

# 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*

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## From the Chair

In her annual report in this issue, past chair Laura Stalker provides several examples of ways in which RBMS has reached out to other professional organizations. Among these is the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America (ABAA). RBMS regulars will recall that ABAA has generously supported receptions at our Preconferences for a number of years, and in 1999 ABAA will be underwriting the Wednesday luncheon at the Montreal Preconference. ABAA is also supporting the Preconference by publicizing the opportunity for dealers to place literature in the conference totebag. Furthermore, RBMS contacts with ABAA have recently increased and deepened. Several productive discussions with Dan De Simone, a member of ABAA's board of directors, have taken place. For example, Mr. De Simone has proposed that RBMS be offered booth space (gratis) at its national book fairs in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. At their midwinter meeting, the RBMS Executive Committee enthusiastically endorsed this method of spreading the word about the Section's goals and programs, and Laura Stalker and Eric Holzenberg (Vice Chair) have just submitted an ACRL Initiative Fund proposal to outfit the booth. Clearly, ABAA and RBMS have many mutual concerns on their agendas, including the need to promote the importance of collecting rare books and manuscripts to the general public. I should add that Steve Ferguson, former chair of the RBMS Outreach Committee (Ad hoc), now disbanded, played a leading role in the initial discussions with ABAA and deserves our thanks. In the future, this committee's functions will be taken on by members of the Executive Committee.

A new Ad hoc Committee on Licensing, consisting of Cathy Henderson (Chair), Lisa Browar, and Michael North was appointed at Midwinter. The issue of licensing special collections materials to publishers and other commercial ventures is one that seems to elicit strong responses, if the recent rip-roaring discussion on Exlibris is any indication! In appointing this committee, RBMS leadership recognizes that not all institutions will choose to license their materials, but more and more (particularly large collections with marketable materials) are doing so and need some guidance. This committee is charged with examining the issues surrounding licensing and with proposing model contracts, forms, and fee schedules.

Finally, I would like to encourage you all to attend the Montreal Preconference "Border Crossings: Exploring New

Territories for Special Collections." The program is provocative, the city charming, the accommodations exemplary and economical. *Venez à Montréal!*

— Rich Oram

## 1999 RBMS Preconference in Montreal

*"Border Crossings: Exploring New Territories  
for Special Collections"*

McGill University and the Canadian Centre for Architecture are co-hosts for the 40th annual Rare Books and Manuscripts Preconference which will take place in Montreal from June 21-24, 1999. This is the first Preconference site outside the U.S. in nearly a decade.

In keeping with the Montreal location, the Preconference will examine developments in North American special collections in a larger, international context. The theme encompasses a variety of metaphorical "border crossings" for special collections: changing roles for special collections libraries and their staff in the digital environment, problems and issues with intellectual property in the international and digital contexts, and developing new constituencies of users and public service strategies for special collections materials.

The Preconference theme will be complemented with an ample number of short papers, seminar presentations, workshops, tours, and receptions. Monday's schedule includes a day-long workshop on digitizing special materials and two half-day workshops, one on description of graphic materials and the other on basic techniques for installing exhibits. A fourth workshop on cataloging rare serials will be offered on Thursday afternoon after the conclusion of the Preconference.

Attendees are strongly encouraged to make reservations for lodging and to register using the online registration form as early as possible. June is high tourist season, and a limited number of rooms have been reserved for Preconference attendees. Note that this year the Preconference will begin on a Monday and conclude on Thursday, giving participants planning to attend the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans a full day for travel on Friday June 25.

A detailed description of the program and registration materials are available on the RBMS website <http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html>. For additional information, contact Bradley Westbrook, Mandeville Special Collections Library, UCSD, La Jolla, CA 92093; [bdwestbrook@ucsd.edu](mailto:bdwestbrook@ucsd.edu).

## RBMS ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

New Orleans, June 26-28, 1999

### SATURDAY, June 26

- 8:30-11:00a 2000 Preconference Program Planning  
Exhibition Catalogue Awards  
RBML Editorial Board  
Security
- 8:30a-12:30p Bibliographic Standards I
- 9:30-11:00a Guidelines for Borrowing & Loaning  
Special Collections Materials for  
Exhibition (Ad hoc)  
Membership
- 11:30a-12:30p Hearing on revised *Guidelines for the  
Security of Rare Book, Manuscript, and  
Other Special Collections*  
Nominating (Closed)  
2001 Preconference Program Planning
- 2:00-4:00p Budget & Development  
Education & Professional Development  
Manuscripts & Other Formats Disc.  
Publications  
Seminars

