

RBMS Membership & Professional Development Committee Minutes

ALA Annual Meeting, Chicago

Saturday, June 29, 2013

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Radisson Blu – Pacific 2

Members present: Katie Henningsen (Chair), Meghan Constantinou, Danielle Culpepper, Elspeth Healey, Kasia Leousis, Kimberly Tully

Guests present: Anna Ferris, Sarah Kleiva, Kristen Mapes, R. Arvid Nelsen, Shannon Supple

Minutes by Meghan Constantinou

1. Welcome and Introductions

K. Henningsen welcomed members and guests. All present introduced themselves.

2. Selection of Recorder and Finalization of Agenda

M. Constantinou agreed to take minutes.

3. Committee Membership and Assignments. K. Henningsen thanked outgoing committee members, D. Culpepper and K. Leousis, for their wonderful service and hard work on the Educational Opportunities Directory and the Buddy Program. KH reported that M&PD has a current total of 21 members, whose help will be needed in maintaining the committee's current projects, as well as preparing for new projects. KH encouraged all present, including incoming members, to become active in the committee, and to contact her at the meeting or via email if there were any projects they were especially interested in working on.

4. Liaison Reports

a. ACRL Membership Committee. K. Henningsen reported that the ACRL Membership Committee, which planned to meet that afternoon, would be discussing the new form they are asking membership chairs to use to collect statistics. This will include monthly records of new and returning membership letters sent; RMBS's online presence in the form of blog posts, tweets, and Facebook updates; the number of members on the RBMS listserv; and membership activities at conferences.

The ACRL Membership Committee held an orientation session at ACRL in Indianapolis in April. RBMS members, Cherry Williams, Lori Dekydspotter, and Heather Smedberg

were on hand to represent the Section. Mike Kelly represented RBMS at the ACRL 101 program that happened concurrently with the M&PD committee meeting.

a.2. Other announcements regarding representation of RBMS. K. Henningsen announced that K. Leousis would represent RBMS at the New Members Roundtable Leadership Opportunities Fair on Sunday, June 30, 2013. M&PD members, Melanie Meyers and Charlotte Priddle, represented RBMS at an ARLIS/NY professional development event organized by M. Constantinou on March 7, 2013.

b. RBMS Scholarship Committee. K. Henningsen reported for J. Sheehan. There were 45 applicants for Preconference scholarships this year, of which 41 were eligible. RBMS was able to award 20 scholarships, compared to 18/75 applicants last year. Four of the scholarships were awarded to applicants who self-identified as belonging to under-represented groups.

c. RBMS Diversity Committee. K. Henningsen reported that this year we teamed up with the Diversity Committee to co-sponsor the Preconference Brown Bag lunch for new members. The Diversity Committee remains interested in helping us with the membership survey.

d. Book Fair. Outgoing Book Fair Liaison, Melanie Meyers, was not present to give this report. M. Constantinou volunteered to serve as the new Book Fair Liaison.

5. Ongoing Activities

a. Educational Opportunities Directory. D. Culpepper reported that the most recent update to the Educational Opportunities Directory occurred in January 2013. Although updates typically occur in the spring, DC and Garth Reese decided to focus instead on testing and fixing broken links. In a few weeks, DC will email E. Healey with the most recent updates for the website. DC is rotating off the committee and reported that Garth would like additional help. K. Henningsen called for two volunteers.

The committee discussed including continuing education opportunities in the directory. KH commented that the inclusion of programs outside the ALA accreditation list, upon which the Educational Opportunities Directory is based, would require a different set of guidelines and endorsements. R.A. Nelsen suggested using the EOD as an opportunity to tap library schools for fundraising.

Action items: KH will send out an email call for volunteers. S. Supple will bring continuing education idea to Executive Council.

b. Buddy Program Report. K. Leousis reported there were 15 Buddy requestors and 13 Buddy volunteers for the Preconference in Minneapolis and ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. During the week before Preconference, the Buddy Coordinator solicited the M&PD group for additional volunteers. Due to a few last minute requests, two of the

volunteers had two buddies each. The Buddy Program survey of participants (7 of 8 responded) during Midwinter 2013 in Seattle revealed overall positive feedback from both buddy requestors and volunteers. The one suggestion was to publicize the program more widely. In July, M. Meyers will begin serving as the new Buddy Program Coordinator when KL rotates off the committee. KL suggested continuing to have an Assistant Coordinator to help with this program.

c. Mentoring Program. K. Henningsen reported that the mentoring program is running smoothly. The committee has more volunteers to be mentors than mentee applications. Two applications for mentors were received this year.

M. Constantinou summarized the brief statement she prepared regarding mentor qualifications for the prospective mentor letter. The goal of the statement was to address concerns expressed by many early-to-mid-career professionals that they are not qualified to serve as mentors. No comments or objections were made by the committee, and the revised prospective mentor letter was approved.

The committee discussed ways to encourage the development of community among new members. Ideas included an M&PD hosted restaurant night at the Preconference and an informal happy hour at ALA for those that do not attend the Preconference. The overall idea was to provide new members with a space to meet and then let them build their own community.

d. Member Survey. K. Henningsen reported that the member survey has stalled. Melissa Nykanen has agreed to take the lead on this project. In January E. Healey will join her as co-organizer. Cait Coker and M. Constantinou have already volunteered to help with this project; the committee needs about four additional volunteers.

e. Committee Website/FAQ. E. Healey reported that the link to “Careers in Rare Books and Manuscripts: Frequently Asked Questions” has been added to the M&PD webpage. She also reported that she will be updating the website again in the next couple of weeks.

Action Item: The committee discussed adding information about interning on RBMS committees to the FAQ. EH will check on whether this information is currently available, and, if not, draft a statement.

f. Letters to New Members. K. Henningsen reported that 145 letters have been sent to new members since Midwinter. RBMS currently stands at 1,731 members, which is a drop of .69% from last year. These small fluctuations occur every year, and this year is significantly less of a drop than last year. She reported that ACRL as a whole grew this year, and she has made a list of the Sections that had increases. The committee was asked whether one or two individuals would be interested in looking at these Sections’ activities and report back to the committee at Midwinter.

6. Minneapolis Preconference Follow-up

a. Preconference Orientation. K. Henningsen reported a great turnout for the Preconference Orientation, with 89 people registered. Members of the Executive Committee and committee chairs shared information on their work and how to get involved in the Section. The committee circulated a new regular handout for the event, an RBMS glossary originally prepared by Nina Schneider.

R.A. Nelsen suggested reminding committee chairs that speak at the Preconference Orientation to share what their committee has accomplished.

K. Henningsen suggested reformatting the Preconference Orientation based on ideas from Cherry Williams, who attended the ACRL 101 session at Indianapolis. The first half hour would be comments from ACRL Executive Director, RBMS Chair, and Preconference Program Planning Chair(s), and a brief discussion of the work of committees, task forces, and discussion groups as a whole. The second half hour would be “speed dating” with individual committee chairs. Chairs or their representatives would station themselves around the room, and groups of new members would rotate through to briefly meet, learn about and possibly ask short questions of the chairs. This type of session would lead nicely into the brown bag the following day when new members could then solicit more information from the chairs at the brown bag. The goal would be to create a more interactive format without losing the informational component. The committee expressed favor at this new format.

b. New Members’ Mixer. K. Henningsen reported for Tory Ondrta. Sixty tickets were sold in advance, in addition to a few more onsite, and a good time was had by all! TO has a really fun room in mind for the event in Las Vegas (used to be the Bally’s club lounge).

c. New Members’ Brown Bag. K. Henningsen reported that this year M&PD co-sponsored the New Members’ Brown Bag with the Diversity Committee. Katharine Chandler of Diversity acted as emcee. This program has been successful the last two years, and will be continued in the future.

d. Mentoring Discussion Group. K. Leousis reported that the Mentoring Discussion Group had 10 attendees with a range of experience levels. The attendees at the mentoring discussion group had some wonderful ideas for engaging members in mentoring. These included ribbons that read, “Ask me about RBMS,” and creating a brief list of potential or suggested activities that a buddy or mentor might do with their mentee for those that are not sure what mentoring or being a buddy entails. Mentors and buddies could chose to do any or none of the suggested activities, but this might encourage more participation among those hesitant to participate.

e. Brainstorming for 2014. K. Henningsen reported that she, R.A. Nelson, and M. Meyers submitted a seminar proposal for the 2014 Preconference on the changing nature of the field and professional expectations.

KH suggested to the Preconference Planning Committee that they consider bringing back the New and Emerging Voices session from a few years ago. This is an opportunity for those with less than five years of experience to present their research.

The committee brainstormed additional ways to engage the RBMS membership through programming. Some of the proposed ideas were: Publishing for special collections professionals; How a non-special collections cataloger can serve special collections— suggestion to co-sponsor with Bib Standards; Practical strategies for preparing yourself as a special collections professional; Collaborating with our peers in general collections. R. A. Nelsen pointed out that library schools might have an interest in sponsoring some of these sessions if approached.

7. New Business. D. Culpepper announced that Rare Book School is working on a grant application for RBMS scholarships and attendance. M&PD is happy to lend support to this.

The committee discussed opportunities to encourage RBMS membership among those managing Native American cultural heritage collections through Preconference scholarships.

K. Henningsen reminded the committee that the following volunteers are needed: Educational Opportunities Directory (2); Buddy Program (1); Member Survey (4); Section Activities (2); Preconference Orientation handouts (2)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Meghan Constantinou, July 6, 2013