

1994 Eagles –

Brig Gen Robert L. “Bob” Cardenas, USAF (ret.)

Bob Cardenas began his military career as a Private in the Army Coast Artillery. He then became a pilot as a Cadet in the Army Air Corps. He was commissioned in July 1941 and flew B-24 bombers in World War II. He was shot down over Germany, but escaped into Switzerland and then into France.

After returning home to the United States, he graduated from the Flight Performance School in 1945. In 1947, Cardenas was a key member of the X-1 supersonic test project, as the Operations Officer and pilot of the B-29 that launched the X-1 into supersonic flight for the first time. In 1948, he was assigned as Officer in Charge of Flight Test Division projects at Muroc Army Airfield. Replacing Captain Glen Edwards, he was the chief Air Force test pilot of the YB-49 Flying Wing program and conducted performance and stability testing. In 1949, Cardenas flew the YB-49 from Muroc to Andrews AFB setting a transcontinental record of four hours, 20 minutes covering 2,258 miles at a speed of 511.2 mph.

During the Korean War, Cardenas was at Wright Field and Edwards AFB testing new jet fighters and bombers. He was then Commander of the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing on Okinawa during the Gulf of Tonkin crisis and flew the F-105 over Southeast Asia. He returned stateside to command the 835th Air Division at McConnell AFB, Kansas, training F-105 crews for combat. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998.



William H. “Bill” Dana

Bill Dana graduated from the U. S. Military Academy at West Point in 1952 and served four years as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force. He joined NASA after earning a Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering from USC in 1958.

As a research pilot, Dana was involved in some of the most significant aeronautical programs carried out at NASA's Dryden Flight Test Research Center at Edwards AFB. He was a project pilot on the rocket powered Hypersonic X-15 and flew it 16 times, reaching a top speed of 3,897 miles per hour, with a peak altitude of 310,000 feet (nearly 59 miles). He was the final pilot for the program that had experienced 199 flights over 10 years.

Dana then began work as a project pilot on the Manned Lifting Body flight test program. Dana flew the M2-F1, M2-F3, HL-10 and the X-24B wingless crafts for 31 flights in all. These tests programs developed critical information that helped shape the nation's Space Shuttle fleet that is in operation today.

During his tenure at NASA, Dana has been the project pilot on the F-15 HIDEDEC program and the Highly Maneuverable Aircraft research program. He was co-project pilot on the Convair 990 used to test Space Shuttle landing gear assemblies and the F-18 High Angle of Attack research program. He flew the triple sonic YF-12 research aircraft and the Advanced Fighter Technology (AFTI) F-16.

Dana retired as the Chief Engineer at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards AFB in May, 1998. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994 and 1999. Dana passed away in May, 2014.



Col C. Gordon Fullerton, USAF (Ret.)

Gordon Fullerton entered the Air Force in 1958 after earning his bachelors and masters of Science degrees from the California Institute of Science and working as a mechanical design engineer for Hughes Aircraft Company.

After flight school, he was trained as an F- 86 interceptor pilot, and later piloted B-47 bombers.

Following his graduation from the Aerospace Research Test Pilot School in Class 64B, Fullerton was assigned as a test pilot with the Bomber Operations Division at Wright- Patterson AFB. In 1966, Fullerton was selected as a flight crewmember for the Air Force Manned Orbiting Laboratory, and served until that program's completion in 1969.

After assignment to the NASA Johnson Space Center as an astronaut, Fullerton served on support crews for the Apollo 14, 15, 16 and 17 moon missions. In 1977, he was assigned to one of the two two-member crews, which piloted the Space Shuttle prototype Enterprise during the approach and landing test phase. He was the pilot on the eight-day STS-3 orbital test flight in 1982, and was commander of the STS-51F Spacelab 2 mission in 1985. In July 1988, Fullerton completed a 30-year Air Force career, retiring as a colonel.

Having logged more than 380 hours in space flight, Fullerton joined NASA, where he remains active as a research pilot on numerous projects at Dryden. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994. Colonel Fullerton passed away Aug. 21, 2013.



Lt Col Fitzhugh L. "Fitz" Fulton, Jr., USAF (Ret.)

Fitz Fulton earned his wings in 1944 and trained in B- 24 and B-29 bombers. He flew C-54 transports in support of the Bikini atomic bomb tests and continued flying the C-54 during the Berlin Airlift, with 225 trips to Berlin. He flew 55 combat missions over North Korea in the B-26. Fulton graduated from the USAF Test Pilot School in 1952, and was selected as its first "Distinguished Alumnus."