### SUNDAY, June 27

- 8:30-11:00a Bibliographic Standards II  
Conference Development  
Curators & Conservators Disc.  
Public Services Disc.  
Licensing (Ad hoc)
- 11:30a-12:30p 2000 Conference Program Planning  
MARC for Special Collections Disc.
- 2:00-4:00p RBMS program: "Where Cultures  
Connect: Making and Using Louisiana's  
'Creole' Collections"
- 4:30-5:30p Information Exchange  
RBMS business meeting and awards

### MONDAY, June 28

- 8:30a-12:30p Executive Committee I & II

*This is the schedule RBMS has requested.  
Check the final conference schedule for changes.*

### RBMS Program in New Orleans

Since Sieur d'Iberville established Louisiana's first French settlement 300 years ago, the state has been a place where cultures collided and mixed. Such diversity presents challenges for librarians who document it in their collections and for the scholars who use those collections. RBMS will sponsor a program on June 27 during ALA's Annual Conference to provide a forum for discussion of those challenges and some ways in which they are being met.

"Where Cultures Connect: Making and Using Louisiana's 'Creole' Collections" will include presentations by Dr. Donald Devore, executive director of the Amistad Research Center, Dr. Barry Ancelet, who chairs the Department of Modern Languages at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, and Dr. Robert Carriker, Department of History, University of Southwestern Louisiana. Dr. Devore will speak about the mission of the Amistad Research Center and the development of its collections. Dr. Ancelet will discuss his work documenting the rich culture of Louisiana's Cajuns. Dr. Carriker will talk about his work as a public historian and how librarians can contribute to documenting public history.

### *Memorial Resolution*

As the Head of Fine Arts and Special Collections at the Cleveland Public Library for many years, the late ALICE N. LORANTH was extraordinarily effective in developing the varied collections in her charge. She was widely respected for her expertise in subjects ranging from medieval romance and Arabic manuscripts to comparative folklore and chess.

The Association of College and Research Libraries and the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section offer its sympathies to Mrs. Loranth's family and friends and congratulates the Cleveland Public Library on its establishment of the Alice N. Loranth Collection of Medieval Romance Literature.

### From the Archivist

Nancy Romero extends her thanks to all those who have sent records for the Archives and would like to encourage all those members who will be outgoing chairs to remember to send their records to her after the ALA Annual Conference this summer. For further information, contact Nancy at [N\\_Romero@uiuc.edu](mailto:N_Romero@uiuc.edu).

## Committee News

### Bibliographic Standards

The main activity of the Bibliographic Standards Committee this year is the revision of *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books*. An electronic discussion list has been set up for the members of the revision committee and discussion is currently underway. Summaries of progress will be posted periodically on the Committee's home page <http://www.lib.byu.edu/~catalog/people/rbm/bsc/home.htm>.

At Midwinter, the Committee discussed the construction of headings for unnamed widows and heirs of printers, a topic that has not been dealt with in AACR2 or the LCRIs. This discussion led to the decision that, in the absence of LCRIs on questions pertaining to the cataloging rare materials, the Bibliographic Standards Committee would issue its own rule interpretations. Decisions will be posted on the Committee's home page.

The RBMS thesauri have moved to the University of Oregon, under the editorship of Bruce Tabb. The new web address is: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/catdept/home/genererms/main.html>. All additions and changes adopted at Bibliographic Standards Committee meetings, including last Midwinter's, may be seen there.

Finally, the Committee would like to remind RBMS members that it is sponsoring a workshop on rare serials cataloging at the Preconference in Montreal. We hope to see you there!

### Curators and Conservators

At its Midwinter meeting in Philadelphia, the Curators and Conservators Discussion Group addressed a variety of topics, including: techniques for the marking of materials, the barcoding of "medium rare" books in general collections, criteria for moving books from general to rare collections, the degree to which various conservation treatments permit the retention of library materials in their original format, and the tendency of many conservation programs to be driven by exhibition needs rather than a desire to improve the overall usability of collections.

The ALCTS Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS) is developing a preconference proposal that focuses on the artifactual interest of "medium rare" materials at risk in general collections. The proposal will address such concerns as: What are the treatment options for these materials? What are the scholarly use patterns and current areas of research interest? What are the curatorial mandates for expanding special collections to include these materials? The second half of the meeting was devoted to discussing this proposal.

The Curators and Conservators Discussion Group provides an important forum for RBMS and PARS members to

meet jointly to discuss issues of mutual concern. We exchange information, share views, and identify topics of interest that might be addressed in future ALA programs. All RBMS members are welcome to attend our next meeting in New Orleans!

