

Report of the Executive Director

—Lawrence P. Jacobs

IT IS AGAIN my privilege to report to you on the general status of our Society. On the first day of next month, I will have completed five years in the capacity of Executive Director. It does not seem quite possible that time could pass so quickly, but time has a peculiar way of doing just that.

For some reason, a five-year period seems to have some fatal fascination to planners, budget makers, and administrators the world over. Washington, Moscow, Peking, Paris, and all the rest are continuously announcing some new five-year plan, and boasting of accomplishments under one just completed.

Five years we must admit is a reasonable length of time to establish trend in key areas of an organization's activities. Sometimes reports covering a one or two-year period can be made to look quite impressive by comparing them with a bad year just preceding. But when we look at operating results for five consecutive years, we can easily get a pretty good idea of whether things are going up, going down, or just moving sideways. And so this year, I thought that, with the help of a few illustrations, we might take a quick panoramic view of the Society's major activities over the period since 1966.

In some instances, we can measure progress in terms of numbers—people, dollars, the value of manuals sold, and so on. In other areas we must interpret results in less definitive terms. But overall, I think you will see that the Society has gained in members, has broadened the scope of its interests, improved its organization, and has slowly, but surely, begun to reach out past its immediate membership to influence the all-important users of photogrammetry.

As membership is basic to any association, suppose we start there. The base of the Society is its individual, or what we used to call *corporate* members. In the five-year period prior to 1966, the number of corporate members stayed essentially level—at or just below the 4000 mark.

This chart (Figure 1) shows that since 1966 we have experienced steady growth. At the end of 1970, corporate membership had risen to 5200. These figures, incidentally, represent members in good standing at year-end. Many societies include within their total

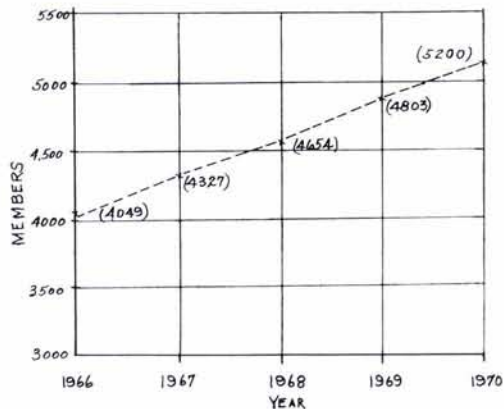


FIG. 1. Regular (Corporate) Members.

membership all delinquent members who are still on the books. We keep records of our delinquent members and encourage them to return to good standing but we do not count them unless and until they do.

As a background, suppose we look at the aims and objectives that were established by the founding fathers of the Society. They have not been changed since 1934:

- To advance knowledge,
- To act as a clearinghouse,
- To better standards and ethics,
- To foster a spirit of cooperation and understanding,
- To provide for a friendly exchange of ideas,
- To hold meetings for the presentation of papers,
- To procure, preserve and disseminate knowledge,
- To publish, distribute, or promote books, periodicals and treatises,
- To dispose of publications by sale.

Student membership also has increased. Between 1966 and 1968 it more than doubled, reaching a high of 661. As you can see from Figure 2, there has been a decrease from this peak in the last two years—probably due to a large extent to the dues increase from \$3 to \$5 per year. So far in 1971, student membership is running ahead of last year and we hope that it will again turn upward.

Adding corporate and student membership together in Figure 3, we see the total individual membership was more than 5700 by the end of 1970. This represents a steady 7

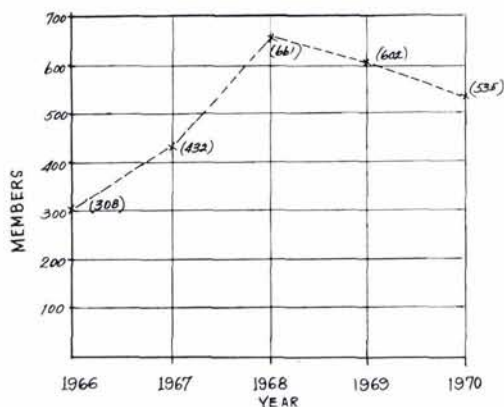


FIG. 2. Student Members.

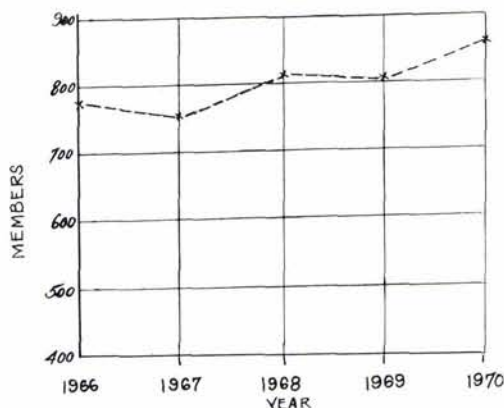


FIG. 4. New Members.

percent per year average net growth. Our five-year membership plan, which started in 1967, actually has another year to go. Obviously we will not be able to quite live up to its ambitious title, 7000 by '70. But with luck, and by the end of this year, we could be above the 6000 mark.