Fulton has more than 16,500 hours in over 235 different aircraft types. He has worked on most of the test programs for bombers and transports - and some fighters - developed between 1950 and 1990.

After 23 years of military service, Fulton retired as Chief of Bomber-Transport Operations at Edwards AFB and joined NASA. First with the Air Force and later with NASA, Fulton piloted B-29, B-50 and B-52 "mother planes" on missions to air drop such experimental craft as the X-1, X-1A, X-1B, X-2, M-2, HL-10, X-24A, X-24B and the D-558. Working with the X-15 program from start to finish, Fulton launched the rocket plane 94 times, a record that remains unsurpassed.

Fulton flew the first NASA research flights of the YF-12 and flew the XB-70 for the Air Force and NASA. He was the pilot on the initial flights of the 747 carrying the Space Shuttle; made all of the 747 Shuttle launches, and was NASA Dryden's chief pilot when he retired in 1986. He then joined Scaled Composites as flight operations director and flew first flights on two new turbine powered aircraft types. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994 and 1999.



Robert O. "Bob" Rahn

Bob Rahn was in the first American fighter group in England in 1942. After 104 Spitfire missions in World War II, he was assigned to the special Weapons Division and Fighter Flight Test at Wright Field. He graduated from the USAF Test Pilot School's second class, in 1945.

He was a pilot for 58 years and flew more than 10,000 hours in 86 different aircraft. As a test pilot for Douglas, he flew first flights of 18 planes between 1946 and 1956. They included the Skyraider series (four models and six versions), the F3D-1 and F3D-2, the F4D-1, XA4D and the F5D Skylancer, which he flew supersonic on its first flight. He flew structural demonstrations on nine Skyraiders and the F3D-1 and conducted spin tests on all of these airplanes. Other Douglas airplanes tested were the SBD-6, A3D, C-54, C-124, DC-6 and the Super DC-3.

Tests of the XF4D earned Rahn the World Speed Record for the 100 km closed course. This was the first Naval carrier plane to hold such a record. Flying the Skyray, he was the first to exceed Mach 1 and perform spin tests in a delta wing aircraft. The XF4D and the F-100 won the Collier Trophy as the first military supersonic airplanes in level flight.

With Rockwell, Rahn flew simulator evaluations and ground tested the Apollo Command Modules and was assigned to the B-1 and the Space Shuttle. He is the only ex-Army Air Corps Pilot inducted into the Navy Test Pilot Hall of Honor, the only U.S. civilian to hold a world speed record in a plane owned by the military and in 1944, was one of the first to fly a U.S. jet airplane. He was a Fellow in the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and an Honoree of the Lancaster Aerospace Walk of Honor. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994. Rahn passed away in 1998.



Max R. Stanley

Max Stanley's first flying job was with Lockheed as a co-pilot ferrying Hudson Bombers from Burbank to the East Coast where they were surface-shipped to England. He was later loaned to Pan American and spent two years ferrying twin-engine aircraft from Miami to the British in Africa, Egypt and India. When Pan Am ended its ferrying operation, Max worked as a captain for United Airlines flying cargo/passenger aircraft from San Francisco to Australia.

In 1943, Stanley began work at Northrop as an experimental test pilot. He flew the first flights of all models of the P-61 Black Widow except the initial XP-61, and first flights of Northrop's F-15, Tri-motor Pioneer and Tri-motor C-125. He also participated in F-89 and T-38 flight test programs. His most significant assignment was with the Northrop Flying Wings. After many flights in the N-9M, one-third scale model of the flying wing bombers then under construction, he was selected Chief Test Pilot for the first flight of the XB-35 Flying Wing and the Contractor Phase I test program. The XB-35 was converted to the YB-49 by replacing the four piston engines with eight jet engines. He was chosen as Chief Pilot for the YB-49 program, including the first flight in 1947.

As the flying wing program wound down, Stanley was assigned to the SM-62 Snark missile program as Chief Pilot of the many aircraft used in its development and testing. After a 28-year career at Northrop, Stanley is known as the "Dean of Northrop Test Pilots". He was a Fellow in the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and an Honoree of the Lancaster Aerospace Walk of Honor. He was honored as an Eagle in 1994, 1996 and 1998. Stanley passed away in 1999.



Col John Paul Stapp, M.D., Ph.D.

Brig Gen Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, USAF (Ret.)