



Carl Richard Huss - *Business, Industry and Professions*

His toys are rather like bookends to the life of Wheeling Hall of Fame honoree Carl Richard Huss.

As a boy in South Wheeling, he always seemed to be building or playing with model airplanes. At his funeral, a friend eulogized that Huss had few peers when it came to teaching, helping and “demonstrating to kids of all ages” all there was to know about airplanes. “He spent many happy hours making beautiful wooden airplane models for Toys for Tots; kids all over Houston who never knew Carl have the wonderful model planes he built for them,” the friend said.

In between his tinkering with toy airplanes, Huss had a distinguished 44-year career as an aeronautical engineer. For 21 of those years, he was a member of the NASA Space Task Force Group, which became known as the Manned Space Craft Center when it was transferred from Langley Field, Va., to Houston, Texas, in 1962.

Huss was the original retro-fire officer in the Mercury program, making him responsible for all abort and retro-fire planning. It was his calculations that made possible the pinpoint landings of Gordon Cooper, John Glenn and other early astronauts.

In the 20 years that followed his Mercury assignments, Huss continued his work in the NASA Mission Planning and Analysis Division for the successful accomplishment of the Apollo Lunar Landing Missions, Skylab (Space Lab), Apollo-Soyuz and the Space Shuttle program. He retired from the Johnson Space Center as chief of the institutional data systems division in 1982. His career then took him to the private aerospace industry for over a decade, first with McDonnell Douglas Corp. Space Division where he worked on projects like the early planning for the Space Station until 1990 and then with a smaller company, G.B. Tech, until 1993.

After retiring, he served as a docent at the Lone Star Museum in Galveston, volunteered in downtown Houston in the theater district, was a member of the Confederate Air Force and finance officer of its Gulf Coast Wing and was chairman of the executive committee of the Wings Over

Houston air show.

Honors that came his way included being named a Distinguished West Virginian in 1982, receiving the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Outstanding Leadership Medal and being awarded the DeMolay Legion of Honor, the NASA Presidential Medal of Freedom and the International Federation of Aeronautics Paul Fissander Diploma.

Huss was born in Wheeling on July 11, 1925; resided 19 years in Wheeling; attended Warwood and Ritchie elementary schools before attending and graduating from Wheeling High School in 1943; completed an accelerated pre-engineering course at Bethany College; and then went to Parks Air College in East St. Louis, Ill., for three terms before serving from 1944-46 in the Army Air Corps. He remained in the Air Force Reserve until 1953. Huss earned his bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering from West Virginia University in 1949 and briefly attended graduate school at the University of Virginia.

His first wife, Margaret “Marge” Kuskey, originally of Roney's Point, preceded him in death. A resident of Clear Lake City, Texas, when he died at age 71 on Aug. 8, 1996, in Nashville, Tenn., his survivors included his widow, Shirley, and one son.

He was past president, Association of Computer Machinery; past section chairman, American Institute of Aeronautics & Astronauts; U.S. delegate, International Astronautics Committee of the Federation Aeronautic International; treasurer, Houston Chapter of the NASA Alumni League; and member, National Aeronautics Association, National Aero Club of the United States, American Aviation Historical Society, Air Force Association and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees.