

RBMS Membership and Professional Development Committee  
ALA Annual Conference, San Francisco, California  
16 June 2001, 2-4 p.m.  
Hyatt Regency Hotel (Seacliff C/D)

Members in attendance: Henry Raine (Chair), Lois Fischer Black, Ellen Ellickson, David Faulds, Julie Grob, Rachel Howarth, Gerri Schaad

Members excused: Mike Kelly, Shanon Lawson (Intern)

Visitors: Kathryn Beam, Richard Dickerson, Susan Fagan, Mary Lacy, Susan Szasz Palmer, Fernando Peña

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. with welcoming remarks and introductions around the table. Beam agreed to take minutes.

The Agenda was approved with no additions or changes. The minutes from the Midwinter Meeting (13 January 2001) were also approved without addition or correction. Several housekeeping issues were raised. The first concerned this committee's charge. Since it is now a new committee created by the joining of two former committees ("Membership Committee" and "Education and Professional Development Committee"), the new charge needs to be incorporated into the RBMS manual. It should be added to the RBMS Manual in July or August. Shortly thereafter, it will be mounted on the RBMS website.

The scheduling of this committee's meetings at Midwinter and Annual has not been resolved. Because of conflicts, alternative time slots were discussed. The Committee agreed that an 11:30-1:30 time slot on Saturday would suit everyone, if available. Raine agreed to investigate and report back at Midwinter.

Raine announced the following changes in committee membership: Laura Linard has ended her term on the committee; Shanon Lawson, the committee's intern, has been appointed a full member; Lois Black, Mike Kelly, and Gerri Schaad have been reappointed to a second term; Kathy Beam, Richard Dickerson, Ann Ferguson, Susan Szasz Palmer have been appointed as new members, and Fernando Peña is the committee's new intern. Raine announced that the committee roster on the RBMS web site would be updated after the conference. He asked committee members to verify the accuracy of their entries on the roster once it has been updated, and to email any corrections to him so that he could ask Christian Dupont to make necessary changes.

Ellickson reported on recent developments regarding the Educational Opportunities Directory. There currently are 54 schools in the Directory. Ellickson mounted a request for corrections and suggestions for improvement. One response suggested that opportunities offered by non-ALA accredited schools be included. Another asked if international opportunities could also be listed. A discussion ensued focusing on whether the Directory should expand along these lines. Members raised concerns regarding time and effort in maintaining the Directory, the

advantages of a self-posting bulletin board, and the question of identifying our audience. The Committee agreed that expansion of the Directory should be considered. Raine asked if Ellickson would like a sub-committee to study the issues; Faulds and Howarth volunteered to work with Ellickson.

Raine reported on the Orientation Session at the 2001 RBMS Preconference. About 80-90 people attended, with all RBMS committees represented. The Orientation Session still needs improvements, however, especially in setting a tone for welcoming new members and answering questions appropriate to new members such as how to get on a committee or how ALA and RBMS conferences are related. Raine emphasized that the Orientation Session must be kept distinct from Information Exchange. It was suggested that the RBMS meeting schedule be included among the handouts, and that committee chairs be encouraged to be briefer and more concise when speaking about their committees. The problem of identifying new members at the RBMS Preconference registration desk was raised. It was suggested that the colored ribbon identifying a first-time attendee be separate from the badge, yet capable of being easily attached. The newcomer could then decide whether or not to wear it.

Howarth reported on the Scholarship Program. Six scholarships (2 full and 4 partial) were available for the 2001 Preconference. Howarth said that the application form needs to be changed so that applicants state clearly whether they could attend if awarded only a partial scholarship. Another improvement would be for the scholarship recipients to be introduced at the beginning of the Preconference, perhaps at the opening reception or at the first plenary session. Although arrangements had been made with Mark Dimunation to introduce the scholarship recipients at the Preconference opening reception, it proved impractical to do so because the reception was spread out over several spaces with no central location for speeches or introductions. The problem of funding the Scholarship Program was discussed. The committee agreed that it would be preferable for money to come from a source other than funds sometimes left over after a successful Preconference. Perhaps a scholarship program in ALA would have funds for this program. Howarth will turn this question over to the Budget and Development Committee. The last issue discussed concerning this program was the need for feedback from scholarship recipients. Raine read a letter received from one of the scholarship recipients giving enthusiastic feedback about the scholarship program. It was suggested that excerpts from this letter could be submitted for publication in the RBMS Newsletter. Howarth will e-mail letters to this year's recipients asking for assessments of the scholarship program.

Raine gave an update on the Buddy Program. This year's program included 17 pairs (12 for the Preconference and 5 for Annual). Raine reported that, while there was no shortage of new members requesting buddies, there had been a serious problem in attracting experienced members to volunteer their services. Suggestions included: 1.) that all members of this committee volunteer, 2.) to draw up a list of all who have served in the past and would be likely to volunteer again, and 3.) to send e-mails to RBMS members about one month before the Preconference describing in detail the expected commitment of being a buddy, and explaining that it is not terribly onerous. Raine will prepare this e-mail, including as well a summary of the program's success. Raine asked whether descriptions and forms to volunteer for both experienced and newcomer buddies could be mounted on the RBMS website. Schaad will prepare these and submit them to the website manager.

Grob spoke about the Non-Member Survey. It was sent out in the summer of 2000 to 230 institutions having a large minority component. The purpose was "to collect demographic data about special collections librarians and archivists who are not members of RBMS ..." 41 responses were received. Grob handed out summaries of the survey results, and several questions were raised. Raine asked if the coverage of the survey should be expanded. Since it was sponsored initially by ACRL, should the project continue? Should someone from the original survey group in 2000 come to the next meeting of this committee to summarize the background and rationale of the project? Raine concluded that the committee has three options: 1.) act on the information acquired from these 41 responses (out of 230), 2.) send the same survey to additional institutions, or 3.) make a new survey and start again. The subject was tabled until our next meeting.

This year Schaad attended the ALA New Members Round Table Orientation Program. She reported that about 200 people were there, one of whom approached her with questions about RBMS. RBM subscription flyers and RBMS brochures were included in packets given to all who attended the NMRT Orientation Program. The committee agreed that it should continue attending this program and making literature about RBMS available to the NMRT at each conference.

Ellickson serves as liaison to the ACRL Professional Development Committee. She reported that the committee is concerned with professional development as it relates to customer service, technology, and organizational development. A new person has been appointed to the Professional Development/Website Development position, and he/she may be able to help with our Educational Opportunities Directory.

Because of a conflict with the RBMS Information Exchange, an RBMS liaison has not usually been able to attend the ACRL Membership Committee meeting. However, Palmer volunteered to attend this year.

Under New Business, Raine raised the topic of the ACRL New Member Mentoring Program. There was discussion regarding similarities between this program and our Buddy Program, especially the application forms available on the web. Raine suggested that committee members consider ways to use this program to promote RBMS.

There being no further new business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Beam