

Collaborative Electronic Records Project

Winter 2009

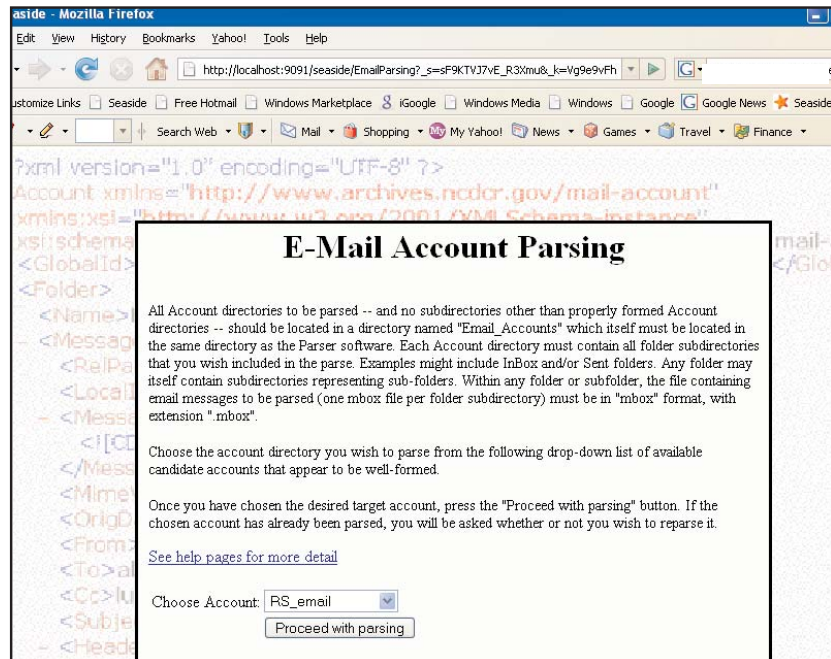
What's new

The Collaborative Electronic Records Project (CERP) concluded its work Dec. 31, 2008. The three-year collaboration between the Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC) and the Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) achieved its goal of finding a long-term preservation solution for email records.

The project originated in 2003 after a conversation between Dr. Edie Hedlin, Director of SIA, and Dr. Darwin H. Stapleton, Executive Director of RAC (both since retired), about the state of electronic records. Working together the two archives achieved much more than they could separately. The project's focus quickly turned to the preservation of email collections.

Project archivists at both archives met depositors, conducted surveys, transferred and processed email collections, and tested software. Two consultants joined the team to address and to contribute system, workflow, and preservation requirements developed by the archivists and project manager.

Lawry Persaud installed and enhanced DSpace, the open-source digital repository used for housing the email col-



The Web User Interface of the CERP parser that outputs an email collection into an XML file of the account following the Email Account XML Schema. The parser code will be released soon.

lections.

Dr. Steve Burbeck collaborated with the North Carolina State Archives to refine an email XML preservation schema it was devising as part of its email project (The states of North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky are jointly conducting the EMCAP project). He also developed a software tool that transforms the email messages and attachments into the XML format.

Both projects would like other organizations to test the schema available through the

CERP website.

The CERP team also hosted a symposium in the fall that presented project findings and discussed future directions for digital preservation.

Representatives from the National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. Senate staff, and University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill/RENCI participated in the event and brought different perspectives to the table.

The symposium proceedings will be available later in 2009 from the CERP website.

Next steps

Even though the project has ended, the CERP website at <http://siarchives.si.edu/cerp> will be available indefinitely. The site contains presentations, papers, and tools developed by the team.

The CERP team would like to see others in the archival community advance its work.

The 2009 Society of American Archivists conference will include an Email Preservation with XML workshop to be presented by CERP's SIA members and the North Carolina State Archives' EMCAP team.

The CERP participants

The following made CERP possible:

CERP team

- * Nancy Adgent
- * Dr. Steve Burbeck
- * Riccardo Ferrante
- * Lawry Persaud
- * Lynda Schmitz Fuhrig

CERP steering committee

- * Dr. Charles Dollar
- * Dr. Edie Hedlin
- * Dr. Margaret Hedstrom
- * Dr. Gregory Hunter

- * Dr. Ken Rose
- * Dr. Darwin Stapleton
- * Anne Van Camp

Funding Institutions

- * The Rockefeller Archive Center
- * The Rockefeller Foundation
- * The Rockefeller University
- * The Smithsonian Institution Archives
- * The Smithsonian Institution