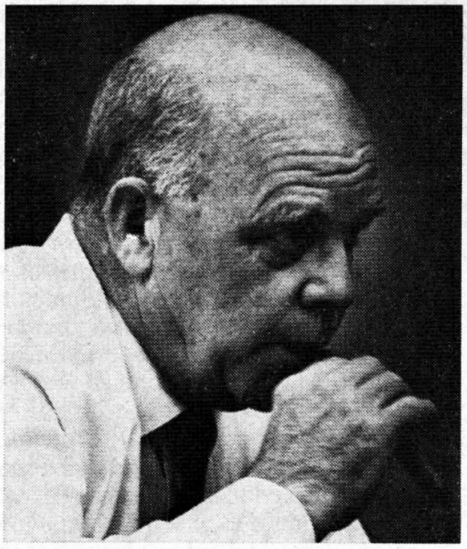
OSTIV Plaque 1972 with Klemperer Award



The President of OSTIV, Mr. L. A. de Lange, presented at the Opening Ceremony of the XIIIth OSTIV Congress in Vršac, Yugoslavia, on July 13, 1972 the OSTIV Plaque with Klemperer Award to Mr. Paul F. Bikle, in appreciation of his noteworthy technical contribution to soaring flight.

Paul F. Bikle: A Life Consecrated to Aeronautics

Paul F. Bikle retired in May 1971 as Director of the NASA Flight Research Center, Edwards, California, culminating a 20 year civilian career as an aeronautical engineer. Prior to joining NASA in this position in 1959, he had been Technical Director of the US Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California. At NASA, Mr. Bikle was responsible for the flight operations of numerous major aeronautical research programs including the highly successful rocket powered X-15, the supersonic XB-70, the Lunar Landing Research Vehicle and the wingless lifting bodies, forerunners of the Space Shuttle. For his efforts in the direction of the X-15 research program, he was awarded NASA's Outstanding Leadership medal in 1962.

Born on 5 June 1916 in Wilkensburg, Pennsylvania, Mr. Bikle was graduated from the University of Detroit in 1939 with a degree in aeronautical engineering. During his undergraduate days, he participated in the construction of a sailplane and earned his pilot's license. This was the beginning of his life-long interest in flying which includes both airplanes and sailplanes. After graduation he was employed in the engineering department of the Taylorcraft Aviation Corp. at Alliance, Ohio, where he specialized in stress analysis and design. While with Taylorcraft he was responsible for obtaining Civil Aeronautics Administration's approval on modifications which permitted an increase in gross weight and horsepower for the standard Taylorcraft airplane.

Mr. Bikle's career with the Air Force began in 1940 when he was appointed an aeronautical engineer at Wright Field, Ohio. In 1944 he was named Chief of the Aerodynamics Branch of the Flight Test Division there. While working closely with other Government agencies in establishing, the first flying qualities specifications for aircraft, he wrote AAF Technical Report 5069, «Flight Test Methods», which was used as a standard manual for conducting flight tests for more than five years. During the war years he was involved in more than 30 test projects, including military gliders, and flew over 1200 hours as an engineering observer. Projects with which Mr. Bikle has been associated include the development of an all-altitude speed course, adaptation of radar tracking to flight test work, and a study of long range operations and effect of high humidity on available engine power for take-off on the B-29 airplane.

In 1947, after the first glide flight of the X-1, Mr. Bikle participated in the early planning for powered flights which resulted in the first flights by man at speeds greater than the speed of sound.

Returning to aircraft evaluation in 1947, he was appointed Chief of the Performance Engineering Branch and directed tests of the XB-43, the first jet bomber; the XC-99; and the F-86A. With the transfer of this part of the flight test mission to the newly formed Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards, he advanced to Assistant Chief of the Flight Test Engineering Laboratory in 1951.

The author of more than 40 technical publications, Mr. Bikle also is an avid soaring enthusiast. On February 25, 1961 he established two world soaring records during a flight near Lancaster, California. He achieved an altitude of 46 269 feet and a total-altitude-gained mark of 42 305 feet. Both marks have been certified by the Soaring Society of America, National Aeronautical Association and the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI).

A veteran of 23 years of soaring, he won the Wright Memorial Soaring Championship in 1949. He was a member of the US Soaring team, taking part in the World Gliding Championships in Poland (1958), Germany (1960) and Yugoslavia (1972). He was selected for the FAI's 1963 Lilienthal medal, and was awarded in 1970 the OSTIV Diploma for his paper «Sailplane Performance Measured in Flight», read during the OSTIV Congress in Alpine, Texas, USA.
Mr. Bikle also holds the FAI Gold Badge with three diamonds and the Simons Wave Badge with three «lennies». He is a Fellow in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and was elected to «Who's Who in America» in 1966. Mr. Bikle holds The Soaring Society of America Gold Medallion for his service as President (2 terms), as a member of the Board of Directors for 15 years and as Chairman of the Competition Rules Committee.

He and his wife, Anne, reside in Lancaster, California. The couple have four children, Hugh, John, Allan and Patricia.