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## Aerospace Section

Donald Welch

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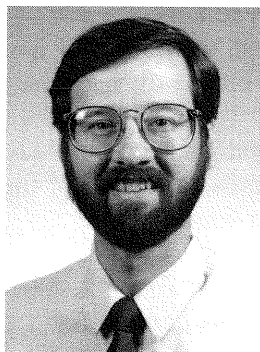
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# AEROSPACE SECTION OF THE ENGINEERING DIVISION

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 bibliographic services.

## FROM THE CHAIR



Words, as someone much wiser and erudite than I has said, cannot describe adequately everything that happens. That's what I'm feeling now after what I enjoyed in Indianapolis, and I speak specifically about the people, the city and the climate that greeted those attending the conference.

What a friendly and clean place it was; and it certainly was sunny. I'm ready now for Minneapolis. I'm pumped, I guess you could say. I believe the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul have quite an act to follow, though. Even though attendance seemed less than that in Seattle and Boston, I met a lot of folks who were glad to be in Indianapolis. I thought it was mah-velous, myself.

The programs were nothing to bring hives either. In particular, I have to mention the competitive intelligence program sponsored by the section. Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. People packed the room and sat on the floor listening to Dottie Moon and the others talk about gathering intelligence on competitors. I didn't see anyone leaving early, either. And I'll bet Mary Ellen McMurtrie was glad to see the crowd there. It's funny, though, that she didn't get to see the program she organized. That's because she was in the hall outside, talking to a representative of Forecast International-Scott Pierce.

I also went to the ISO 9000 certification program that was co-sponsored by the Engineering Division, and I learned a couple of things - even though we have been through the process at Bell Helicopter Textron. Carolyn Ernst and Chris Dobson, a couple of consultants from Dallas (who are formerly librarians)

talked about why and how libraries should position themselves for involvement in the ISO certification

## DONALD WELCH

process. They convinced me it was a good thing to be involved...and to volunteer for the responsibility, too.

A round of applause needs to be extended here to the companies that sponsored parts or all of the programs and/or events of the section and division. You probably have heard of them previously, but I want to thank them personally myself. I've talked to a couple of them myself (both in Indianapolis and since then) and I know that they get more than just a couple of requests for support and/or sponsorships. While they'd like to help everyone, they have resources that are limited just like ours. So, thanks to the AIAA, Forecast International, Carroll Publishing, FAXON, and McGraw-Hill for going with us.

At the annual business meeting (of the section), Robert Marrah of Honeywell Defense Avionics spoke unabashedly about a number of trends in the aerospace industry and he touched a couple of times on the culture of companies within the industry as well as the industry itself. Even though the industry is settling after a number of mergers have reshaped the form and name of competitors, success within the industry, either for a company or for an individual, is going to depend upon the cultures fed and nourished within the companies, he said. How (and whether) someone succeeds somewhere is dependent upon how he or she can relate culturally within the corporation or department.

We also heard from representatives of a number of sponsors and/or vendors who were there with us. Tom Carroll of Carroll Publishing talked of developments in print and electronically at Carroll and then he waxed nostalgically I think on the first conference of the SLA he attended in the 1970s. Peggy Traband also talked on what was happening at McGraw-Hill, and Susan Lamana of Transport Canada discussed some of the things in the works in Ontario. Also speaking to us was Karen Holloway of

the AIAA...and she announced, among other things, that the records of the AIAA were going to be returning to the files of NASA. I, for one, am glad to hear that.

Let me speak for the 40 or more of us (that were at the meeting) and say WE MISSED YOU! Not only did I enjoy Indianapolis and the meeting, but I enjoyed meeting folks I only get to see once a year at conference. I realize now that there were some of you I didn't get to see this year. I'd like to rectify that in Minneapolis, if you can make it. No pressure, understand; but I will say that I will work this year and next to make sure Minneapolis will be a place to enjoy.

Let me say that as of June 1, there are 173 members of the Engineering Division who are members of the Aerospace Section. That's marvelous!! That's the kind of participation I like to see. The section (and previously division) has had at least 50 attend all the conferences since Atlanta, which was in 1994. The year before Atlanta, the division had 60 attend the conference. That represents a base from which anything is possible. Given also that we are a unit of the Engineering Division is exciting, too. That's because it is showing itself to be an up-and-comer in the Association. In 1996 it had 200 members attend the conference; and that made it eighth among the divisions with members at the conference. In 1997 it was third of 26...with 220. That 220 was an increase that only a pair of divisions were able to show over '96. Engineering improved 10 per cent and Advertising & Marketing improved 20.9 per cent from 158 to 191. I think that's something to celebrate among ourselves and with Engineering.

Speaking of Engineering, I am finding the folks there to be, well, just like us. They are wonderful to know, and they are willing to help whenever they can. I've been talking and working mostly with Kelly Yuille and Gad Engler, and I have found them to be responsible as well as responsive. Kelly and I first worked together as Treasurers; she as the receiver of funds and I as the transferor of funds. Gad is now Treasurer for Engineering, and Kelly and I are now chairs of Engineering and Aerospace, respectively. Interestingly, I learned at the Engineering Board meeting that Engineering has 720 plus members now. That's tremendous!