After all, the numbers in themselves are not the all-important factor. The main things are: we have grown—we have grown steadily—and we have developed a very much improved teamwork on membership between the national and regional organizations. Some of the persons who have contributed significantly to this effort will be recognized here today (See Awards, page 697).

Before leaving the area of corporate membership, here is another chart that might be of interest (Figure 4). You will note that the number of new corporate members joining the Society has been near the 800 mark in each of the five years. Now, as this curve is essentially level, and the overall membership curve is decidedly upward, there obviously has been a steady increase in the retention of our cor-

porate members. Only a few years back we were experiencing a drop-out rate that was in some instances as high as 17 percent. In the last three years this has dropped closer and closer to the 10-percent mark, and in 1970 the drop-out mark was at a new low of 9.9 percent.

The number of paid sustaining members at year-end has also increased (Figure 5). Frankly, it has not been as high as we would like it to be. But considering the rather substantial increase in dues that was made in 1966 and the uncertain economic climate of the latter portion of the period, we are fortunate not to have experienced a net decline as has been true for some societies. We have sincerely tried to increase benefits and privileges to sustaining members and, if nothing else, to let them know that we are genuinely grateful for their support. Without this assistance from our sustaining members, we would need to raise individual dues and very considerably curtail many of the Society's

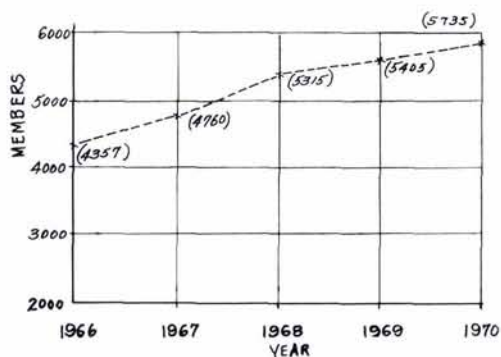


FIG. 3. Total (individual) Membership.

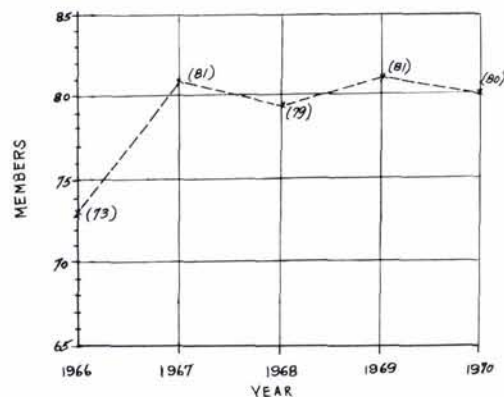


FIG. 5. Sustaining Membership.

important programs. We will do our best to merit their continued support.

Now let us turn to another area that is very vital to ASP, or to any other organization—*money!* And let's start by looking at two major areas of expense. The cost of printing our journal plus related costs, and administrative expenses.

You will note from Figure 6 that printing costs at the end of 1970 were nearly a staggering 90 percent higher than they were in 1966! Only about half of this increase can be attributed to member growth and an increase in the number of issues from 6 to 12. For with great skill and perseverance, Carper Tewinkel and his staff have kept the 12 issues—although somewhat thinner than their bi-monthly predecessors—filled with interesting material and a real credit to the Society. To offset this increased cost we were forced to raise advertising rates. But they are still lower than those of most of our contemporary societies.

Administrative expenses (Figure 7) cover a wide variety of items: salaries, postage, rent, auditing fees, telephone, rebates to regions, to name a few. Administrative expenses are up 27 percent since 1966 and this is almost in direct proportion to the increase in membership. It is in this area that we have tried very hard to hold the line by doing as much work *in house* as possible and through other economies.

SOURCES OF INCOME

Let's look briefly now at the income side of the ledger. One major source is, naturally, dues of all types. Dues income is directly proportional to the number of members in each category and hence any charts or graphs of

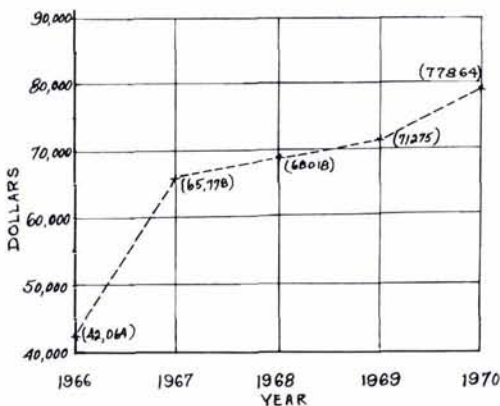


FIG. 6. Journal Printing Costs.