### Exhibition Catalogue Awards

The Exhibition Catalogue Awards Committee has voted this year's Katharine Kyes Leab & Daniel J. Leab *American Book Prices Current* Awards to the following institutions:

Division 1 (expensive): co-winners: Houghton Library for *The Practice of Letters: The Hofer Collection of Writing Manuals 1514-1800*; and, John Carter Brown Library for *The Dutch in the Americas, 1600-1800*; honorable mentions: Beinecke Library for *The Grand Tour*; and, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library for *Toronto In Print: A Celebration of 200 Years of The Printing Press in Toronto, 1798-1998*.

Division 2 (moderate): Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library for *Radicals and Revolutionaries: The History of Canadian Communism From the Robert S. Kenny Collection*; honorable mentions: University of Pennsylvania for *Encounters with the "Holy Land": Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*; and, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library for *Experiencing India: European Descriptions and Impressions, 1498-1898*.

Division 3 (inexpensive): Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina, for *The Great War 1914-1918: An Exhibition Drawn From the Joseph M. Brucoli Great War Collection at The University of Virginia and From Other Collections*.

Official presentation of the awards will be made at the RBMS program during the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans, and a display of all the catalogues submitted will take place at the RBMS Preconference in Montreal.

The Committee has also successfully submitted a proposal for judging library exhibition catalogues on the World Wide Web to the RBMS Executive Committee and will begin soliciting submissions of digital exhibition catalogues once it receives permission from the ALA Awards Committee.

Finally, the Committee has begun the work of creating a web version of its highly successful traveling exhibition, "Exhibiting Excellence: Award-Winning Exhibition Catalogues, 1986-1995." The digitization of the exhibition, which commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Leab awards, is being funded by an ACRL Initiative Grant.

### Manuscripts and Other Formats

Over fifty people attended the Manuscripts and Other Formats Discussion Group Midwinter meeting on Saturday, January 30. The meeting was our first joint meeting with a comparable group from another ALA section, the Photographic and Other Recording Media Discussion Group of the Preservation and Reformatting Services Section of ALCTS.

The primary discussion topic for the meeting was the "Management, Care, and Handling of Photographs and Photograph Collections." Our guest speaker was Jon Williams, Andrew Mellon Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Hagley Museum and Library, in Wilmington, Delaware. After a presentation on the extensive photographic collections at Hagley, Mr. Williams led us in a wide-ranging discussion of a variety of management issues, including digitization, copyright and intellectual property, levels of access in processing and cataloguing, rights and permissions, user fees, automation, and preservation. Both groups felt it was a lively, stimulating discussion and we plan to hold another joint meeting at some point in the future.

## Membership

The Membership Committee is gearing up to provide buddies for all interested new members who are planning to attend the RBMS Preconference in Montreal and/or the RBMS meetings at ALA in New Orleans this summer. The buddy program aims to make the conferences more friendly and informative for members who are new or who simply feel new to the organization. It has been especially popular at Preconferences in the past. If you are interested in participating either as a new member or as an experienced member, please contact the Membership Committee Chair, Suzy Taraba, at [staraba@wesleyan.edu](mailto:staraba@wesleyan.edu) or 860-685-3375. A more formal call for participants will be issued through the RBMS electronic list closer to the time of the conferences.

The full compilation of the membership survey data has been distributed to the RBMS Executive Committee and RBMS committee Chairs and will be available on the RBMS website later this spring. The survey provides extensive data—some expected, some surprising—that will be invaluable as the Section plans for the future.

## Preconference Program Planning

RBMS will hold its 41st Annual Preconference in Chicago, Illinois, Wednesday, July 5 through Friday, July 7, 2000 immediately prior to the ALA Annual Conference, also in Chicago.

The program will focus on issues relating to visual information. During the latter half of the 20th century, there has been a remarkable increase in the amount of information that is recorded and communicated visually (or with a strong visual component) rather than verbally. Television and videotape technology accelerated a transformation that had already been set in motion 150 years earlier by photography and then, after the turn of the century, speeded up by the advent of moving pictures. The web (with graphical user interfaces) has compounded the speed of transformation, to the point that it may well constitute a revolution not unlike that which occurred after 1454. In the 21st century, information literacy will involve a strong component of visual literacy.

This transformation is mirrored in the concerns of current

scholarship, as scholars increasingly focus on mining the artifactual evidence of the past for visual information: the bindings of 19th century books are offered as evidence concerning the intellectual reception accorded their texts; sheet music covers yield evidence of racial bias; pulp fiction cover art from the 1960s points up gender stereotyping. At recent RBMS Preconferences, scholars have told us repeatedly that their efforts are hampered by lack of intellectual access to this information.

