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Aerospace Section

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AEROSPACE SECTION OF THE ENGINEERING DIVISION

The Aerospace Section of the Engineering Division encourages communication and cooperation among information professionals concerned with aerospace, aeronautical and related technologies. In addition, it fosters dialog with entities such as NASA, the AIAA and other important sources of technical data and bibliographical services.

FROM THE CHAIR

THOMAS DE PETRO

My first task as Section Chair is to again thank Susan Lamanna of Transport Canada for her leadership and service this past year. Susan concluded her tenure as Chair at the annual conference in June by moderating a section breakfast meeting, a section luncheon with a guest speaker, and a conference session. Susan also achieved much in the area of sponsorship, securing the participation of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), BAE Systems—formed by the merger of British Aerospace and Marconi Electronic Systems, the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) Automotive and Aerospace Solutions, and OPENTEXT—Basis Division. BASIS is a document collection search and retrieval system product that exemplifies “knowledge management.”



The annual section business meeting provided an opportunity for us to meet our sponsors' representatives and to introduce the new Chair-elect, Eileen Dorschner of the MIT Aeronautics & Astronautics Library. Eileen is already assisting me in planning programs for next year in Los Angeles. One of our additional guests represented the McGraw-Hill Aviation Week Group, a potential sponsor. Some of you may also know of future possible sponsors. Your input in that area or on any issue affecting the Section is always welcome.

The luncheon meeting featured a guest speaker from the FAA. Ms. Susan Buckingham introduced and demonstrated the FAA Regulatory and Guidance Library (RGL) on the web. The RGL is one of 30 “Available Information” sources listed on the FAA Aircraft Certification homepage at <http://www.faa.gov/avr/air/airhome.htm>. As a set of databases, the RGL contains regulatory, guidance, and aviation product information. The five groups offered are the Advisory Circulars, Airworthiness Directives, Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs), Make Model listings (Type Certificate Data Sheets), and Regulatory Basis documentation consisting of searchable past FAR parts. The FAA has made significant advances in offering its documents and resources on the web, making it much easier to access needed information.

On the topic of information access, one of my goals with this column is to share knowledge of new resources. As a member of the Texas A&M University Libraries Science and Engineering Services unit I am responsible for information sources in aerospace engineering, computer science, electrical engineering, materials science, and mechanical engineering. Keeping up with the new resources, acquiring them as able, and informing users about them are tasks common to us all. Many tips and insights on this process are shared on listservs of course, but on those occasions when a significant development in aerospace information occurs, I would like to share it here. Again your input there is welcome—and needed.

One example of this from the past year is the acquisition of the Aerospace Database by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA) from AIAA. Another example is the backfile of AIAA journals and papers

available on the web. These developments emphasize one of the many values of the SLA Annual Conference—the opportunity to meet directly with the information producers and providers. I had the good fortune to participate in an AIAA focus group last fall in Houston. One area of potential cooperation is with the AIAA Publications Committee. Perhaps some of us know AIAA members in our organizations who are avid library users or supporters. Encouraging those individuals to consider participating on that committee would further benefit our aerospace libraries and information centers. AIAA is only one of many professional societies that we interact with

and similar connections can be established as part of our wider networking activities.


Some of our members, past or present, also occasionally publish on aerospace information. I was impressed when I saw Charles Lord's book titled *Guide to Information Sources in Engineering* (Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2000) arrive on my BNA approval books shelf. Again, please notify me if you or someone you know in our Section has a recent publication. I can share that achievement and information here.

I look forward to hearing from you!

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