

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

Spring 2009, Number 50

From the Editors

As RBMS members prepare to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the section's annual preconference later this year, it seems to be a remarkable coincidence that you are holding the golden issue, No. 50, of the *RBMS Newsletter*. The first issue, edited by David Warrington, appeared in the spring of 1984 and two issues per year (with the exception of 1992) have been published since then. Warrington explains the *Newsletter's* inception in Issue No. 1: "The greatly increased activity of RBMS in the past several years and the lack of a suitable forum to report Section proceedings and news from the world of rare books and manuscripts at large have made the appearance of a RBMS newsletter long overdue." The *Newsletter* served as the primary communication tool for RBMS until the widespread use of email and the World Wide Web came about. It would have been difficult to envision in the early 1980s the "suitable forum" that the Web eventually would provide. Now, the *Newsletter* works in tandem with the Web to provide news to section members. All of the past issues of the *Newsletter* have been digitized and are now available online at <http://www.rbms.info/publications/newsletters/index.shtml>. While the design of the *Newsletter* may have changed over the years, its mission of providing news to all members of the section—not just those who attend conferences or read the website—remains the same.

—Christopher D. Cook (cdcook@illinois.edu)
& Steven Cox (steven-cox@utc.edu)

From the Chair

All roads lead to Charlottesville and our fiftieth anniversary preconference! "Seas of Change: Navigating the Cultural and Institutional Contexts of Special Collections" promises to be a well-attended conference, despite the continuing economic downturn. As of the end of March, almost 300 registrations have been received. Since we are setting a very high registration cap of 425, there should still be spaces available when you read this. We will be welcoming at least six "golden leaders" (retired leaders of the section); in addition, many former chairs of the section will be attending. The highly relevant topic, the charms of Charlottesville, and the infusion of enthusiasm from new attendees and scholarship winners should make this preconference one to remember! Thanks are due for the hard work of the Preconference Program Planning Committee, Local Arrangements Committee, and Seminars Committee for bringing the preconference together.

I would like to thank the many generous RBMS donors who have contributed to our "50 for 50" campaign. We have raised an amazing \$3,750 from member contributions, assuring that we will receive the full ACRL match of \$7,500. This augurs well for the 2010 scholarships: our action plan proposal was granted in full, which means that we will need to raise \$5,000 in donations to receive a matching \$10,000 from ACRL. We are encouraging applications from paraprofessionals working in special collections,
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Past Chair's Report

Last year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our section, in June we will host our 50th annual preconference for which we recently completed our "50 for 50" scholarship fundraising campaign, and right now you are reading the 50th issue of our newsletter. No running for the shadows in these golden years!

Inaugurated in April 1984, the RBMS Newsletter continues to serve as a primary vehicle for communicating news about section happenings along with the RBMS electronic discussion list and website. To mark this publishing milestone, our section archivists and web team collaborated to create a keyword searchable online archive of the complete file of RBMS newsletters. You will find this new resource linked from the Publications section of our website (<http://rbms.info>). Search for a name or a topic and see what comes up from way back.

Meanwhile, a subcommittee of the 2009 Preconference Program Planning Committee has been working with our Publications Committee to produce a printed keepsake containing information about past preconferences and section leadership for distribution at our upcoming preconference. These and other records concerning our section history also will be added to our website.

To promote cross-generational learning and dialog at our upcoming golden anniversary preconference, we have made special efforts to identify and contact all previous section and preconference chairs and executive committee members who have retired from the profession and offer them complimentary registration through our "Golden Leaders" initiative. Half a dozen have accepted so far, and another twenty past section chairs have confirmed their attendance as well.

In addition, we recently completed our "50 for 50" preconference scholarship fundraising campaign, successfully raising \$3,750 in order to obtain double that amount in matching funds from ACRL through our first-ever challenge grant. Forty-two people contributed \$50 or more to the campaign, and there were many smaller gifts, too, reflecting broad participation by section members. Next year we will have the opportunity to receive up to \$10,000 in matching funds, so get ready!

Yale University Library has also pledged \$2,000 toward this year's scholarships and each of the next two years. This special gift is being offered in the honor of one of our original "golden leaders," Marjorie Wynne, retired Edwin J. Beinecke research librarian, a co-founder of our section who attended our first preconference in 1959 and served as a section chair in 1978. Sadly, Marjorie's passing was announced as I was preparing this column. We will miss "Miss Wynne."

These sources, combined with profits and registration donations from last year's preconference, give us a total of \$16,285 to fund first-time attendee scholarships and our "Golden Leaders" initiative.