For librarianship as a whole and most certainly for special collections librarians, collecting, preserving, and providing adequate intellectual access to visual information have always been major challenges. Reflecting the social and scholarly milieu in which we exist, we have focused on text. In the main, we have aimed our collecting policies, cataloguing codes, access policies, budgets, and management strategies at dealing successfully with the written word. If we are to continue in our role as keepers of the historical record, this must change.

The goal of the 41st RBMS Preconference will be to bring the issues surrounding visual information to the forefront of the collective consciousness of special collections librarians. Focusing on visual information, we will address issues of collection development (particularly with reference to the web), developing tools to provide intellectual access, preservation issues, and copyright and other legal issues.

Chicago is an ideal venue for this Preconference, and the Local Arrangements Committee is lining up a variety of tours and site visits to show off rich local collections. Receptions at the Newberry Library and Chicago Historical Society are planned. For additional information, contact Preconference Program Planning Chair Elaine Smyth, Curator of Rare Books, at [esmyth@lsu.edu](mailto:esmyth@lsu.edu) or LSU Libraries, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803-3300.

## Public Services

The RBMS Public Services Discussion Group serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas on promoting the visibility and use of original research materials. Since we began meeting in 1996, our agenda has covered a variety of service and outreach related topics, including reading room operations and reference services, instruction, exhibitions, promotional publications and programs, the use of electronic technologies for reaching constituencies, and issues relating to copyright, permissions, and duplication of special collections materials.

At the 1999 Midwinter meeting in Philadelphia, we had two topics on our agenda. We shared information on our current practices, policies, and difficulties relating to publication and other user fees. This topic has emerged at almost every one of our meetings over the past two years, as many of us continue to wrestle with the complicated issues surrounding the licensing of our materials in the absence of standard practices. The group strongly endorsed the planned formation of the new RBMS ad hoc committee on licensing, which will be charged to investigate current practices and develop re-

# REGISTRATION FORM

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION: 1 JUNE 1999

# 40th RBMS PRECONFERENCE

21-24 JUNE 1999, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

Names (as to appear on badge): \_\_\_\_\_

ALA Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street City State/Province Country Code)

Preferred mailing address (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

## REGISTRATION FEES

**US\$ 200.** ACRL member  
**US\$ 240.** Non-member (U.S.)  
**US\$ 150.** Canadian resident  
**US\$ 100.** Student  
**US\$ 75.** Canadian student  
**US\$ 50.** Late Reg. Fee

**US\$ 35.** Workshop 1. Ident. Media  
**US\$ 40.** Workshop 2. Exhibits  
**US\$ 50.** Workshop 3. Digital Projects  
**US\$ 40.** Workshop 4. Rare Serials  
**US\$ \_\_\_\_** Tours (total for all checked below)

**US\$ \_\_\_\_** One-day registration at half the applicable fee. Specify Day: \_\_\_\_\_  
**US\$ \_\_\_\_** Total enclosed Payable to ACRL

Mail / fax (if paying by credit card) with registration form to: **RBMS Preconference, ACRL/ALA, 50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611-2795; (312) 280-2520**

Check enclosed or charge my account: VISA  Mastercard  AmEx

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTENDEE INFORMATION (Place a check on the line to indicate affirmative response; otherwise leave blank)

- This is my first RBMS Preconference.  I will be arriving (day) \_\_\_\_\_ at (time) \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will be staying at conf. hotel  dormitory  other \_\_\_\_\_.  I will be leaving for ALA on (day) \_\_\_\_\_ at (time) \_\_\_\_\_.
- I will attend the opening reception at McGill U.  I will attend the reception at the CCA on Wed..
- I will attend the luncheon on Wed.  I require a vegetarian lunch.
- I require Americans for Disabilities Act assistance (an ACRL staff member will contact you).

**Tours** are scheduled on Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday (20, 21, and 23 June). Descriptions of the tours are provided in this brochure. **PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL TOURS.** There is no limit to the number of tours you can take, but each tour has a space limitation. Please check the appropriate box (x) if you wish to attend Tour 1. For Monday morning (Tours 1-5), Monday afternoon (Tours 6-8) and Wednesday (Tours 9-17), please number as many alternative preferences as possible (1=first preference, etc.). Because of demand you may not get your first choice. Undersubscribed tours may have to be cancelled.

- |                    |                                  |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Sunday</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 1  |                                  |                                  |                                  |
| <b>Monday a.m.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 4  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 5  |
| <b>Monday p.m.</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 6  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 7  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 8  |                                  |
| <b>Wednesday</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 9  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 12 |
|                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> Tour 17 |

**For tours 3, 6 and 8 please add \$US10 to your total registration fee for each tour selected.**

Refund requests must be submitted in writing prior to 1 June 1999, and are subject to a US\$50 cancellation fee. Refunds will be processed and mailed after 15 July 1999. The Preconference OR ANY OF ITS TOURS OR WORKSHOPS may be cancelled if there is insufficient registration. In the event that an ACRL sponsored activity is cancelled, ACRL cannot be responsible for any cancellation/change charges assessed to registrants by airlines, travel agencies, or housing accommodations.

