

SAA Electronic Records Section 1998 Annual Report

Annual Meeting

The Electronic Records Section held its annual meeting during the SAA annual meeting in Orlando. Approximately 45 people attended the meeting.

Current chair Tom Ruller led the meeting which covered the following:

1. Rob Spindler of the University of Arizona made a brief presentation about a conference that he is organizing that focuses on electronic records in academic institutions. The conference will be held in Arizona in 1999. For more information, contact Rob Spindler or see the conference web site <<http://www.asu.edu/it/events/ecure/>>.
2. Joan Sander, SAA Education Director, solicited workshop proposals from the section. SAA sponsored two pre-conference workshops on electronic records at the Orlando meeting, both were completely full. SAA is developing its first on-online course, which will be Basic Electronic Records, modeled on the Basic Electronic Records workshop that was held in Orlando.
3. Tom Ruller reported that the Section has received excellent support from SAA Council. Council has actively solicited feedback from ERS on a number of important electronic records issues including the recent comments on NARA's GRS-20 and associated regulations.
4. The bulk of the section meeting focused on a direction and purpose for the section. Tom Ruller introduced the discussion by indicating his feeling that electronic records issues have grown from being addressed by a small group of archivists, to being an aspect of the work most archivists. Most SAA sections, whether they are functional or institutional, have started some kind of focus on records in electronic form. Tom's question was, "What role does ERS have within SAA?" There was a lively discussion. The consensus was that ERS still has tremendous value to the SAA, but we need to develop and stay focused on a set of activities that provides information to the Society. ERS should also ensure that SAA members are aware of issues affecting records in electronic form and providing a locus of expertise to SAA and to the archival community as a whole.
5. The section discussed seminars that would serve as the program at the section's 1999 annual meeting.
6. A final action of the meeting was to elect Weston T. Thompson of the University of Kentucky as Vice-chair/Chair elect.

Activities During the Year

The major activities carried out since the 1998 section meeting include:

1. Developing a slate of candidates for section leadership positions to be voted on during the 1999 meeting.
2. Naming a new section newsletter/web-site editor. Charles F. Thomas will serve the section in this capacity. His first project has been to develop a prototype section web site, which is nearing completion as the 1999 meeting nears.
3. Establishing a CART Curriculum/ Foundation Cluster work group to continue examining issues brought to the fore during the 1997 section meeting. The group made some minor progress during this year, but was slowed as most of the members were involved in career moves during this time frame.
4. Organizing the 1999 section meeting. David Wallace of the University of Michigan worked diligently to organize a session on document and records management systems. The session will provide three presentations on document & records management applications, with specific reference to emergent standards and implementations. The first two presentations will provide insights into the Australian records management standard and the US Department of Defense design criteria standard for records management software applications and how these standards are being expressed within existing and emergent software and implementations. The third presentation will provide a brief overview of the methods and findings of a comparative benchmarking analysis of records management systems currently on the market. The session will be chaired by David Wallace; speakers will be Adrian Cunningham, National Archives of Australia, Sue McKemmish, Monash University, Bruce Miller, Provenance Systems, and Rich Medina, Doculabs