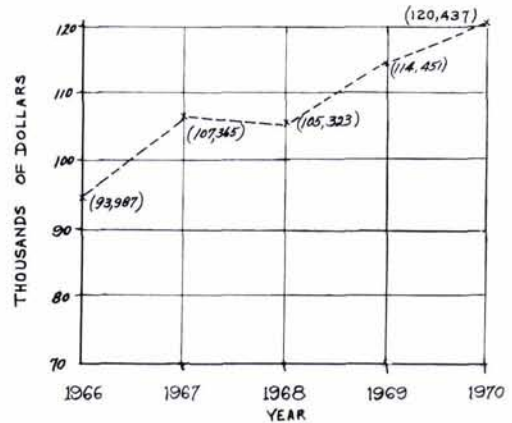


FIG. 7. Administrative Costs.

these figures would look almost identical to those we have already seen on membership.

As I have already indicated, we have to a large extent countered the heavy increase in printing costs by raising advertising and subscription rates. But one area of our income, the very important area of manual sales, is rather difficult to forecast and control.

Looking at our five-year record of manual sales in Figure 8, you will see a definite pattern. In years where new manuals are brought out, there is a peak of income from advance sales and the first rush of regular purchases. This is followed by a rather sharp decline from the peak down to a point where sales become reasonably level. You can see that right now the line is going down again after the peak sales of the new Color Manual. This is why we have had to be very cautious in projecting manual sales in our budget forecasts.

Our objective is to develop our financial position so that we will not lean too heavily

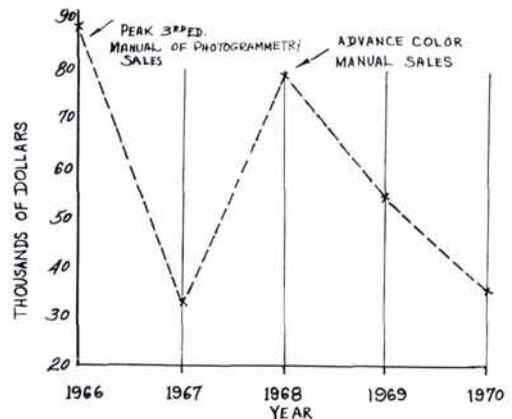


FIG. 8. Manual Sales.

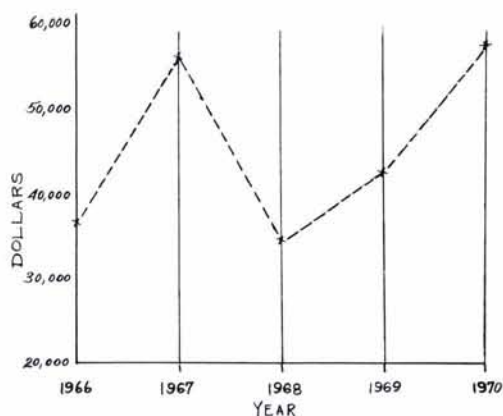


FIG. 9. Cash at Year-End.

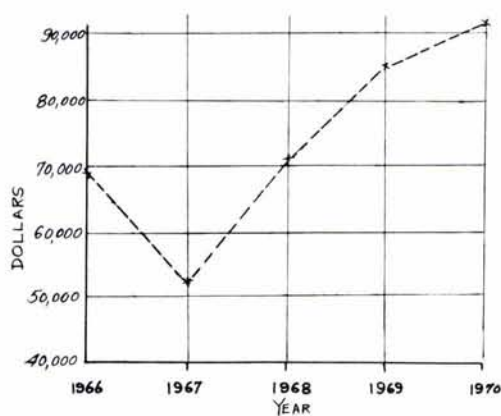


FIG. 10. Members' Equity.

on manual sales. We also want to be in a position to bring our new manuals with less need for extensive borrowing. I am pleased to report that our cash position at year-end has allowed us to make a definite step in this direction. We took \$10,000 of our cash and started a *revolving manual fund*. We hope to be able to add some each year, so that when our new Remote Sensing manual comes out, we can in essence, borrow a substantial amount from ourselves at no interest.

CASH AND MEMBER'S EQUITY

Now that we have considered major sources of income and expenses, let's turn to the two pay-off areas financially speaking—cash, and members equity.

This next chart (Figure 9) shows the cash position of the Society at the end of the year, for the last five years. Although it is encouraging to see that our cash position is on the increase, this is another area where we have had to exercise caution. We normally send out dues notices for membership and subscriptions around November 1 of the year preceding. Thus it is quite easy toward the end of a given year to get a peak flow of cash which actually belongs to the next year, and which will not be *earned* until we have performed all services to those who paid them in. I am happy to report that last year we could have made it through to year-end without touching advance dues payments. This is a goal that we have been working toward for quite some time, and I hope we can continue this situation.

