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Background on the
HOMER I. BERNHARDT DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
Engineering Libraries Division
American Society for Engineering Education

Homer I. Bernhardt was, from 1966 until his untimely death in 1982, head of the Bevier Engineering Library at the University of Pittsburgh. Born in 1936, Homer received both his bachelors degree in Business Administration and MLS from the University of Pittsburgh. When he was elected to Beta Phi Mu in 1964 upon his graduation from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, he had already been Head of the Physics Library at Pitt for 2 years. That same year he became head of the combined Physics and Engineering Libraries. However, between 1964 and 1966 he ventured into industry as head of the East Pittsburgh Division Library of Westinghouse Electric Corporation, returning in September 1966 to head the Bevier Engineering Library at the University of Pittsburgh. His colleagues remember him as being dedicated to the education and training of engineers and as someone who never feared change.

Homer's professional activities reveal some of his interests. He was a member of ALA between 1964 and 1970; a member in 1970 of the National Microfilm Association. In 1964 he joined the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Special Libraries Association serving as Treasurer, Conference Treasurer, Vice President and finally President in 1973-74. His membership in the American Society for Engineering Education began in 1969. As a consequence of his interest in automation, he played a significant role in Information Systems chairing the publications committee, editing the newsletter and serving as secretary of the ISCommittee and on its Executive Board when it achieved Division status. At the time of his death, Homer was Vice President/President Elect of the Division.

Within ELD, Homer was editor of the newsletter, an executive board member, and secretary/treasurer for 1977-78.

Some of you may remember a presentation which Homer made at the ASEE conference at Louisiana State University in 1979. Entitled "Pitfalls of the Pitt Study" it was a critique of a study conducted under the auspices of the National Science Foundation by Professor Allen Kent. Known as the "Kent Study," the findings on serials use were reported in Library Journal and contained, according to Homer, some "errors and faults"--hence the title.

Homer Bernhardt's professional activities contributed to engineering and librarianship at Pitt and at ASEE. His commitment to the field is recognized in ELD's decision to name its Distinguished Service Award in his memory.