## BORDER CROSSINGS

Exploring New Territories for Special Collections  
Monday – Thursday, 21-24 June 1999

Borders are most familiar as geopolitical dividing lines, where cultures collide, entangle, and generate hybrid cultures. But they are also to be found in more conceptual spaces-between tradition and innovation, between ethnic groups, genders, and classes, and even between disciplines and professions. The fortieth RBMS Preconference will explore some ways in which the traditional borders of special collections librarianship are being altered at the end of the twentieth century. Particular attention will be given to the convergence of special collections librarianship and digital technology and related issues involving intellectual property rights; to the differences between anglo- and francophone approaches to bibliography; to new developments in special collections public service practices; and to the relationship between special collections librarianship and museum curatorship.

For a more detailed description, consult the online brochure available at  
[www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html](http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html).

The official RBMS Preconference hotel is Le Centre Sheraton Hotel. Call for reservations at 514-878-2000.

To reserve dormitory rooms at McGill University, call Margarita Ortega, McGill University Residences, at 514-398-6367.

**Deadline for registration is 1 June 1999**

## PASSAGES FRONTALIERS

Explorer de Nouveaux Territoires Pour Les Collections Spéciales  
Du lundi au jeudi, 21-24 juin 1999

**Montréal, Québec, Canada**

**Plenary Speakers include:**

**Les conférenciers en séance plénière comprennent:**

Jean-Claude Guédon  
Université de Montréal

Michel Brisebois  
National Library of Canada

Richard Landon  
University of Toronto

Howard Besser  
University of California,  
Los Angeles

Brian E.C. Schottlaender  
California Digital Library

David Walden  
Canadian Cultural Property  
Export Review Board

Françoise Hébert  
Information Resources  
Consultant

Cathy Henderson  
Harry Ransom Research Center

H. Thomas Hickerson  
Cornell University

**Other Contents:**

**Les matières additionnels:**

14 Short Presentations  
7 Seminars  
17 Tours  
Receptions & Poetry Reading  
Preconference Lunch

Les frontières sont mieux connues comme des lignes divisant des ensembles géopolitiques, où les cultures se confrontent, se mêlent et engendrent des cultures hybrides. Mais les frontières prennent aussi la forme d'espaces plus conceptuels entre tradition et innovation, entre groupes ethniques, sexes et classes, et même entre disciplines et professions. La quarantième conférence préliminaire de la RBMS explorera certains moyens par lesquels les frontières traditionnelles de la bibliothéconomie des collections spéciales sont modifiées à la fin du XXe siècle. La conférence portera en particulier sur la convergence de la bibliothéconomie des collections spéciales et de la technologie numérique, ainsi que la question connexe des droits de propriété intellectuelle, sur les différences entre les approches anglophone et francophone de la bibliographie, sur les nouveaux développements dans les pratiques des services publics en matière de collections spéciales, et enfin sur la relation entre la bibliothéconomie des collections spéciales et la conservation muséologique.

Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter en ligne la brochure sur le site Web  
[www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html](http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html).

L'hôtel officiel de la conférence est Le Centre Sheraton. Pour les réservations, veuillez appeler au 514-878-2000.

Pour réserver des chambres aux résidences de l'université McGill, veuillez appeler Margarita Ortega au 514-398-6367.

**La date limite d'inscription est le 1 juin 1999**

commendations in the form of sample contracts, a checklist of issues, or guidelines. We spent the remaining time discussing our second agenda item: building effective relationships with faculty.

Minutes and agenda of the Public Services Discussion Group are posted on the RBMS electronic discussion list. The Chair, Katherine Reagan, welcomes comments and suggestions at [kr33@cornell.edu](mailto:kr33@cornell.edu) or 607-255-3530.

## Publications

After six years as editor of *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship*, Sidney Berger will be succeeded in that post by co-editors Marvin Taylor and Lisa Browar after the 1999 ALA Annual Conference. Marvin and Lisa will appoint a new editorial board. The journal currently has about 525 subscribers, about 300 of them institutions. ACRL has pledged that it will scan back issues of *RBML* and mount them on the web.

Meanwhile, the RBMS website is seeing an increase in popularity, with hits to the site up from about 20 a day to the mid-30s. "Your Old Books" is still the most popular part of the site, with the RBMS committee roster running second. "Your Old Books" has also resurfaced in paper form; it is currently listed in the ACRL publications catalogue. The *RBMS Newsletter* also continues to thrive and is now up on the RBMS website. Subscribers to the RBMS-L electronic discussion list are holding steady at about 500.

