



# Biography

## Gary L. Aldrich, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

Gary Aldrich, a 22-year Air Force officer and aviator, is teaching future test pilots in his role as a contract Flight Test Instructor at the United States Air Force Test Pilot School located at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

After graduation from Syracuse University in 1973 with a degree in Aerospace Engineering and a commission from AF Reserve Officer Training Corps, Gary reported for duty to Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri where he was a Combat Crew Commander in the Minuteman strategic missile system. While stationed at Whiteman, Gary earned a Masters Degree in Aviation Management at Central Missouri State University. In 1977, he transferred to Los Angeles Air Force Base to serve as a test engineer and program manager for a sensitive military space program.

In 1982, Gary was selected to attend the USAF Test Pilot School, graduating with class 82A in December of that year. Following graduation, he worked as a Flying Qualities Flight Test Engineer and flight test manager at Edwards AFB, testing the F-16XL, A-10, and T-46A before returning to the Test Pilot School (TPS) as an instructor. At TPS he was qualified in the T-38, A-37, F-4, UV-18, U-6, and KC-135 aircraft as well as serving as the chief flight instructor for the TPS soaring program.

Following completion of Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama in 1986; then Major Aldrich transferred to Ramstein Air Base, Germany where he managed the deployment of numerous intelligence systems. Returning to Edwards AFB as a Lieutenant Colonel, Gary assumed the role of Director of Technical Support for the Test Pilot School as well as resuming his platform and airborne instructor role; this time in F-16, F-15, C-23, C-141, and T-38 aircraft.

Gary earned his private pilot certificate in 1970 while in college and continued to advance to Commercial privileges with ratings in single- and multi-engine aircraft and gliders. He also holds a "Gold Seal" flight instructor certificate with the same ratings. Between his civil and military flying, Gary has amassed more than 5,000 hours of flying time in well over 40 types of military and civilian, domestic and foreign aircraft. He has flown such diverse aircraft as the P-51 Mustang, the Goodyear Blimp, and the Soviet MiG-25 Foxbat.

As President of Muroc Chapter 1000 of the Experimental Aircraft Association, Gary leads a spirited group of flight test professionals and sport aviation aficionados. He was in the initial cadre of the EAA Flight Advisor program and is an enthusiastic supporter of the Young Eagles program, having flown nearly 100 young people in their first flight experience in his Cessna C-180K Skywagon.

In 2006 Gary was honored by the international Society of Flight Test Engineers with their "Kelly" Johnson Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Flight Test Engineering. His name was engraved on the permanent trophy housed at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC alongside such aviation notables as Burt Rutan and Clarence "Kelly" Johnson.

Gary is married to his college sweetheart, Anne, and they have two grown daughters, Rachel and Debra.