Engineering also has enacted a program, if you will, for providing funds to chairs and chair-elects if they need money to travel to

conference. This was an initiative that Kathy Harkness carried to Engineering after she finished her term as chair of the Aerospace Division/Section in 1997. She worked with Betty Lou Hicks on this, and Betty Lou, Chair of Engineering for 1997-98, backed the idea from the beginning. It subsequently has passed, eliminating in part, at least, one barrier to serving as Chair...of the division or section either one.

I want to get back to talking about Minneapolis now. I just can't say how much I am looking forward to it. I wish it were here already. Part of that is attributable, I think, to the time I had in Indianapolis. If I haven't convinced you yet, I had the best of times in Indianapolis. I just think Minneapolis is going to be as good or better. (There is, I understand, the largest of malls anywhere in the world there. What else could you want from a place?)

A highlight of the week in Indianapolis was the cooperation and enthusiasm for planning for Minneapolis that I felt; it was contagious. Some of that was displayed by the staff of SLA. They know how to help first-timers get into the flow of the process. Most of the contagion I caught, however, was from others also involved in the planning. I had an idea for a program that was received well enough that three divisions agreed to be co-sponsors of the program, with funding and/or the speaker either. That REALLY got me excited.

The program is about libraries and/or librarians that have been involved either in a merger of companies or the acquisition of a company ... theirs or another's. The divisions interested in examining how libraries prepare and/or survive a merger or acquisition are Communications, FAN (or Food, Agriculture & Nutrition), and Petroleum, and Energy Resources. What I've heard from the chairs about this so far is encouraging and exciting. Stay tuned for more on this, please.

Forecast International has approached us, too, to be the sponsor of a program that should be excellent. They sponsored the competitive intelligence program in Indianapolis, of course, and it was excellent. I don't see why another of theirs shouldn't be as good or better than the last.

So much has happened in June that I don't think I have covered all of it. Let's see ...

There are at least two from the section running for office again. They are Dottie Moon and Karen Holloway. They are in the running for seats as directors. Contesting them for the seats are Lynn

Tinsley, a member of the Engineering Division (!!!), and Sylvia James, a consultant from Haywards Heath, West Sussex, England. It should be interesting, don't you think?

Mala Sistla, the chair of Aerospace in 1994, has had an article published in Information Outlook; and it's "Warning: A Killer Mistake in Business - Don't Let Technology Drive Your Requirements". Look in the June issue and see what she and James Todd have to say about being smart and working smart in libraries.

The Transportation Division sent those of us on the section listserv an invitation to add information about ourselves to an upcoming directory of transportation industry libraries. I accepted the invitation, and I would encourage all of you to do likewise. I also visited the web page of Transportation, and they have done well. It's gotten buttons for news, officers, programs, publications, history, bylaws, the listserv, and links to places we can "transport" ourselves electronically. Doesn't that sound like fun?

Speaking of listservs, if you haven't joined the listserv of the section, do it today. Send an email to: [listserv@sti.nasa.gov](mailto:listserv@sti.nasa.gov) with the message "subscribe sla-aero <your firstname> <your lastname>". That'll do it.

I recently posted a message to the listserv, too, that was meant to correct a frame of mind that was akilter - mine! I wrote a couple of things in *Sci-Tech News* in May that were revisited on the listserv by a couple of members who took issue with what I said. They made a couple of points that hit the mark, so to speak, and I took the opportunity recently to respond to them there. In summary, I know being a member of the Aerospace Section is as much a responsibility as it is opportunity, or tool to meet others in the profession. Responsibility is to be helpful and to be supportive of others in the group--to stand by those who are will to stand by for you. I realize now that I was not being supportive or helpful in picking at members for not volunteering by the dozens to work for the betterment of the section. Individually, we face workloads and issues that might preclude us from being involved; and we shouldn't be chastized for that. People of conscience, and that's what I believe most of us are, will try to do what we can when the time is right. The time will be right for each of us to get involved when it's right. And ONLY when it's right. Maybe that will be in Minneapolis?

Hope to see you there.

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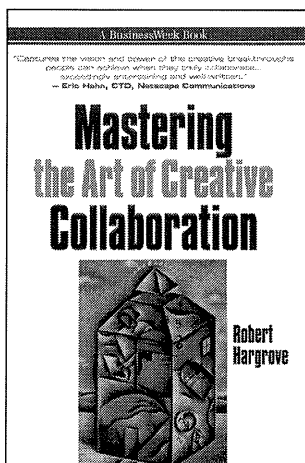
*Authored by*  
Cathy A. Porter  
Mary E. Beall  
Janice F. Chindlund  
Rebecca S. Corliss  
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Sara R. Tompson  
Lorri A. Zipperer

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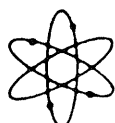
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*Authored by*

Cathy A. Porter

Mary E. Beall

Janice F. Chindlund

Rebecca S. Corliss

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