At the request of the Executive Committee, the Publications Committee is investigating the desirability of moving the RBMS website to the ALA server, so as to give it a relatively permanent home. This move comes in response to a request from the Bibliographic Standards Committee, whose members have experienced firsthand the difficulties of transferring web pages when responsibility for those pages shifts from one person to another or when the responsible person changes institutions. The Executive Committee has also asked the Publications Committee to make a recommendation on the fate of the *RBML* Award. Possibilities raised at Midwinter included giving the award less frequently and locating an alternative source of funding for it.

## RBML Award Committee

The *RBML* Award Committee, meeting at Midwinter in Philadelphia, selected Robert A. Gross as the winner of the 1999 *RBML* Award for his article "Communications Revolutions: Writing a History of the Book for an Electronic Age," published in *RBML* vol. 13, no. 1, 1998. The committee praised the article, which was based on Prof. Gross's address to the RBMS Preconference in Claremont in 1997, as offering a broad view of the field and a summary of scholarship in the history of the book, based on substantial and thoughtful research, and providing refreshing and useful perspectives for teaching and as a context for the practice of special collec-

tions librarianship. Prof. Gross is Forrest D. Murden Jr. Professor of History and American Studies at the College of William and Mary. The *RBML* Award, consisting of a certificate and a cash award of \$1000 sponsored by Christie's, is presented every other year for the best article appearing in *RBML* during the previous two years. The formal presentation of the 1999 award will take place at the annual business and program meeting of RBMS in New Orleans in June.

## Security

The Security Committee is in the final stages of revising the section's *Guidelines for the Security of Rare Book, Manuscript, and Other Special Collections*. The proposed revisions to that document were the subject of a very well attended seminar at the Washington, D.C., Preconference and were discussed at a public hearing at the Philadelphia Midwinter Conference. A final public hearing will be held at the Annual Conference in New Orleans, after which it is hoped that the guidelines may be sent forward in the ACRL/ALA approval process. The revised document was published in a recent issue of *C&RL News* and it is also available on the RBMS website <http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/secguidenew.html>. The currently approved Guidelines may also be found on the website <http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/secguide.html>. Section members are urged to send whatever comments and suggestions they may have to Everett Wilkie, Chair, so that they may be taken into consideration ([ewilkie@ix.netcom.com](mailto:ewilkie@ix.netcom.com)). The section's *Guidelines Concerning Thefts in Libraries* are also due for revision and the committee has begun work on those, as well. Those guidelines are also available on the RBMS website under the Standards and Guidelines section of the page, although the link is to the version mounted on the ALA site.

## Seminars

The Seminars Committee invites you to propose a seminar for the 2000 RBMS Preconference in Chicago. The deadline for submissions is 1 June 1999. Proposals will be reviewed for approval at the committee's meeting during the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans. This is your opportunity to address important professional issues, bring special projects or areas of endeavor to the attention of your colleagues, or provide a forum for experts to discuss significant technical topics in depth.

For information about what to include in a proposal, please see the electronic form available at <http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/preform0.html>. Additional information about seminars is available on the RBMS website <http://www.princeton.edu/~ferguson/rbms.html#Seminars>. Or, you may contact Mary Lacy, Chair of the Seminars Committee, at [mlac@loc.gov](mailto:mlac@loc.gov) or by phone (202-707-8799) or fax (202-707-6336). It is not necessary that you be a member of the Seminars Committee to make a proposal.

## Annual Report from the Chair, 1998

Section membership is holding steady. As of May 1998 we numbered 1,812 (compared to 1,808 in 1997). This comprises 1,641 personal members and 171 organizational members.

In 1997-1998 RBMS contributed to the ACRL Strategic Plan in the following ways:

**GOAL 1: Provide development opportunities for academic and research librarians and other library personnel that enhance their ability to deliver superior services and resources.**

### Current Activities

Programs: RBMS sponsored two public programs in 1998: (a) "Getting Ready for the Nineteenth Century: Strategies and Solutions for Rare Book and Special Collections Librarians." The 39th RBMS Preconference took place June 23-26 in Washington, D.C., with over 300 in attendance. (b) "Re-Imag(in)ing the text: The Literary Text in the Electronic Age." The RBMS annual conference program took place June 28 in Washington, D.C. Co-sponsors were the English and American Literature Section and the Electronic Text Centers Discussion Group of ACRL.