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RBMS Annual Meeting Schedule

Chicago, July 10–14, 2009

FRIDAY, JULY 10

1:30–5:30 PM

Bibliographic Standards, Controlled Vocabularies
Subcommittee
Bibliographic Standards Editorial Team I

SATURDAY, JULY 11

8:00–10:00 AM

2010 Preconference Program Planning
Curators and Conservators
Nominating (*closed*)

8:00 AM–12:00 PM

Bibliographic Standards
Exhibition Awards

10:30 AM–12:00 PM

Membership and Professional Development
2009 Preconference Program Planning

1:30–3:30 PM

Publications
Security
Seminars

3:30–5:30 PM

Budget and Development
2009 Conference Planning
2010 Conference Planning
Public Services

SUNDAY, JULY 12

8:00–10:00 AM

Collection Development
Conference Development
Diversity
Guidelines for Borrowing and Lending

10:30 AM–12:00 PM

ALA/SAA *Joint Statement on Access Review*
Guidelines for Digitization of Special Collections
MARC for Special Collections
Manuscripts and Other Formats

1:30–3:00 PM

RBMS Conference Program

3:30–5:30 PM

Information Exchange and Leab Awards

MONDAY, JULY 13

8:00–11:30 AM

Executive Committee

1:30–5:30 PM

Bibliographic Standards Editorial Team II
Bibliographic Standards Editorial Team III

TUESDAY, JULY 14

8:00 AM–6:00 PM

Bibliographic Standards Editorial Team IV

8:00 AM–12:00 PM

Bibliographic Standards Editorial Team V

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

From the Chair - *continued*

as well as from members of under-represented communities, and we expect many applicants seeking to attend the Philadelphia pre-conference.

As hard times continue to affect RBMS and ALA members and institutions, we are working on ways in which virtual participation in programs and meetings can be extended. The RBMS traveling workshop pilot (one of which has been offered at this writing) is another step toward widening opportunities beyond attendance at meetings.

RBMS members attending the ALA Annual Meeting in Chicago this July should find our conference program, “Documenting Tragedy: Special Collections on the Front Line and on the Front Page,” a powerful program they will not soon forget. The Leab Awards will be presented during the Information Exchange meeting rather than following the conference program this year.

The section continues to be very active, as you can read in the following committee and task force reports. We are looking forward to the recommendations of the Task Force on Digitization of Special Collections Material, and hope for the final adoption of revised security and joint ALA/SAA access guidelines. In addition, we have updated our section bylaws to “governance procedures” which can be revised by action of the Executive Committee, without first submitting to ACRL. While we kept this revision as close to the original bylaws as possible (while incorporating mandatory language from ACRL), we discovered that there are some areas of ambiguity, especially in terms of filling vacancies occurring in section offices, particularly in the positions of vice-chair and chair simultaneously. We are seeking input from section members in seeking solutions and in any other changes to these procedures you may suggest. We hope to discuss these matters and other matters more fully at the Executive Committee meeting in Chicago.

—Mary A. Lacy (*mlac@loc.gov*)

Committee News

Bibliographic Standards

The Bibliographic Standards Committee (BSC) is pleased to report that the second manual in the DCRM suite, *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Serials)*, was published in November 2008. Editorial work is underway on four additional DCRM components: Music, Manuscripts, Graphics, and Cartographic Materials. The DCRM(S) editorial team is now engaged in developing an application manual, with extensive illustrative examples, to accompany the rules. A working group, led by Eduardo Tenenbaum and Nina Schneider, has begun compiling examples to accompany DCRM(B). The Controlled Vocabularies Subcommittee is working with OCLC Research to add the RBMS thesauri to the OCLC Terminologies Project. Another working group, under the direction of Elizabeth Robinson, is revising *Standard Citation Forms for Published Bibliographies and Catalogs Used in Rare Book Cataloging* (2nd ed.), to provide improved access to bibliographic citations in catalog records. As part of that revision, a BSC proposal to MARBI to add subfield "u" (for a URL) to MARC tag 510 (Citation/References note) was approved at the 2009 ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver. Following on recent committee activities, BSC will be sponsoring a seminar on bibliographic citations and a workshop on DCRM(S) at the 2009 RBMS Preconference in Charlottesville.

