

Date: 20 October 2009

Name of Section/Roundtable: Reference, Access and Outreach Section

Officers:

Schindler, Amy Chair 8/15/2009 - 8/14/2010 The College of William and Mary

Gerencser, James Vice Chair 8/15/2009 - 8/14/2010 Dickinson College

Melley, Nancy Communications Liaison 8/30/2008 - National Archives and Records Administration

Blodgett, Jan Web Liaison 8/5/2006 - Davidson College

Schmuland, Arlene Immediate Past Chair 8/15/2009 - 8/15/2010 University of Alaska Anchorage

Bell-Russel, Danna Steering Committee Member 8/30/2008 - 8/14/2010 The Library of Congress

Bensman, Beth Steering Committee Member 8/15/2009 - 9/1/2011 National Archives and Records Administration

Marquis, Kathy Steering Committee Member 8/30/2008 - 8/14/2010 Albany County Public Library

Severn, Jill Steering Committee Member 8/15/2009 - 9/1/2011 University of Georgia

Bromley, Benjamin Intern 8/15/2009 - 8/14/2010

Miller, Jessica Intern 8/15/2009 - 8/14/2010 Wayne State University

Lawson, Brenda Council Liaison 8/15/2009 - 9/1/2011 Massachusetts Historical Society

Report from annual meeting:

- Number of attendees: est. 80.
- Election results: elected Jill Severn and Beth Bensman to 2 year terms on the Steering Committee, James Gerencser elected to Vice Chair/Chair elect position. Passed bylaw amendments as noted in the July 2009 RAO newsletter (<http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/rao/RAONewsletter16.pdf> pp 8-10).
- Summary of meeting activities:
The Section had a different type of meeting this year. Aside from the standard business events (election, announcement of results, presentations by Council liaison and Program Committee representatives) and reports from Task Forces, the Steering Committee chose to use the remaining time to have breakout groups of the membership consider several topics of interest to the Section. Details of the notes from the breakout groups can be found on the RAO blog: <http://raonews.blogspot.com/>

Completed projects/activities

A Newsletter Task Force comprised of Todd Kosmerick, Amy Schindler, Tiffany Schureman, and Nancy Melley was convened to assess the Section membership's opinions and suggestions regarding the newsletter. The group conducted a survey of the membership and the result of their recommendations was a series of amendments to the bylaws (see above URL under election results). Results of the survey were distributed and as a result, the section membership voted overwhelmingly to support the changes at our election. One of the most important pieces of this process was the creation of a section blog (see above link) to provide more timely information to membership.

Ongoing projects/activities

During 2008-2009, the Section's MPLP working group compiled resources via literature searches and example processing manuals. Additional archivists to work on the project going forward were solicited via announcements to the Description and College & University Sections annual meetings as the group hopes for representation from a broad range of constituencies. In 2009-2010, the group will develop a plan for an administrative structure to enable and support the collection and dissemination of information and resources useful to archivists on this topic including a potential best practices guide in the future.

Danna Bell-Russel conferred with teachers participating in the NHD teacher institute that took place during the National History Day competition in College Park to find out what kinds of resources they wanted SAA to provide. Danna also presented at the SAA Leadership Forum regarding this topic.

New projects/activities

RAO has launched an internship program aimed at introducing new archivists and graduate students to involvement in a SAA section as well as the RAO Section specifically. Two interns were selected and their primary responsibilities will be in the area of communications, but may include other section initiatives based on the interests and needs of the interns and section. The interns will serve through the 2010 SAA Annual Meeting.

The other new project for the year is the development of short and long-term section goals and objectives with the discussion groups from the annual meeting serving as the main areas of interest.

Diversity initiatives

Amy Schindler attended the Diversity Committee meeting in Austin and conferred with Terry Baxter, the Chair of the Diversity Committee after the committee meeting on how RAO and the DC could and should work together. They agreed that after the DC had completed its planned survey of the membership this year, we would discuss again.

Questions/concerns for Council attention

One member of the Steering Committee reminded us that we need to concentrate more on developing our collaborative relationships between sections and roundtables and between us and other archival and allied professional groups outside of SAA. Perhaps Council could create/collate a list of ongoing collaborative efforts and make that available?