

CHRISTOPHER C. KRAFT, JR.



Dr. Kraft was the Director of the NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, in Houston, Texas, from January 1972 to August 1982. Since his retirement from Federal Service in August of 1982, Dr. Kraft serves as an aerospace consultant to Rockwell International, IBM, and a number of other companies.

Dr. Kraft was born on February 28, 1924, in Phoebus, Virginia, and received his BS degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, in December 1944.

In January 1945, Dr. Kraft joined the Langley Aeronautical Laboratory of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). His entire professional career was in Government service. During his career with NACA he made significant contributions in the field of aeronautical flight research.

In October 1958, Dr. Kraft was selected as one of the original members of the Space Task Group, the organization established to manage Project Mercury. In the early phases of Project Mercury, he was prime contributor to the development of many of the basic mission and flight control techniques used in manned space flight. He personally served as Flight Director for all the Mercury missions and many of the Gemini missions. During the latter phase of Project Mercury he directed the design and implementation of the Mission Control Center in Houston, the control center from which all of NASA's manned space programs have been conducted.

Dr. Kraft is a Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering; corresponding member of the International Academy of Astronautics of the International Astronautical Federation, and an honorary member of the Aerospace Medical Association and a fellow in the American Astronautical Society.

Dr. Kraft has served two terms as a Director-at-Large of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, and two 4-year terms as a member of the Board of Visitors at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. He is presently on the board of

Directors of the Park Plaza Hospital, and served on the Board of Directors of Tech Sym Corporation, Panhandle Eastern Corporation; LifeCell Corporation, and the Manned Space Flight Education Foundation.

Many honors and awards have come to Dr. Kraft from aeronautical research societies and universities. Among these are:

Distinguished Alumnus Citation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University's highest award, 1965.

"Honorary Degree of Doctor of Engineering from the Indiana Institute of Technology, 1966.

Honorary Degree of Doctor of Engineering from the St. Louis University, 1967.

Invited to deliver the von Karman Lectureship in Astronautics for 1979, and was awarded a medal and citation at that time.

Honorary Degree of Doctor of Business Administration from Villanova University, 1979.

He has also received the following special honors:

One of the 100 Outstanding Young Leaders in the Nation by Editors of Life Magazine, 1962.

Arthur S. Fleming Award as one of the ten outstanding young men in government career service in 1963 by the Downtown Jaycees of Washington, D.C.

NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal from the President of the United States, 1963.

"Virginian of the Year" award by the Virginia Press Association, 1967.

Spirit of St. Louis Medal by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 1966.

NASA Distinguished Service Medal in January 1969, and also in October 1969, following the first flight to orbit the Moon and following the first lunar landing (after Apollo 8 and Apollo 11) and in 1981 for the design and development of the STS and as a special award in 1982 - the distinguished service medal of the NACA + NASA.

Space Flight Award, The Astronautics Engineer Award, 1982, 1996 John F. Kennedy Astronautics Award, American Astronautical Society, 1970 Louis W. Hill Space Transportation Award for 1970, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Theodore Roosevelt Award, National Collegiate Athletic Association, 1971.

American Society of Mechanical Engineers ASME Medal, 1973.

National Order of the Legion of Honor, Rank of Chevalier, French Republic, 1976.

National Civil Service League, Career Service Award, 1976.

W. Randolph Lovelace II Award, American Astronautical Society, 1977.

Goddard Memorial Trophy, National Space Club, 1979.

Roger W. Jones Award, American University, 1979.

Dr. Kraft is married to the former Elizabeth Anne Turnbull of Hampton, Virginia. They have two children: a son, Gordon, who resides in San Francisco, California, and a daughter, Kristi-Anne of Houston, Texas. Dr. and Mrs. Kraft reside in Clear Lake in Houston, Texas.

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