—Randal Brandt (rbrandt@library.berkeley.edu)

Budget and Development

At its Midwinter meeting, the Budget and Development Committee heard reports on budget matters pertaining to the Leab Endowment, as well as the preconference and preconference scholarship finances. The Committee particularly focused on fund-raising initiatives to support those latter endeavors. We agreed to ask for the Executive Committee's approval to pursue two additional initiatives: 1) to develop support for scholarships to help new RBMS members attend ALA Midwinter and Annual Conferences, and 2) to develop support for providing additional access to RBMS programming using digital technologies. Both initiatives, which the Executive Committee approved, will be important in maintaining RBMS's commitment to bringing in new professionals from diverse backgrounds, especially as the recession's effect is felt in academic and independent research libraries.

—Elaine Smyth (esmyth@lsu.edu)

Collection Development

A dozen hearty souls braved the snow in Denver early Sunday morning, January 25th, to participate in the Collection Development Discussion Group. This session began with reports of new collections from around the country. Following news of recent acquisitions which attendees observed were primarily in-kind gifts that had not been affected by the economy, attention turned to the subject of future donations. Attendees were not as optimistic that donors would maintain their current levels of giving. Discussion shifted to institutional responses to the downturn in the economy, which included hiring freezes and layoffs, both of which resulted in staffing shortages in the libraries. Reports on reductions in acquisitions budgets were also shared by attendees, some of whom had been instructed to return a portion of their budgets, and others who had been directed to reduce the draw on their endowments.

One antiquarian bookseller attending the discussion group observed that the trade has experienced a parallel reduction in commercial activity, but no price reductions at this point. Speculation led one to believe that such a change was inevitable.

Appropriately, the second half of the meeting was devoted to building collections on a reduced budget. Attendees discussed the relative merits of "peripheral collecting", or what actions special collections curators take when their budgets can no longer support the purchase of first editions. Librarians debated the merits of the tried and true tradition of building upon institutional strengths, but also indicated they were engaged in the identification of new, previously uncollected disciplines that might appeal to future generations of scholars. Transfers from institutions' general collections appear to be regaining momentum as curators seek out alternative sources of material, not only in response to the budgetary crisis, but also in response to new demands upon collections. Discussion relating to collection development policies revealed that there is interest among RBMS members in a workshop or seminar on this topic. The co-chairs will pursue this proposal with preconference program planners.

—Lois Fischer Black (lob206@lehigh.edu)

Conference Development

The Conference Development Committee meeting in Denver included reports from last summer's preconference in Los Angeles and upcoming preconferences in Charlottesville (2009) and Philadelphia (2010). A subcommittee appointed to investigate the future of RBMS preconferences had several preliminary reports. One group reported on their initial analysis of responses to the last three preconference evaluations, all of which were done electronically. As a result of this analysis, the subcommittee is preparing a survey to be sent to the entire section concerning the preconference. The goal of the survey would be to provide suggestions to future planning committees on ways to secure the continuing success for the considerable effort that goes into the preconference each year. Issues of programming, timing, location, cost, and alternative delivery options will be explored. Jane Gillis provided a thorough report of the first RBMS-sponsored regional workshop "RBMS Workshop on *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*." It was held at the Beinecke Library in New Haven on December 12, 2008, and was a success in spite of the weather.

—Elizabeth L. Johnson (johnson1@indiana.edu)

Curators and Conservators

The Curators and Conservators Discussion Group did not meet at Midwinter.

—Kenneth Lavender (klavende@syr.edu)

Diversity

The Diversity Committee met in Denver where the co-chairs, Verónica Reyes-Escudero and Athena Jackson led an energetic meeting. Please stay tuned for the Recruitment Tool Kit, soon forthcoming. Announcements of completion will be sent to the RBMS listserv and other pertinent venues. The Tool Kit can be used in efforts to recruit people from under-represented racial and ethnic groups to the special collections library profession. We welcome your comments and stories about any of your recruitment and outreach initiatives.

We would also like to spread the word that the committee is seeking new members. Current members are cycling out of their seats, and we would welcome suggestions for new members, and target

groups for soliciting new members. We have a dynamic committee whose charge encourages librarians to participate in fulfilling our charge and participating in other RBMS committees.

Finally, join Athena Jackson and Past-Chair Julie Grob at this year's 50th annual preconference where they will facilitate a frank discussion about diversity in our profession called "Many Voices at the Table: Diversity in Special Collections."

