francisco. **Philip C. Bantin** has been appointed head of archives and manuscripts at the John J. Burns Library at Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. **Josiah Quincy Bennett** died in Bloomington, Indiana in February. He worked as a cataloger and authority on early printed books at Indiana University after a long career in the rare book trade. **Suzanne F. Blaine** is the new head of preservation services at the Smithsonian Institution Library, Washington, D.C. **William E. Brown, Jr.**, has been appointed head of archives and special collections at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. **Sarah Bryan** is the new library assistant in special collections at Baker Library of Harvard University. **Mark Dimunation** is the new director of the Rare Books Department, Cornell University Libraries, Ithaca, New York. **Charles Egleston** is with the English Short Title Catalogue (aka STC and Wing projects), Center for Bibliographical Studies, UC - Riverside. **Werner Gundersheimer**, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library, was elected to a three-year term as president of the Independent Research Library Association. **Sara Dunlap Jackson** retired from a long career at the National Archives and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. **Margaret Jerrido** has been named head of the Urban Archives Center at Temple University, Philadelphia. **H. G. Jones**, curator of the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was the 1990 recipient of the Award for Distinguished Service in Documentary Preservation and Publication from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. **Ksenya Kiebusinski** has been appointed archivist/bibliographer at Harvard University's Ukrainian Research Institute Reference Library, Cambridge, Mass. **Sandra Kroupa** is the book arts librarian of the Special Collections and Preservation Division in the new Allen Library, University of Washington, Seattle. **Victoria Kulsic** is now archivist, American Mathematical Society Records Management and Archives Project, at Brown