But cash at year-end can be a deceptive yardstick for still another reason, particularly if you have heavy debts or liabilities that must be met early in the next year. A much

more meaningful test of financial strength is the trend in *member's equity*. I am sure that all of us are familiar with the term. Expressed in simplest form, it reflects the difference between firm assets and liabilities that would exist if the Society decided to disband at any given time. In Figure 10, the accounting is made at year-end and comes, of course, from the annual balance sheet. The drop in 1967 reflects the cumulative impact of a number of things that took effect in 1966—12 issues of the journal instead of six—increasing the Headquarters staff, and adding a pension plan, etc.

Measures taken since that time have reversed the situation and the trend in member's equity is upward, as you can see. Here again let me be as clear as possible. Members' equity includes office equipment, the manual inventory as well as cash. Therefore, if the Society did disband, your share might be \$5.00 in cash, a copy of the Color Manual, and a box of new typewriter ribbons. But as you can see, the *value* of the members' equity per corporate member now exceeds the annual dues rate of \$15.00. This curve will be the prime indicator in telling us when a dues raise is necessary. So far, a healthy increase in membership and actions to produce additional income, have made such an increase unnecessary.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Here are some other accomplishments in the last five years of which I believe the Society can take reasonable pride.—I'll touch only briefly on each one:

- * Journal issues doubled.
- * Three technical divisions activated.
- * Organization of ASP chapters.

- * New governing structure.
- * Program-planning committee.
- * Increased regional participation.
- * In-depth seminars and symposia.
- * A distinctive fall meeting.
- * Simplified accounting procedures.
- * Two major manuals published.
- * Corporate dues kept level.

The number of issues of Photogrammetric Engineering has been doubled so that published technical papers and newsletter items are more nearly current.

Three technical divisions have been organized to replace a myriad of technical committees which previously reported individually to the President (many of the committees reported very little).

Nine ASP Chapters, including two student chapters, have been formed within the various regions. It was recently my pleasure to present charters in the name of President Diercks to four new chapters in the Great Lakes Region. Several other chapters are in the formation stage.

Certainly the change in the governing structure of the Society as developed by the Radlinski Committee will prove to be a major step forward. Direct representation on the ASP Board is bound to involve the regions more closely in the policy-making activities of the Society. And this is as it should be.

Out of the reorganization has also come the *Program Planning Committee*. This committee is an operating element of the Board of Direction that meets at regular intervals to review the status of all the major programs of the Society. It has already produced results in coordinating and selecting the subject areas for seminars and symposia two years in advance.

As Executive Director, I am in a position to work very closely with the regions—to receive their activity reports, and visit with them from time to time. *Increased regional activity* has, in my opinion, been one of our major areas of progress. Nearly all regions now have active programs of social and technical meetings, contact their delinquent members effectively, and report regularly. This is quite a change from a few years back and a very welcome change.

Each year we have increased the number of *in-depth seminars and symposia* in selected subject areas. So far, we have been successful financially and otherwise; and I cannot help but believe that they have increased the sta-

ture of our Society in the scientific and technical community.

The old *semi-annual* meeting had developed an image which was essentially a junior version of the annual meeting. By changing its name to *Fall Technical Meeting*, and having it concentrate on the user areas of photogrammetry, we have made it distinctive. The rising attendance at Fall Meetings has been most encouraging.

In the area of administration, we have *simplified our budgeting* and accounting procedures. We have also changed our membership records and accounts over from the old addressograph plates to a computer program.

And, certainly we can take pride in publishing and paying for two major manuals and for planning a third.

CONCLUSION

I am sure there are areas where we might have accomplished more, or possibly, have done things better or more rapidly. But, thinking in terms of the founding fathers and the aims and objectives that they laid down for us, I cannot help but believe that they would, in the main, be satisfied with the progress and accomplishments of the last five years.

In closing, (and in terms of our Commander-in-Chief) "*let me make one point very clear*." You remember the story of the movie star who startled an interviewer speechless by saying, "*But let's don't talk about me, let's talk about you.*" But then he said, "*For example, how did you like me in my latest picture?*"

This has not been a report on the activities of the Executive Director. This is a summary of the accomplishments of many people working individually and collectively, and with great dedication. I hope that I have made some contribution to it, for after all, that is my purpose for being here.

In that vein may I take this opportunity to thank so many people—many of whom are here today—for the help and encouragement that they have given me. I particularly wish to acknowledge the outstanding work of Frank Mann, our consultant on budget and finances, and the equally fine work of all members of my staff at Society Headquarters.

I deem it a very great privilege to be associated with this Society. Thank you very much.