—Verónica Reyes-Escudero (reyesv@u.library.arizona.edu)
and Athena Jackson (athena_n_jackson@yahoo.com)

Digitization in Special Collections

The Guidelines for Digitization of Special Collections Task Force met at Midwinter and delved into three primary discussion areas: the review of two supporting documents available on the Task Force's website (http://www.rbms.info/committees/task_force/digitization/index.shtml), and preparation of the Task Force's final recommendations, to be sent to the RBMS Executive Committee for review before ALA Annual 2009. The two supporting documents include the "Digitization in Special Collections Bibliography" and "Principles for Digital Content." The Principles document intends to serve as a set of talking points that address the increasing role of digitization in special collections. As we began our work, it became clear that a set of well-articulated principles would help set the stage for our final recommendations. At the time, it seemed worth noting too that digital technologies are extending our resources to a broader set of users than ever before and are particularly valuable at a time when travel budgets for researchers will likely be reduced and as users continually expect to find more information online. A lively discussion followed around the wording of the seven principles and they were made available online in February 2009. The bibliography, also available online, is a straightforward clearinghouse of resources that support special collections as we adopt and improve digitization workflows.

The second half of the meeting was dedicated to an open conversation to discuss the form and content of our final recommendations. Along with a list of relevant groups across ALA that already explore issues around digitization our Task Force will propose three primary areas of responsibility for RBMS to consider as it sets an agenda for digitization and special collections. These areas, as they stand currently, are 1) Liaison, 2) Education, and 3) Policy.

—Rebekah Irwin (rebekah.irwin@yale.edu)

Manuscripts and Other Formats

The Manuscripts and Other Formats Discussion Group met at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in Denver on Sunday, January 25, 2009, from 10:30–12:00. A small group of 8–10 participants gathered for informal discussion.

Members were invited to describe new collections, projects in which they were involved, exhibitions, or other news from their repositories. The individual member issues and queries section of our discussion solicited stories from all of the individuals present. The topic most recounted by participants was preservation disasters with a lively discussion of mold outbreaks and other organisms living in or on our collections. Finding harmony and balance between our repository environments and other custodial concerns were brought to light with a number of helpful suggestions from participants who had overcome the challenges of disaster response. Less threatening and humorous anecdotes were shared between members concerning dirty documents, the place of cats

in collections, and other oddities which might make an interesting session proposal or further discussion along the lines of "what do I do when . . ."

The primary discussion topic was digital preservation. A shared concern is that the electronic formats representing important images and descriptive data within our holdings are increasingly at risk of loss. Although digital preservation is by no means a new concern, our discussion focused on how special collections librarians and archivists are responding, assisting, or advocating for collaboration with IT staff. These concerns are largely institution-dependent and it was evident from our discussion that librarians and archivists are often not invited to the table for discussion of such issues. The group also looked at the maintenance of born-digital institutional or other records and whether they had become less cumbersome for departments and repositories to accept with assurance than they were ten years ago.

Suggestions for future discussion topics were solicited and include looking back on the hidden collections initiative and considering how much of an impact this has had on processing collections. RBMS members are encouraged to suggest other issues and are welcome to attend future meetings. Please don't hesitate to get in touch!

—Kate Colligan (colligank@edc.pitt.edu) &
Lois Fischer Black (lob206@lehigh.edu)

ALA/SAA Joint Statement on Access Review

The Task Force to Review the ALA/SAA Revision of the *Joint Statement on Access* met twice in Denver during the 2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting. On Saturday (January 24) the Task Force held a hearing on the *Joint Statement*. Prior to the meeting, the current draft statement was posted on the RBMS website. Ten individuals attended the hearing, including a representative from the Standards and Accreditation Committee (SAC) and a representative from the ALA Joint Committee on Archives Libraries and Museums (CALM) who planned to report to CALM at their Midwinter meeting later that day. A number of minor corrections were suggested, but in general, the draft document was well received and deemed ready to go forward. On Sunday (January 25) the Task Force also met very briefly with three attendees.

Subsequent to Midwinter, the draft was sent for comments to several relevant groups, including the GODORT Committee on Rare and Endangered Government Documents and to the SLA Geography & Map Section. The Task Force also discovered that we had not posted an announcement on the ExLibris listserv that the draft was available for review and this has now been done. The draft has also been sent to SAA Council for review and an announcement will appear in *C&RL News* indicating that the draft is available for review and comments on the RBMS website until April 15. Following these final review opportunities I will send the draft to the RBMS Executive Committee and hopefully it then will go on to SAC for approval.

