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THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF WALTER HÄUSSERMANN TO ROCKET DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

For the year 2011, it is suitable to commemorate the life and work of Dr. Walter Häussermann, a German aerospace engineer, mathematician, and member of the original “Werner von Braun rocket group” who was deceased December 8 2010 at age 96. Dr. Häussermann made many contributions to the development of complex guidance and control methods as well as innovative research of how Hall electric devices effect electric motor efficiency. His excellence in understanding of rocket control caused him to be drafted into the German army in 1939, and he was taken to the rocket development center at Peenemünde, where he later became director of guidance and control. After World War II, Häussermann joined Werner von Braun’s rocket team in the United States, first at Fort Bliss, Texas and later at Huntsville, Alabama, where he became director of guidance and control of the Saturn rockets at Marshall Space Flight Center. In 1954, Häussermann became a United States citizen. When NASA was formed in 1958, he began to research and develop electric computer systems for rocket guidance and control. In 1959, Häussermann was recognized with the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service for his work on the Saturn rockets. In his later years he continued to eagerly support the United States space program. The tragedy of his death prompts an exploration of the profound impact Dr. Häussermann has made on the scientific community through his involvement in the United States’ rocket program, specifically his contribution to guidance and control of missiles and rockets, and how his legacy of rocket control design has impacted modern aeronautics.