BCC2009/SDC/3

MUSIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL COMMITTEE
DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGING SUBCOMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT
July 2008-June 2009

Members: Mark Scharff, chair (2008); Joseph Bartl (LC Representative), Don Brown (2009), Candice Feldt (2009), David Guion (2008), Jean Harden (2008), Steve Henry (2005), Mark McKnight (2008), Patricia Thomson (2006).

The summer and early autumn of 2008 were quiet times for the subcommittee. A flurry of activity had surrounded the May 16 meeting of music experts from the North American JSC constituencies at the Library of Congress. Participants were seeking consensus on proposals from the Library of Congress (known as "LC/12") to amend the portions of *Resource Description and Access* Chapter 6 that involved naming and creating access points for musical works. The MLA representatives (Kathy Glennan, Steve Henry, Mark Scharff) had expected that the constituencies would spend the summer working on issues not resolved in the May meeting or in a subsequent teleconference; this work would be based on an LC-issued follow-up document that would reflect areas of agreement among the "May Group." Vacations, conferences, and the like put things in a holding pattern. There was also the wait for the issuance of the complete draft of *RDA*.

Events moved in rapid sequence after Halloween. The follow-up document (named hereafter "LC/12/follow-up") appeared at the very end of October, and the Subcommittee began evaluation soon thereafter using the BCC wiki, trying to navigate a document with many inaccuracies in rule numbering and "blind references" to the yet-unissued full draft. The complete draft of *RDA* appeared in mid-November—not only enormous at over 900 pages, but issued in poorly-edited PDF files. Its sheer heft forced me to provide a very selective review and to comment in the CC:DA wiki rather than preparing a formal MLA response. Then in early December, LC issued a second follow-up document to LC/12 (known hereafter as "LC/12/follow-up/2"). This document contained reworkings of LC/12 proposals that had not been accepted by the other JSC constituencies, including changes to sections of LC/12/follow-up. The Subcommittee also used the wiki to comment on this document. With BCC "pre-approval," I drafted responses to LC/12/follow-up and its cousin and submitted them to CC:DA on Jan. 14. These documents formed the core of the ALA response to these documents, drafted by John Attig, ALA representative to the Joint Steering Committee for the Development of *RDA* (JSC). John, Kathy and I had informal discussions at ALA Midwinter about how to proceed. We decided that Kathy and I would attend a session of the JSC's March meeting in Chicago at which the LC proposals were to be discussed and decisions made on the final language of the music instructions in Chapter 6. We would function as resource persons for the ALA representative.

Meanwhile, the Subcommittee was preparing for and conducting our business meeting at the MLA Annual Meeting in Chicago, as well as contributing ideas for the content of the BCC News Hour and the RDA Update. Our business meeting was well-attended, with nearly 30 guests. Most of our meeting was focused on issues surrounding the complete draft of *Resource Description and Access (RDA)*. As Kathy and I prepared for the JSC meeting, we realized that the short time allotted to discussing very complicated issues called for us to prioritize the list; the SDC discussion in Chicago sought to help that process by getting wider feedback. This was indeed the outcome. At the end of the meeting, the Subcommittee bid farewell to Lois Schultz and Steve Henry (who was reappointed for a one-year term to utilize his familiarity with *RDA* during this final push toward issuance); Candice Feldt (Harvard University) and Don Brown (El Camino Community College) were appointed to the subcommittee subsequently.

The preparation for the JSC meeting also led Kathy and me to see that ALA's positions on the LC proposals were closest to those of the Canadian Committee on Cataloging (CCC); we spent many hours in wiki work and e-mail with Daniel Paradis, MLA and CCC member, to produce a set of joint responses to the LC proposals. We had some contact with LC that promised to clear some of the smaller issues off the table, but press of time caused them to back off. We went into the Chicago meeting with a somewhat shorter list of open issues, but still more than we could expect to resolve in four hours.

At the meeting in Chicago, Barbara Tillett of LC led the discussion, as the source of the proposals. Three of the four hours were spent confirming points on which the North American constituencies had agreed, then getting approval from the others around the table (CILIP, the British Library, and the Australian Committee on Cataloging). The remainder of the time saw some resolution of a few points of contention, but many items remained untouched. For those points, the existing *RDA* draft would become the text of the first release. Overall, we felt that the outcome represented an appropriate balance of change and continuity, though we recognize that major discussions need to take place within the next few years as the implications of *RDA* become clearer. A more detailed accounting of the outcomes of the meeting are available on the BCC website.

Among the post-Chicago items: Kathy and I had volunteered to supply new or improved examples for several instructions, which we did. We also fielded queries from the ALA representative to double-check the incorporation of the March decisions into the final draft of *RDA*.

Submitted by Mark Scharff

Last updated July 17, 2009