

**M&PD Committee Minutes**  
**ALA Annual Meeting, New Orleans**  
**June 25, 2011. 10:30 a.m.-noon**  
**Sheraton New Orleans – Napoleon B2**

Members present: Deborah Whiteman (acting in place of chair Katie Carr), Eva Guggemos, Katie Hennigsen, Melanie Meyers, Nina Schneider, Garth Reese

Guests present: Douge Denné, Danielle Culpepper, Jessica Pigza, Kathryn Brooks, Mark Danley

Minutes by Eva Guggemos

1. Introductions

All present introduced themselves. DW: there is space on the M&PD committee for new members; guests are invited to apply.

2. New Members' Orientation and Mixer at the Preconference

DW: Only about 45 people attended the Orientation, which was a decline from recent years. This might have been due to the weather, which delayed many incoming flights that afternoon.

Several people reported back about the New Members' Mixer: About 50 people attended. Unlike previous years, attendees paid in advance when registering for the Preconference. It went smoothly with no problems like those encountered last year – e.g. there was plenty of food and lots of mingling. One person heard a complaint of the music being too loud for easy conversation, but in general, the feedback was positive this year.

3. Preconference/Conference Buddy Program

DW on behalf of K. Leousis: There were 15 paired matches this year. Several M&PD members reported positive buddy experiences at the Preconference.

4. "Careers in Rare Books and Manuscripts" FAQ

EG: A new person is needed to train/prepare to take over maintenance of the FAQ in Drupal. This would also be a good time to review past answers and update them or add new items. No major updates have been made recently.

A general discussion of the FAQ followed. NS suggested doing more to promote the FAQ to new members. DW and others suggested methods such as:

- Putting a link to the FAQ on the Preconference Orientation Handout
- Promoting it on other literature given out to new and potential members, such as on flyers at the RBMS table at book fairs. (It was noted that it already appears on the letters sent to new members.)
- Promoting it via third parties, e.g. asking RBS, library schools, etc. to provide it to their students. A discussion of how this could be accomplished most efficiently

- followed. KB volunteered to write up a blurb to be used in advertising it (with input from EG). This blurb is to be posted on RBMS-L in early fall, asking RBMS members to forward the blurb to parties who are likely to be interested, e.g. members' library school alma maters. The blurb can be re-posted/re-used as needed.
5. Web Site Liaison  
EG: Updates to the committee's portion of the RBMS web site this year were routine. A new person is needed to train/prepare to take over this function as EG is rotating off M&PD next year. A brief explanation of the duties of this role followed.
  6. Educational Opportunities Directory  
DW on behalf of H. Cole: 1/3 of schools responded to queries for updates to the directory. The updates are ready to be sent to the M&PD web liaison but are not yet live. H. Cole hopes to restructure the directory; needs a volunteer to train/assist in doing this.
  7. Scholarship Committee Liaison  
KH on behalf of D. Warner: There were 38 applicants for Preconference scholarships this year; 36 were eligible. 20/36 applicants received scholarships, compared to 19/41 applicants last year. 6 of the scholarships were awarded to applicants who self-identified as belonging to under-represented groups. Additional details about the scholarship awards were read from D. Slive's "RBMS Scholarship Committee - Report for Diversity Committee."
  8. Diversity Committee Liaison  
KH: Diversity Committee is still interested in working with M&PD on creating a Member Survey, and would like to know the status of our deliberations. Discussion of the background for this request followed. It was noted that it would provide valuable statistics about RBMS members, since the last survey was conducted approximately 10 years ago. KB & KH volunteered to work on creating the survey.
  9. Book Fair Liaison  
MM: Contacted "captains" for three rare book fairs (California, New York and Boston) and ensured they had the necessary materials to stock the RBMS tables. No problems reported.
  10. Letters to New Members / Membership Statistics  
DW on behalf of KC: 200 letters to new members and 59 letters to reinstated members went out this year. Membership increased about 3% over last year, bringing the total number of personal members to 1771.  
EG: Do we have any idea of why it increased or longer-term statistics?  
DW: No; we can suggest that in future years, we get statistics from additional

years to see trends.