—Timothy D. Murray (tdm@udel.edu)

Membership and Professional Development

The Membership and Professional Development Committee is putting the finishing touches on two initiatives. A subcommittee con-

sisting of Eva Guggemos, Heather Cole, Susan Fagan, and Sarah Fass is finalizing work on an FAQ for those new to the profession. The FAQ is in the form of a wiki which we plan to make available via the Committee's page on the RBMS website. The Committee is also finalizing work on evaluation forms for the Mentoring and Buddy Programs. The evaluations are short online surveys that will be emailed to participants in the Buddy Program after conferences and to mentoring pairs one year after they are matched. We plan to use the results of the evaluations to continue to improve both programs. We made one buddy match for Midwinter and have matched six pairs of mentors since Annual 2008. The total number of mentor pairs matched since the program's inception in 2004 is 62. Thank you to everyone who has participated in the Mentoring and Buddy Programs. And, because new mentors are always needed, please consider volunteering to be a mentor.

The Committee would like to reprise for the Charlottesville preconference the slide show of committee chairs that debuted at the Preconference Orientation in Los Angeles. The Committee requests every member of the Executive Committee and the chairs of other committees, discussion groups and task forces, to send a digital photo of herself or himself for inclusion in the presentation that will be playing during the Introduction to RBMS portion of the Orientation. If your photo was in the "Head Shots" display in Los Angeles, please let us know if we may use it again, or send us a new one if you prefer. New photos and permission to reuse last year's photos may be sent to fagan.susan@gmail.com.

—Donna L. Davey (dd424@nyu.edu)

MARC for Special Collections

The MARC for Special Collections (MASC) Discussion Group met January 25 in the Colorado Convention Center for 90 minutes, during ALA Midwinter. The 41 attendees applauded the publication of DCRM(S) and listened to other announcements, including a request for volunteers to take over leading MASC following ALA Annual. We then welcomed John Chapman, Matt Goldner, and Jackie Dooley from OCLC for a discussion of the findings of the WorldCat Local Special Collections and Archives Task Force. The Task Force brought together special collections librarians and OCLC representatives to identify problems with the way WorldCat Local handles special collections, and ranked them from highest to lowest significance. The Task Force identified the top five concerns as 1) Incomplete record displays, 2) Local/institutional data is not indexed, 3) Principal author is not distinguished from added entries, 4) Keyword searching is inadequate for voluminous result sets, and 5) The definition of "type" for archival materials is inaccurate. Matt Goldner promised that OCLC would provide a response no later than the end of February. Discussion then moved on to the use of non-special collections catalog librarians and staff in special collections cataloging. Suggestions included using staff to work on twentieth-century materials and also to develop long term projects and utilize staff for a set amount of time each week. Several people noted that increases in shelf-ready materials make this an ideal time to request assistance from our colleagues in cataloging departments. Please send future discussion topics to the Co-Conveners: John Overholt (overholt@fas.harvard.edu) and Sarah Fisher.

—Sarah S. Fisher (sarah.fisher@yale.edu)

Public Services

The Public Services Discussion Group met at Midwinter in Denver with approximately 35 people attending. Discussion centered around the main topics of the approved *Core Competencies for Special Collections Professionals* and how they affect recruitment and hiring in the public services area; digitization and what different institutions are doing in light of the previous summer's preconference discussions; and the mounting of exhibitions, both large and small, and how public services is affected.

Discussion veered at several instances into staffing shortages and hiring freezes at many institutions, resulting from current economic difficulties. Of particular interest was a lengthy discussion centering on the difficulty of maintaining a secure environment and monitoring handling practices in the reading room with reduced staff and with greater demands on staff time. There was great variation on coping strategies among reading rooms, depending on the size of the institution and the number of staff members.

The continued interest in digital delivery produced a variety of topics for discussion including retrieval of digitized images, and which images to save. Libraries offering digital images to patrons reported that orders were processed much faster than with paper-based image delivery, and the procedure was popular with patrons. Discussion continued on the topic of image access and whether, and how best, to retain low resolution scans.

An involved discussion on the topic of mounting exhibitions revealed that public services staff members are affected in a number of ways, including preparing suggested reading follow-up lists, creating programs related to the exhibitions, conducting tours, and successfully keeping track of materials. The larger institutions that had curators were affected differently from the smaller institutions without curators. Many participants from smaller institutions indicated that mounting exhibitions was done by the public services staff and was very popular, in some cases with staff concentrating on personal interests.

The group was co-chaired by Susan Walker (susan.walker@yale.edu) and Margaret Tenney. Both would like to hear of possible topics for inclusion in the discussion group meeting set for Annual.

