



VALLEY OF THE GIANTS



Elwyn L. Treat

Elwyn L. Treat spent the major part of his career as a civilian in what became known as the Deputy for Systems Management, Aeronautical Systems Division, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The Deputy for Systems is the management focal point for acquisition of the aircraft and missiles assigned to it.

Early in 1941, Mr. Treat was a project engineer on the B-25 and B-26 production programs. He became civilian chief of the B-17 and B-32 programs. The pressure during the war for ever-increasing numbers of combat aircraft, coupled with the large number of configuration changes generated from combat experience, was unbelievable. Special projects such as the Dolittle raid on Japan in 1942 required around-the-clock expediting to get the B-25s modified. As combat reports came in detailing losses of aircraft and crews, the mental pressure was great. Mr. Treat lost two male cousins, three close high

school friends, and three military co-workers, intensifying his desire to protect flying crews and end the war.

After the war, Mr. Treat was civilian chief of the production, Bombardment Aircraft Branch for six years. This organization was responsible for aircraft procurement programs amounting to over 10 billion dollars, including triple source procurement of the B-47 and dual source of B-52. Other programs included the B-36, B-45, B-50, B-57, and B-58. The Cold War, Korea, and Vietnam created major demands similar to WWII.

Mr. Treat rotated from line to staff organizations three times during his career. This permitted him to use his experience and do a better job in both types of work. He constantly strove to improve the organization efficiency and product quality. Projects that he initiated were: (1) the 1st AF manufacturing methods programs; (2) reduction in the number of government-furnished equipment items supplied on AF airplane contracts by 20%; (3) appointment of one man to monitor all activity on subsystems used on more than one airplane; and (4) extensive studies and recommendations for aircraft development and production scheduling techniques which later became known and referred to as the "Cook-Craigie concept", the overlapping development and production concept and the concurrence concept.

All of the above ideas were put into effect and used extensively before the words "reinventing government" became popular. Boeing used the Cook-Craigie concept on every commercial program after the 707.

As weapon systems became more complicated, demands for improved reliability, quality, maintainability, etc., increased. Also, new financial, contractual and environmental controls were levied. This complicated the management process due to the additional manpower required to administer these areas and tended to dilute the basic functions of project administration. Mr. Treat, during the last few years of his career, worked diligently to simplify and improve these areas.

Mr. Treat attended and taught many classes at WP-AFB. He also attended the American

Management Association four-week course in New York City.

He was born in Jasper, Michigan, on January 17, 1916, and grew up in Flint, Michigan. Many summers were spent on farms in Adrian, Michigan, where his parents, Lester Treat and Edith Gove were born. It was a good place to learn basic mechanics. He delivered newspapers for 11 years and worked many part-time jobs including mowing lawns, baby-sitting, furniture repair, office renovation, real estate photography and physics lab assistant. He worked full time for two years as machinist at AC Spark Plug, and driver at Buick Motor Co. to finance his college education.

Being a member of the 1st Air Scout troop was his pride and joy. Projects included working on a Liberty engine, and rebuilding the wing and flying a primary glider.

He attended Flint Jr. College for two years and graduated from the University of Michigan in 1939 with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering.

He has been active in Christ United Methodist Church and South Community Family YMCA building programs. He designed and built his first home and designed his present home.

In 1941, he married Norene Jadwin, his college sweetheart, who later taught in the Kettering schools for 20 years before her death in 1977. They had three children—two sons and one daughter. In 1979, Elwyn married Carol Howard, who had lost her husband. She had two daughters and one son. The combined family includes 13 grandchildren.

Mr. Treat's life in retirement today is centered around his extended family, friends and the community. Christ United Methodist Church, South Community YMCA, and the Dayton Engineer's Club provide the stimulus to engage in work such as the Wright B Flyer, the Club's Barn Gang projects, and other endeavors.

Elwyn Treat was the Engineers Club's 1995 recipient of the Deeds/Kettering Award at its Annual Meeting last month, and he is most deserving to have his name listed with the others in our honored roll of the VALLEY of the GIANTS!