

President's Inaugural Address



PAST PRESIDENT WELCH, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, Members of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, Honored Guests; I stand before you greatly honored by the responsibility which you have placed in my hands. More than that, I am humbled by the fact that I am the first woman president of this great society, and I am also the first president of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. If I have any other distinctions it is that I was born the same month and the same year as the Society. Traditionally, the major responsibility of the president of the Society is to provide the leadership that ensures that the programs of the Society continue as necessary and that new programs are developed which will enhance the value of the Society to its members. I intend to provide such leadership.

I am pleased to announce that the Satellite Remote Sensing Committee, proposed by president Welch last year, has been established and Roy has agreed to serve as the Chairman of this committee during its first year. I would also like to continue to improve the various recognition programs and awards that the Society offers to its members. The Society is made up of people and people need recognition. The Society awards are an important program and I plan on improving the recognition that they are given in the journal and at our meetings. As a member of the Joint Task Force on convention management I have been working with our colleagues to develop a series of proposals that we feel enhance the usefulness of conventions to the membership and the profession. Our annual and fall conventions are now big business and a real partnership between the two societies and the convention directorate should be established.

As a person closely associated with the computer industry I am deeply committed to continuing the further automation of our headquarters operation in cooperation with Executive Director Bill French and headquarters staff. As previously reported, the Society has made enormous strides during the past year. This will result in improved service and increased productivity among the headquarters staff. Already numerous reports on membership statistics

and financial data not available before are being generated. I also want to work with Bill on the revision of the staff management plan, a key element in our business plan.

New Programs

Regarding new programs, during the coming year, with your help, I plan to focus on several activities which I feel are of paramount importance to increasing membership in the Society and continuing the growth that my predecessors began.

Committee on Computer Applications

I am planning to establish a committee on computer applications. This would be a Society-wide committee whose charge would include study and analysis of all applications of computers in every area of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. Several areas that have no particular focal point within the society at this time are Geographic Information Systems, the entire area of Image Processing and data analysis, mapping data standards, and the application of microcomputers to the Photogrammetric and Remote Sensing process. I hope that this committee will become so active that it will achieve division status within a short time.

Strengthen the Role of the Divisions in the Society

ASPRS is a technical society devoted to the development of knowledge in the fields of photogrammetry and remote sensing. As such its technical divisions must play a leading role in this effort. However, in the past, the technical divisions have been unable to contribute as much as they might contribute given the opportunity. I have solicited input from all the current division offices and many of our members and past officers who were active in the divisions regarding a series of steps that would provide greater autonomy for the divisions and provide them with a mechanism for playing a leading role in Society activity. With this input I hope to put together a plan that will allow the divisions to increase their effectiveness and make a more meaningful contribution to the entire spectrum of Society activities.

Inter-Society Liaison Committee

I also plan to establish an Inter-Society Liaison committee whose purpose would be to review the existing relationships between ASPRS and all other societies and to exploit opportunities of cooperation with other organizations as they arise, and to develop ways in which ASPRS can interact more closely with its sister societies in the many disciplines represented by our membership.

Involvement of Past Presidents

Although ASPRS has many active Past Presidents, it is my observation that we have not used this tremendous resource effectively. The Past Presidents of ASPRS have spent years of service to the society and the profession. However, once they assume the title of Past President, many of them are not asked to participate further in society affairs. I hope to change this by asking them for advice and counsel, assigning them specific responsibilities as opportunities arise, and my encouraging them to form an active Past President council with the Society.

European Operation

During the past year, I had the unique opportunity of representing ASPRS, along with Past Presidents Welch and McHail, as part of the official U.S. delegation to the International Congress on Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. After talking with many of our overseas members, it became obvious to me that we must develop ways in which we can better serve our members overseas. As a pilot project, I am investigating the possibility of establishing a European operation with an ASPRS representative acting on behalf of the Society to assist our European members, to provide better service to them, and to represent ASPRS at important Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing meetings that are held in Europe. If this program is successful I would hope that similar operations on other continents could be opened as the needs of the membership dictate.

Membership Survey

As Past President Welch mentioned, headquarters surveyed over 2600 members to determine why they did not renew their membership in the Society. I think that a more complete survey of the membership is in order to determine if the members feel that they are getting the proper service, what they would like to see us do, what their needs are, and what their wants are. The information gathered by the membership survey will be used to develop a business plan to help achieve the long range objectives of the Society. I plan to ask the Board of Direction for approval for a survey.

Publications

ASPRS publications are among the finest in the

world and are key to our success as a Society. During the next few months I hope to continue to work to improve Photogrammetric Engineering and Remote Sensing, to implement the procedure developed by Past President Welch with regard to the review and publication of papers in the Journal, and to work with our new Staff Editor Don Hemenway and Editor Jim Case with the goal of making the Journal more readable and appealing to all our members. I am also requesting the publications committee to review the possibility of new manuals and to develop business plans that will allow the Society to publish such manuals without the financial strain imposed by the publication of the Manual of Remote Sensing, 2nd Edition. I also want to explore the concept of joint publications with the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping. I would like to see plans for a joint newsletter developed this year.

Affiliation

This last item leads to the subject of closer affiliation between ASPRS and ACSM. I have never kept it a secret that I feel strongly about closer affiliation between these two societies, as does over 60% of our membership. I was disappointed when consolidation did not happen. As a business person it seems logical to me that the two societies carrying out similar functions in roughly the same areas should work together more closely in every way possible. Following discussions with John Bossler, the ACSM incoming President, joint committees are studying ways in which new joint programs may be proposed and implemented in areas that may be beneficial to both organizations. Examples of joint programs that might be developed more actively are a stronger joint convention program and a joint publications program. It is my hope that a whole series of joint programs may lead to the creation of one society serving the entire profession.

Conclusion

I also want to emphasize that I feel that the Regions of ASPRS can provide tremendous service to the membership at the local level. As a past chairperson of the committee on regions and chapters I recognize that strong local organizations make for a strong national society and provide a level of service to the members that they cannot obtain from the national society. I hope to be able to visit as many regions as possible during the coming year. I also intend to continue the tradition of my predecessors by representing the society at as many meetings of other societies as it appears possible during the coming year.

I wish to thank all of you for giving me this opportunity to serve the Society and the profession and I promise that I will strive to do my best to make the society better for every member, with help from all of you.

—Tamsin Barnes