—Margaret Tufts Tenney (mtenney@mail.utexas.edu)

Publications

The Publications Committee met at the ALA Midwinter Conference on Saturday, January 24, 2009, in Denver. The commemorative keepsake volume to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Section in Charlottesville in 2009 was the primary topic for discussion. Terry Belanger, Christian Dupont, Elizabeth Johnson, Jeffrey Makala, Arvid Nelsen, and Daniel Slive have assembled documents and data to be included in the book. Arvid Nelsen will be composing some of the introductory matter. Terry Belanger has examined the materials compiled thus far and has made some design and formatting suggestions. The challenge will be to create a truly attractive commemorative publication while also containing the costs involved. A Charlottesville printer may be selected for this volume.

James Ascher and Christopher Smith reported on recent website developments. After the 2008 preconference, they received and published online supporting documentation from some of the presentations. History and Workshops sections have been added to the website. Other enhancements include a committee roster and a print style sheet for *Your Old Books*. (The style sheet allows page

contents to be printed without the navigational sidebar and graphic header.) The Web editors are also exploring Web 2.0 potentialities and are working on various pilot projects. Statistics reveal that visitations to the Section's website remain steady. A document in the form of frequently asked questions for people new to the profession is currently being drafted by the Membership and Professional Development Committee. This will be added to the site in the next six months or so. The Web editors are also in the process of creating a manual for future Web editors to encourage a consistency of style during such transitions.

A follow-up discussion was held concerning Richard Noble's suggestion at the June 2008 meeting that the Publications Committee consider assuming responsibility for the publication of the list of submissions to the Leab exhibition award competition as well as the display cards and award certificates. It was agreed that such an arrangement would provide appropriate support for the Exhibition Award Committee's endeavors, and that it would also help ensure some cohesiveness in the design schemes as well. The information will be ready to share in March or April when ACRL announces the winning entries.

—William La Moy (wlamoy@syr.edu)

RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage

The editorial board met during Midwinter and discussed the format of the journal, including the possible creation of a "books received" or book review column. We are also considering adding an occasional column that would be more practice-oriented.

The spring 2009 issue (10.1) should be in subscribers' mailboxes mid-May, and work is already underway for the fall issue. As always, we welcome questions about publication in *RBM* and are happy to work with authors throughout the submission process.

—Beth Whittaker (whittaker.50@osu.edu)

Security

The Security Committee heard reports on the Missing Maps database (www.missingmaps.info) and the proposed use of the "List" feature within the WorldCat database for listing missing and stolen special collections materials (the latter still being tested; more information will be available at a later date). There was a report on the Committee's improved and expanded website, including a full listing of theft and security-related resources (<http://www.rbms.info/committees/security/index.shtml>). The Committee completed its work on a final draft of the combined *Security/Theft Guidelines*, which was approved by the Executive Committee in March.

—Richard W. Oram (roram@mail.utexas.edu)

Seminars

The 2009 preconference will feature seminars on topics including preservation (mold outbreaks), working with digital technologies (ramping up digitization, Web 3.0), and technical services (citing bibliographies in rare book cataloging, innovative staffing for archival processing) as well as library friends groups, scholarly engagement, transfer policies, and public services in an age of "more product, less process." A complete list of the nine seminars being offered, including descriptions and speakers, can be found on the preconference website.

The Seminars Committee seeks your input regarding seminars for the 2010 preconference. The committee will discuss proposals at the Annual Conference in Chicago. We particularly encourage

the chairs and members of RBMS committees, discussion groups, and task forces to submit proposals that pertain to your current needs and interests. Remember that you do not have to undertake the responsibility of organizing a seminar if you have an idea for something you want to see. The Committee is always happy to work with individuals who do wish to organize a seminar, but you may simply contribute an idea for a seminar you would like to attend. To suggest a topic or make a formal proposal either send an e-mail to the Committee Chair at edowell@indiana.edu or use the form at http://rbms.info/committees/seminars/seminar_proposal_form.shtml.

—Erika Dowell (edowell@indiana.edu)

2009 Annual Conference Preview

The 2009 RBMS Annual program in Chicago will be titled: "Documenting Tragedy: Special Collections on the Front Line and on the Front Page." The program is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, July 12, from 1:30 to 3:00 PM. This session deals with institutional crises in the form of tragedies and the role that archives and special collections play in responding to these events. These responses serve the crucial function of documenting such events in their immediate aftermath. They also, however, play a role in helping the institution manage and respond to the event, sometimes even becoming a part of the institutional grieving process. Because these events are often emotionally charged and involve intense public and media scrutiny, the archival and library response can be challenging. The participants in this panel all have first-hand experience in such matters. Steven Smith was a part of the Cushing Library's response to the bonfire collapse at Texas A&M in 1999. Tamara Kennelly will discuss her work as archivist in the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy. Ed Galvin is Director of Archives and Records Management at Syracuse University. He and his staff have been involved in collecting material relating to the Pan Am Flight 103 tragedy and Syracuse University for many years. Jennifer Paustenbaugh of Oklahoma State will moderate the session. Aaron Purchell, also of Virginia Tech, will offer a response. In addition to relating the experiences of individuals and institutions, the panelists will offer insights and advice in preparing for and responding to these events.

