Welcome and updates from Bill Kelly:

- The Library is undertaking a process of strategic alignment, which will bring all parts of the organization to bear around one aim: more people reading more. For the research libraries, this translates into greater use of the research collections. In order to support this, we will be working to provide better accommodation for researchers and better tools to surface the collections (improved online catalog, etc.). We are in the process of upgrading the digital infrastructure needed to support researchers’ service needs, and also the infrastructure needed to ensure long-term preservation of the collections.
- Research staff are working in collaboration with branch staff to distribute circulating services during the gut-renovation of the Mid-Manhattan Library (MML). The architectural renderings of the renovated building have been well-received publicly. MML will be closed from August 2017, with its services, collections and staff being temporarily re-housed in the system. Programming will be shared between SIBL, the Schwarzman Building, the Grand Central branch and the new 53rd Street Library. The browsable circulating collection from MML will be browsable on the ground floor of the Schwarzman Building, in back-office spaces currently under renovation. When MML reopens, these renovated ground floor spaces will be used for educational purposes. Research staff are working in conjunction with other groups in the Library to manage the increased traffic, ensuring the security of the collections and the preservation of the quiet spaces necessary for research.

Update from Denise Hibay:

- The online catalog issues that complicate the process of finding and requesting research materials through the online catalog are deep-seated. Improvements depend upon considerable work on the digital infrastructure supporting the catalog. We are currently upgrading the software running the Catalog and making back-end improvements that will allow us to implement a new request button for ReCAP materials in September, and in phase two, a request button for all onsite materials. This work dovetails with the improvements required to request materials seamlessly from our partners’ ReCAP holdings. Our goal for launching requests for shared collection materials is September 30, 2017. The security and privacy of our readers remains a paramount concern, and these catalog changes will not affect either. In order to ensure privacy, we cannot share whether a MaRLI or ReCAP partner has checked out an item. We will have a mechanism for recall of ReCAP materials, one in which staff will mediate the request in a similar manner as our ReCAP partners mediate and triage recalls. Our general plan for
improvements to the Catalog, which will be rolled out in phases, includes developing a better way to manage requests, patron feedback, and quality of service.

**Director of Exhibitions:**

- This newly created position will focus on developing a strategy for Exhibitions in the Schwarzman Building, working closely with staff from the Schomburg Center and the Library for the Performing Arts. Louise Bernard, who has worked at the Beinecke at Yale and on plans for the Obama Presidential Library, took up the position in January. As well as reactivating Gottesman Hall, the main exhibition space in the building, Louise will be working with curators, preservation staff, programming staff, our digital department and communications to create more robust support and a greater reach for our exhibitions.

**New acquisitions, overall strategy:**

- Joshua Chuang, the Wallach Associate Director for Art, Prints and Photographs, provided context for the discussion by speaking about a recent acquisition from his department, the third part of Anna Atkins’ *Cyanotypes of British Algae*. This work completes the Library’s set of this work, making it the most comprehensive set in North America, and represents a key development in the histories of botany and photography. Its addition to the collection highlights factors that come to bear when considering acquisitions.
- Over the past five years, funds allocated to special collections acquisitions have risen considerably. These numbers will fluctuate, as they are impacted by the addition of large collections (e.g. *The New York Review of Books* archive, the Tom Wolfe archive).
- Currently, acquisitions decisions are driven by curators and funded by endowments or special donations. The curators are working to codify an overall strategy for acquisition priorities, allowing us to build on existing collection strengths while still remaining open to collections and objects that become available serendipitously. This is a particularly auspicious to focus on this, as the Library has just received a $15M gift from Katherine Raynor to support special collections acquisitions over the next ten years.
- The Council would like to receive more information about current collection strengths and priorities, in order to contribute to the conversation constructively.

**Next Meeting:**

The autumn meeting will continue the conversation about special collections acquisition strategies.