

SAA Electronic Records Section 2006 Annual Report

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Name of Section/Roundtable: Electronic Records Section

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Report from annual meeting:

Number of attendees: 85

Election results:

- Suzanna “Suzie” Long was elected Vice-Chair of the Electronic Records Section.
- Richard Marciano was elected to the Steering Committee. To my knowledge Dr. Marciano is the first computer scientist/engineer to be elected to the Steering Committee of an SAA Section. SDSC issued a press release about Dr. Marciano’s election to the Steering Committee that was picked up by a number of media outlets. (See: http://www.sdsc.edu/Press/2006/08/082106_digital_preservation.html)

Summary of meeting activities:

See the [attached minutes](#).

Completed projects/activities

The Electronic Records Section Steering Committee worked with NAGARA’s Committee on Electronic Records and Information Systems (CERIS) to put together session proposals for the 2006 joint SAA/NAGARA/CoSA meeting. The ERS/CERIS team helped put together and/or recommend to the Program Committee three sessions that appeared on the program:

“X” Marks the Spot: Archiving GIS Databases

- Peter Bajcsy, Chair
UIUC Automated Learning Group, National Center for Supercomputing Applications
- Richard Marciano
San Diego Supercomputer Center
“Research Issues Related to Preservation of Geospatial Electronic Records”
- Helen Wong Smith
Kamehameha Schools
“Wahi Kūpuna: Digitized Cultural Resources Database with GIS Access”
- James Henderson
Maine State Archives
“Managing GIS in the Digital Archives”

This session highlights issues involved in developing and preserving geospatial data. The largest private land owner in Hawaii, Kamehameha Schools have implemented the Land Legacy Database to collect, index, and disseminate the

history and traditions of their lands, which support their schools. The San Diego Supercomputer Center is working on long-term preservation of geospatial data. The Maine State Archives recently concluded a GeoArchives preservation and access project. The speakers discuss the lessons learned at their institutions

A Web Crawl... Is Not a Web Crawl... Is Not a Web Crawl: Building an Archive of Government Websites

- Mark Conrad, Chair National Archives and Records Administration
- Mark Myers Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives “Archiving Websites in Kentucky”
- Kelly Eubank North Carolina State Archives “Yes, We are Crazy: Cooperative Efforts Between the North Carolina State Archives and State”
- Patricia Cruse California Digital Library “CDL’s Web Archiving Service: A Model for Collecting Government and Political Information”
- Judith Cobb Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) “Managing Web Content with Archival Practices”

Preserving web-based information has become an important topic for archivists and records administrators. This session introduces tools that are under development or already in use. Speakers address both the technical and nontechnical aspects of developing a successful project. Myers and Eubank share their institutions’ experiences with different methods to capture information from state government websites. Cruse and Cobb discuss their institutions’ efforts to develop tools for web capture and preservation.

We Did It and So Can You: Tackling Electronic Records Issues

- Rosemary Pleva Flynn, Chair Energy and Environmental Research Center, University of North Dakota “What You Can Do Now to Address Your Electronic Records Issues”
- Bonita S. Smith The Aerospace Corporation “The Aerospace Corporation Digital Archives Conversion”
- Bonita L. Weddle New York State Archives “The New York State Experience”
- Edith M. Jeter International Mission Board “E-mail Capture at the International Mission Board”

Organizations in all sectors and of all sizes face electronic records issues needing attention now—before records are lost. This session details how the Aerospace Corporation, the International Mission Board, and the New York State Archives addressed three issues (preservation and accessibility of existing archival electronic records, standardization of electronic archiving and records management to facilitate sharing, and e-mail management). The speakers emphasize the practical needs and considerations driving planning and implementation.

Meeting Summary

These sessions were all very well-attended and there was active audience participation.

It is also worth noting that the Electronic Records Session was responsible for five computer scientists/engineers participating in DC2006!:

- The San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) was well represented at DC2006 by Reagan Moore, Richard Marciano, and Chien-yi Hou. All three of these gentlemen actively engaged in dialogues with archivists and records managers throughout the meeting. The exchanges were lively and enlightening.
- Richard Marciano gave a presentation entitled, Research Issues Related to Preservation of Geospatial Electronic Records, in the session entitled, X Marks the Spot: Archiving GIS Databases. In his presentation Dr. Marciano highlighted the many research collaborations between archivists and SDSC personnel in trying to grapple with the long term retention of geospatial electronic records. He introduced the audience to Chien-yi Hou and pointed out that Chien-yi was the first person at SDSC to have the title of Digital Preservation Specialist. The presentation was very well received.
- Reagan Moore gave the keynote address at the Electronic Records Section (ERS) annual meeting. Dr. Moore's presentation, based on his recent article in *American Archivist*, was very well received. In his presentation, Dr. Moore identified relevant preservation concepts for preserving authentic electronic

records, talked about how those concepts have been tested in the SDSC/NARA/UMD Transcontinental Persistent Archives Prototype and other collaborations with archivists. Finally he discussed the development of the next generation of preservation environments using iRODS. Data grids, SRB, and iRODS were the topics of many conversations during and between subsequent sessions at DC2006!

- Dr. Peter Bajcsy from the National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign chaired the session X Marks the Spot: Archiving GIS Databases.
- Mike Smorul from the University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies (UMIACS) gave a brief presentation on the Producer-Archive Workflow Network (PAWN) at the Electronic Records Section Annual Meeting. PAWN is a prototype application for moving electronic records from the records creator's desktop to an archival repository.

Having these world class computer scientists and engineers participate in the annual meeting and having one of their number elected to the ERS Steering Committee certainly helps SAA advance its agenda in the Technology area.

Ongoing projects/activities

The Electronic Records Section endorsed two proposals for the 2007 Annual Meeting. Based on informal discussions with members of the Program Committee, it appears that both of these proposals have been accepted for the 2007 program.

New projects/activities

In response to the article in the July/August issue of Archival Outlook concerning Council's strategic planning, members of the ERS Steering Committee initiated discussions between personnel at the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) and SAA's Executive Director and President. The purpose of these discussions is to explore the possibility of co-sponsoring an annual "technology summer camp" for the development and sharing of research relating to technology in archives and allied professions. This was one of the top three proposed activities for SAA to undertake under the Technology issue on Council's Radar Screen. Discussions between SDSC and SAA are ongoing. The Director of SDSC, Dr. Fran Berman has expressed her enthusiastic support for such a program.

Diversity initiatives

At the annual meeting the ERS held informal discussions about the need for diversity in the professions represented in our section. For example, we discussed reaching out to organizational IT staff as partners in addressing electronic records issues.

Questions/concerns for Council attention

The Electronic Records Section would like to hear more about Council's thoughts on the report from the Taskforce on Sections and Roundtables.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Conrad
Electronic Records Archives (ERA)

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