The RBMS Conference Development Committee has ongoing responsibility for long-range planning and support of Preconferences. This committee fulfills its charge by (a) continuing to refine the evaluation process for RBMS Preconferences, (b) updating and expanding Preconference planning documentation, and (c) actively involving past, present, and future Preconference planners in its activities.

Publications: RBMS members produce two print publications: (a) The *RBMS Newsletter* goes to the membership twice each year and (b) *Rare Books and Manuscripts Librarian ship* is published by ACRL on a subscription basis. *RBML* appears twice a year, and in 1996-97 there were approximately 525 subscribers.

The Section also maintains a website and an electronic discussion list. The main website has an average of 26 hits a day (in comparison with an average of 23 per day at this time last year). Our webmaster has been informed by Alta Vista that the URL is found in over 100 different web documents that it tracks. The web version of "Your Old Books" has between 350 and 400 hits per week. RBMS-L has 480 subscribers. The *RBMS Newsletter* is now posted on our website as well as distributed in print form.

The Bibliographic Standards Committee maintains its own home page as well as a Resources for the Rare Materials Catalogue website. The Committee continues to maintain the six RBMS thesauri and is preparing a new edition of *Examples to Accompany Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books*.

Awards: The Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab *American Book Prices Current* Exhibition Catalogue Awards

were presented to the following three libraries at the 1998 Annual Conference program: the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the University of Arizona Library, and the Southern Methodist University Library. Information on this year's awards and images from the winning catalogues have been posted to the RBMS website.

Professional Education: The RBMS Education and Professional Development Committee maintains an online directory of special collections related courses offered by ALA-accredited library schools.

Standards and Guidelines: Two RBMS guidelines are currently under review: The RBMS Security Committee is reviewing *ACRL Guidelines for the Security of Rare Book, Manuscript, and Other Special Collections*. The RBMS Guidelines for Borrowing and Loaning Special Collections Materials for Exhibition Committee (Ad hoc) is reviewing *Guidelines for Borrowing of Special Collections Materials for Exhibition*.

### Other Activities:

The Section's four discussion groups continue to provide a forum for special collections librarians to share ideas and experiences with their colleagues.

At the 1998 ALA Midwinter meeting, the Bibliographic Standards Committee held a public hearing on two documents, the proposed core record for rare books (which will become an official LC Program for Cooperative Cataloging document) and the *Guide to Rare Book Records in Online Systems*. The Committee is currently reviewing two existing documents, *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books* and its list of relator terms.

The Membership Committee has introduced a "buddy system" to RBMS activities for pairing new and experienced members at Preconferences and Annual Conferences. The Membership Committee has also completed a survey of RBMS members and will soon administer a survey to targeted persons who are not members.

Most RBMS standing committees actively recruit interns. The Section chair conducts an orientation session during the Annual Preconference.

### Planned Activities:

Programs: RBMS submitted two program proposals for the 1999 ACRL National Conference to be held in Detroit. Planning for the 1999 RBMS Preconference in Montreal, Quebec, June 21-24, is well advanced. The theme is "Crossing Borders: Exploring New Territory for Special Collections." The title of the 1999 Annual Conference program is "Where Cultures Connect: Making and Using Louisiana's 'Creole' Collections." The Conference Development Committee has confirmed the site of the 2000 RBMS Preconference in Chicago.

Publications: The Publications Committee plans to mark up back issues of *RBML* and put them on the web. The Section

will continue to add its existing documents to the website including all of the standards and guidelines.

**Awards:** RBMS has been awarded ACRL Initiative Funds to support a web exhibition based on the ten-year anniversary exhibition of the Exhibition Catalogue Awards.

**Professional Education:** The Education and Professional Development Committee proposes to identify internships, practicums, and fellowships, along with possible funding sources for this type of continuing education.

**Other Activities:** The Bibliographic Standards Committee will soon review a draft set of rules for cataloguing codex manuscripts.

**GOAL 2: Collaborate with other professional organizations and associations of higher education in order to promote mutual interests.**

**Current Activities:**

Within ALA: Co-sponsorship of 1998 Annual Conference program with EALS and ETCDG (see above).

We offered 1998 Preconference registration to members of PARS/ALCTS at the ACRL member rate. This is in recognition of a special workshop PARS members organized as part of the Preconference.

The Bibliographic Standards Committee maintains liaison relationships with MARBI and other ALA bodies with similar responsibilities. Through their MARBI liaison the Committee submits proposed changes to the MARC format that are of interest to the special collections community.

RBMS maintains liaison relationships with the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing and with the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of IFLA.

Brochures for the 1998 RBMS Preconference were mailed to the Manuscripts Section of the Society of American Archivists and to the Washington Area Rare Books Group. Announcements of the Preconference were posted to the electronic discussion lists of a wide variety of professional and scholarly groups.

The 1998 RBMS Preconference included a plenary session based on the Modern Language Association "Statement on the Significance of the Primary Record." Representatives from the ARL-MLA Joint Working Group, the American Historical Association, and the Council on Library and Information Resources made presentations.

**Planned Activities:**

Planners of the 1999 Preconference are exploring co-sponsorship arrangements with the Bibliographical Society of Canada.

The Executive Committee and the Outreach Initiatives Committee (Ad hoc) have begun discussions with the

Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America to develop joint projects to raise awareness of primary materials and collecting among the general public.

RBMS contributed to the formulation of an ARL SPEC survey of special collections in research libraries.

**GOAL 3: Maintain at the national level a prominent role in planning and decision-making for influencing information policy.**

**Current Activities:**

RBMS standards, guidelines, and publications serve as national models.

Individual members of RBMS provide expertise at the national level on issues such as access, copyright, preservation, digitization and security.

**GOAL 4: Ensure that ACRL's operating environment provides efficiency in its use of resources and effectiveness in the delivery of services to its members and constituent units.**

**Current Activities:**

The Section's website and electronic discussion list are used to conduct Section business and disseminate documents in the most timely, efficient, and cost-effective manner.

The Budget and Development Committee is creating a donor database to track all of the Section's development activities.

The Conference Development Committee works with ACRL staff to improve and document Preconference planning procedures.

—Laura Stalker

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## Transitions (cont. from p. 8)

Chicago. Special Collections Librarian at Wesleyan University, **Elizabeth Swaim**, retired in June 1998. The University of Manitoba in Winnipeg named **Shelley Sweeney** Head of Archives and Special Collections. The new African American Studies Archivist and Resource Specialist in the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library at Duke University is **Joseph D. Thompson**. Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, recently named **Ann W. Upton** archivist and special collections librarian. Rare book cataloger and bibliographer at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois, **Peter Wang**, received the 1998 Chinese-American Librarians Association President's Recognition Award. **Frances Brooke Whiting**, 79, has died. She had retired in 1983 after thirty-two years of service to the University of California/Los Angeles Library in various roles including literary manuscripts librarian, curator of rare books and head of special collections. The Boston Public Library recently named **Roberta Zonghi** as keeper of rare books and manuscripts.

## Transitions

Former curator of special collections at the Library of Congress, **Leonard Beck**, 86, died of respiratory failure. He had retired in 1986. **William J. Crowe** has been appointed Spencer Librarian at the University of Kansas and will oversee the Department of Special Collections, the Kansas Collection, and the University Archives. **John Cuthbert** is now curator for the West Virginia and Regional History Collection and head of special collections at West Virginia University Library, Morgantown. **Steven L. Davis** joined the staff at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos as assistant curator of the Southwestern Writers Collection. Former curator of the Rosenbach Museum & Library, **Derick Dreher**, has been named the new director. **William K. Finley** has been appointed as the new head of special collections at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Former head of the Frick Fine Arts Library, **Elizabeth Fitton Folin**, died in November, 1998 at the age of 88. Haverford College Librarian, **Michel S. Freeman**, died in February, 1999. The new director of the Connecticut Historical Society Library is **Richard Frieder**. **Morris Gelfand**, librarian, printer, and publisher, died in October, 1998. Noted book historian, **William J. Gilmore-Lehne**, died in March, 1999. The new director of the Kentucky Historical Society in Frankfort is **J. Kevin Graffagnino**. After fourteen years of service as rare book cataloger at the Getty Research Institute Library in Los Angeles, **Elizabeth (Betty) Herman** has retired. **H. Thomas Hickerson** has been appointed Associate University Librarian for information technology and special collections at Cornell University Library. After thirty years of service, **Ed Hill** has retired as Special Collections/Area Research Center Librarian at the University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse. **Sidney F. Huttner** is now Head of Special Collections at the University of Iowa, Iowa City. **Timothy Johnson** has been named curator of special collections at the

University of Minnesota Libraries/Twin Cities Wilson Library. The New Jersey Historical Society appointed **James A. Kaser** to be director of the library. **Deborah J. Leslie** has been named Head of Cataloging at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. After forty-two years of service in Special Collections at the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, **Alexandra Mason** has announced her retirement. Retired Professor of Bibliography at the University of Oxford, **Donald McKenzie**, died in March, 1999. **Bett Miller** has been appointed rare books curator at the Milton S. Eisenhower Library at Johns Hopkins University. **Jacqueline V. Reid** was named reference archivist in the John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History at Duke University's Rare Books, Manuscript and Special Collections Library. **Jay Satterfield** is the new Reader Services Librarian for Special Collections at The University of

(cont. on p. 7)

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