

# Lt. Gen. Robert R. Williams



Inducted October 5, 1999

Member of test group for Field Artillery  
Organic Aviation, 1942-1943

First president of the Continental Army  
Command Aviation Board, Number 6 (re-  
designated to U.S. Army Aviation Board)  
Fort Rucker, Alabama, 1955-1958

Commanding General  
U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Control  
Group  
Fort Benning, Georgia, 1963-1964

Retired Lt. Gen. Robert R. Williams is a dedicated aviation testing pioneer with a distinguished career of serving his country and others which spans five decades.

He entered the test arena in 1942 by serving as a member of the Test Group for Field Artillery Organic Aviation. His outstanding technical skills were instrumental in establishing a solid foundation for the early integration of aviation and artillery operations.

In the ensuing years, Williams pushed the envelope in pursuit of excellence by establishing the U.S. Army Aviation Board at Fort Rucker, Alabama, in 1955 and serving as its first President until 1958. This board was the nucleus from which U.S. Army independent operational aviation testing was derived. While serving as the commander of the Army Test and Evaluation Control Group at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1963-64, he was responsible for testing the Army's 11th Air Assault Division.

That air mobility concept developed and tested at Fort Benning went on to change the face of war in Vietnam and is still the operational base for today's Army aviation forces.

Overall, his leadership and testing expertise resulted in the successful completion of multiple aviation-related tests involving U.S. and foreign aircraft as well as items of ground

support and aviation life support equipment. He excelled in every assignment but still pushed himself for more.

As a tester, he conducted the first aerial refuel of a helicopter. This was accomplished by utilizing an H-21 flying from Marimar Naval Air Station in California to the helicopter pad at the pentagon and refueling en route utilizing an Otter.

The National Aeronautics Association came closest to defining his contributions when they named him the "Elder Statesman of Aviation" in 1994. His many accomplishments, his assertive foresight, and his effluent service are major contributors of today's Army Aviation branch and will endure into the twenty-first century.