—Steven Smith (stevensmith@tamu.edu)

2009 Preconference Preview

The 50th annual RBMS preconference, titled "Seas of Change: Navigating the Cultural and Institutional Contexts of Special Collections," will be held from Wednesday, June 17 to Saturday, June 20, 2009, in Charlottesville, Virginia, site of the first preconference in 1959. The fiftieth anniversary of the preconference suggests for many an opportunity to simply reflect on where we have been as a profession and a section, but rather than merely dwell on past achievements, this program aims to critically examine current and anticipated developments affecting the environments in which special collections departments and professionals work. The preceding fifty years saw innovations made by such professionals in response to dramatic social, cultural, technological, economic and academic changes. The world today shows, if anything, change occurring at an even faster rate. While our past experiences may inform our discussions, the program will strive to address issues of relevance to the profession today.

The program will feature five plenary sessions addressing a range of issues faced by academic research institutions, our research communities, professional organizations and library education, the booktrade, contemporary print publishers and editors, the global information ecosystem, and academic library systems. Plenary speakers currently include: John T. Casteen, III, President of the University of Virginia; Professor Francis X. Blouin, Director, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan; Beverly P. Lynch, Professor, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles; Katharine Kyes Leab, Editor, *American Book Prices Current*; Ted Genoways, Editor, *Virginia Quarterly Review*; Eli Horowitz, Publisher, *McSweeney's Quarterly Concern*; Tod Lippy, Editor, *Esopus*; Siva Vaidyanathan, Associate Professor of Media Studies, University of Virginia Law School; Oya Y. Rieger, Associate University Librarian for Information Technologies, Cornell University; Ellen S. Dunlap, President, American Antiquarian Society; and Sarah E. Thomas, The Bodley's Librarian and Director, Oxford University. Additional potential speakers are currently being considered.

The program will also feature short papers and discussion groups, as well as the usual complement of seminars. The theme of the short papers is *New and Emerging Voices*. This session is designed to gather perspectives of new special collections professionals on the nature of our collections and institutions and on the future of our work. Recent graduates of library and information studies programs, experienced librarians making a career change, and representatives of groups traditionally underrepresented in the archival, rare book and manuscript library professions will share their points of view in half-hour prepared presentations. They will talk about why they have been drawn to the field at this point in time, what they hope to achieve, and where they see the cultural and institutional tides taking us in the future. Discussion groups are in preparation and will look to cover a range of issues from lessons learned in the history of the section to the future of the preconference, diversity within the profession, issues faced by smaller libraries and archives, and the application of Web 2.0 technologies in special collections.

The Omni Charlottesville Hotel will serve as the main preconference hotel, meeting venue, and location of the opening reception on Wednesday evening. Single and double rooms at the Omni will be priced at \$189/night. Additional hotel and dormitory accommodations will also be available. On Thursday, preconference sessions will be held at the University of Virginia's Newcomb Hall conference center. An evening reception will be held in the gardens and terrace of the Colonnade Club, located on the University's historic central grounds.

The Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA) and its Southeastern Chapter will be hosting a booksellers' showcase during the preconference on Wednesday. Workshops are presently being organized for that day; more information will be available soon. Tours will be offered of local special collections libraries and cultural attractions, including the University of Virginia, Monticello, Ashlawn-Highland, and Montpelier. In addition, organized visits to local wineries and the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains are also being planned. The Local Arrangements Committee, chaired by Christian Dupont, is also exploring the possibility of offering behind-the-scenes tours of conservation and other facilities at the Virginia Historical Society, Library of Virginia, and other libraries, museums, and archives in nearby Richmond.

Rare Book School will be offering summer courses immediately

preceding and following the preconference for the convenience of attendees. The Rare Book School also, with assistance offered by the Preconference Program Committee, will mount an exhibit on RBMS history in the UVa Rotunda.

A website with information about the preconference is currently located at: <http://rbms.info/conferences/preconferences/2009/index.html>. Please contact the program chair, R. Arvid Nelsen, with any questions or suggestions.

