

"TAILLESS BIBLIOGRAPHY" REVIEW

This bibliography was first brought to our attention by a correspondent who mentioned a classified advertisement in one of the magazines catering to enthusiasts of homebuilt aircraft. Our request for additional information was met with a prompt reply, and we ordered a copy for our personal library.

A complete and accurate overview of the contents of "Tailless Aircraft" is best left to Mr. Krauss:

"After more than a year's work, I have just released a bibliography of literature concerning subsonic tailless aircraft and related topics. An outgrowth of a personal hobby, it began as an attempt simply to catalog my holdings and to save others some of the effort necessary to find the thousand or more tailless items I had or knew about from several years of enthusiastic nosing around. It has since grown to include nearly 1500 tailless items, 500 items of related interest, and other information of an annotative nature. The entire document contains over 120 pages. It is, to my knowledge, unique and the largest work of its kind ever published.

"My main intent in publishing this work has been to provide a bibliography substantial in its treatment of historical and technical literature concerning tailless development and technique, and well-rounded with respect to other topics of tailless interest. While such a document can be neither comprehensive nor exhaustive, this is an extensive work, encompassing literature ranging from magazine articles through patents and technical reports, and dating from the late nineteenth century to the present. Historians and those interested in design and construction of tailless aircraft should find its listings useful.

"In addition to chronological listings of material on tailless aircraft and related topics, the bibliography includes other helpful information. A preface furnishes a

brief perspective on tailless development and its chief proponents. Introductory material includes discussion of tailless guidelines, content and format of the bibliography, information on acquisition of tailless aircraft information, and suggestions for reasonable core material from the tailless literature. Listed items are commonly accompanied by notations concerning topic, content, length, presentational features, and sometimes other cross-referential material or sources. Brief lists of previous bibliographies and sources of rare materials are also included. Finally, an appendix lists dates for tailless aircraft by more than 100 selected designers.

"The book is spiral bound (helically) in durable patchco grained material, so that it can be opened back on itself without folding or otherwise damaging its pages. It can also be dragged through library stacks - or wherever - with a minimum of wear."

The preface remains our favorite part of the book. It is here, in the opening pages, that we read about a few of the notable designers and their approaches to the unique problems of tailless aircraft. Mr. Krauss, however, goes further. He explains the underlying drives which relentlessly force those individuals to persist, sometimes in the face of strong personal and monetary adversity. We, not too surprisingly, see inklings of these drives in ourselves, and so the preface lends support to some of our own goals, while at the same time reminding us of the existence of fallacies.

As genuine tailless and flying wing fanatics, we have devoured this book several times over. After more than a year it still serves as an efficient source of information, and it has in fact stimulated us to catalog our own collection of materials dealing with tailless aircraft.

The first edition of "Tailless Aircraft - An Extensive Bibliography for Subsonic Types" was printed in December of 1989. Serge adds to the tailless bibliography as he finds materials not previously listed and updates it with recent citations. A copy of the current version is available directly from Mr. Krauss.