## 11. Mentoring Program

DW on behalf of KC: Sadly, we had only 4 mentor-mentee matches this year. There are many people waitlisted as mentees but few people sign up as mentors. Blanket solicitations for volunteers on RBMS-L have not been very successful.

A general discussion of the mentor program and how it might be improved followed. Comments included:

- KH noted that some potential mentors prefer a less formal and more organic process of entering into mentor/mentee relationships.
- One person suggested that it might work better if we allowed mentors to have more input into choosing who their mentees were.
- Another person reported that past mentors had complained that mentees really only wanted job networking contacts; perhaps this is one reason mentors are unwilling to volunteer.
- EG asked how SAA runs their mentoring program and whether we might borrow ideas from them? KB replied that she believes they have issues with their program as well.
- Several people agreed that often, the people who are most likely to seek out a mentor proactively are the ones who are least in need of mentoring.
- NS suggested offering a “Speed Mentoring” session at the Preconference. There was agreement that this could be an interesting option.
- KH wondered whether we might track informal mentor relationships?
- MM suggested integrating the Mentor program more into the Preconference and promoting it more there.
- EG wondered whether “Buddy” matches sometimes evolve into mentor relationships. Several anecdotes followed supporting this notion.
- DW reported on discussions with others about the issues involved in supporting the Mentoring Program. Calls for mentors on RBMS-L usually don’t work well. We should be encouraging newer members of RBMS to serve as mentors, not only long-time members. Some sort of event at the Preconference in support of mentoring relationships, e.g. a special lunch or “speed mentoring,” would be helpful. Also, we should consider asking past mentees to serve as mentors.
- MD: Suggested greater alignment of mentor/mentee research interests and possibly more connections with library school faculty. Could we get library school faculty to serve as mentors?
- GR: Suggested that M&PD sponsor a Preconference session on mentoring. DD offered to bring a suggestion for a discussion-format session to Seminars.

DW recapped the discussion: More visibility and a reinvigoration of the Mentoring Program are needed. We may want to consider personally soliciting mentors via individual emails in the future.

## 12. RBMS presence at ACRL booth

DW on behalf of KC: We had no volunteers to staff the ACRL booth at ALA Annual this year. (The call went out late.) Reminded M&PD members to volunteer at Midwinter in Dallas if possible.

## 13. New Business: Student and Regional RBMS Chapters?

NS: Reported on discussions regarding this issue at the Preconference. There is fairly broad support for the idea of Student Chapters, if students are willing to organize them.

Several people commented that Regional Chapters would be a valuable addition to RBMS, increasing access and affordability. They could be especially useful for library students and librarians at small institutions. They might also encourage individuals to become more involved on the national level. On the other hand, it was noted that supporting regional outreach takes a lot of work to do well; that regional groups with similar aims (e.g. Northwest Archivists, New England Archivists) may already be filling this role; and that we might partner/piggyback on their efforts.

More suggestions/questions followed:

- One person suggested that as a beginning effort, RBMS could sponsor social events in areas with many potential members, e.g. New York City.
- EG asked, in the case of Student Chapters, if they could plan their own events with minimal involvement from the national organization? If so, what would our role be?
- DW stated she believed they would plan their own activities. DD suggested taking the SAA Student Chapters as a model.
- EG noted that with so many library school students being enrolled in virtual programs, we may need to think more about the need for "Regional Student Chapters," rather than student chapters attached to a particular school.
- One person asked whether student chapter membership would be considered as being separate from regular RBMS membership? Several people noted parallel models that could be borrowed from, e.g. ARLIS.
- DC noted that RBMS's regional workshops have not been as financially successful as was hoped – might indicate less interest in regional offerings than we assume?

(The meeting time ended before the discussion could be brought to a conclusion.)

## 14. Priorities

DW noted top priorities for near future:

- Reinvigorate the Mentoring Program
- Create a member survey
- Promotion push for Career FAQ