—R. Arvid Nelsen (nels0307@umn.edu)

Past Chair's Report - *continued*

I am especially grateful for commitment demonstrated by these investments in our section's future as they come during a period of severe economic hardship that is affecting us on personal and institutional levels, and likely will do so for some time to come. Everywhere we are seeing budgets slashed, services cut back, personnel reduced. Many of our members have lost funding to attend conferences and workshops. Yet even before the financial crisis started last fall, we began taking steps to make our educational opportunities and programs more accessible. With support from ACRL, we are piloting a regional workshop program to take some of our popular preconference workshops and seminars "on the road." The first of these, a DCRM(B) cataloging workshop held at the Beinecke Library in December, quickly filled to capacity, and plans for another workshop are underway. With equipment loaned by RLG Programs/OCLC Research, we will be recording the plenary sessions at our upcoming preconference and making the available through the RBMS website.

We also are following ALA and ACRL policy developments pertaining to virtual committee participation to determine how and when they can be applied to our work. With the launch of ALA Connect (<http://connect.ala.org/>) in April, we now have a new and powerful technology platform at our disposal. As we explore such possibilities, we look forward to your ideas and involvement.

—Christian Dupont (cdupont@atlas-sys.com)

Transitions

Laura Berfield is the new Project Archivist (part-time) for the Center for Public Service Archives, Loyola University-Chicago. **Clark Center** has been promoted to Head of the Dept. of Archives and Southern History and Life at the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa. **David D'Onofrio** is now Special Collections Librarian at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. **E. Evan Echols** has been appointed Assistant Librarian in the Special Collections Dept. at the University of Delaware. **Stephen Enniss** has been named Eric Weinmann Librarian of the Folger Shakespeare Library. **S. Victor Fleischer** has joined the University of Akron as University Archivist, Head Archival Services. **Neil Fulghum** retired as Keeper of the North Carolina Collection Gallery at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Kenneth Giese** has been appointed Special Collections Librarian at Goucher College in Baltimore. **Kacy Guill** has been appointed University Archivist and Records Manager at East Carolina University. **Earle Havens** is the new Curator of Rare Books at the Johns Hopkins Sheridan Libraries. **Ethan Henderson** has been appointed the Special Collections Librarian at Kenyon College. **Stuart Hinds** is now Head of Special Collections at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. **Lynn Holdzkom** has been appointed Head of Technical Services in the Wilson Special Collections Library at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Douglas "Biff" Hollingsworth** has been appointed Collecting

and Public Programming Archivist in the Southern Historical Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill. **T. Michael Kelly** has been named Head of Archives and Special Collections at Amherst College. **Erin Lawrimore** is now the Associate Head and Curator of the Special Collections Research Center at North Carolina State University. **Lindsey Loeper** has been appointed Special Collections Archivist at the Albin O. Kuhn Library and Gallery, University of Maryland-Baltimore County. **John Lovett** has been appointed Director of Special Collections at the University of Oklahoma. **Kerry Magruder** has been appointed Curator of the History of Science Collections at the University of Oklahoma. **Susan Malbin** has been named Director of Library and Archives at the American Jewish Historical Society in New York City. **Michelle Mascaro** has joined the University of Akron as Special Collections Cataloger. **Kelly McAnaney** is now Supervisory Archivist at the University of California-San Diego Mandeville Special Collections Library. **Charles McNamara** retired as Curator of the Rare Book Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Jennifer Meyer** is now Assistant to the Curator of Rare Books in the Dept. of Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton. **Jeffrey Monseau** is now College Archivist at Spring-

field College (Mass.). **Jennifer Motszko** is now Archivist at UNC-Greensboro. **Mary Osielski** has retired from the M. E. Grenander Dept. of Special Collections and Archives, SUNY-Albany. **Frieda Rosenberg** retired as Head of Serials Cataloging at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Deirdre Scaggs** has been appointed Director of Archives in the University of Kentucky Library Special Collections and Digital Programs. **Jennifer Sedgwick** was appointed Manuscript Processor at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Holly Smith** has been appointed Grace McSpadden Overholser Archival Fellow in African American Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill. **Aislinn Sotelo** has joined the University of California-San Diego Mandeville Special Collections Library as Special Collections Cataloger. **Kristina Southwell** has been appointed Assistant Curator of Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma. **Laura Sullivan** is now Assistant Archivist in the Special Collections Dept. at the Iowa State University Library. **Anne Thomason** is now Assistant Archivist at Earlham College. **Marilyn Wurzbarger** has retired as Special Collections Librarian at Arizona State University. **Marjorie Wynne**, retired Edwin J. Beinecke research librarian, RBMS co-founder, and 1978 section chair, passed away on April 5, 2009.

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