

Project Pioneer: Arthur "John" Cable



Arthur "John" Cable was inducted as an AEDC Fellow in 1992, receiving the honor for his significant, outstanding technical and leadership contributions in development of world-class ballistic test facilities at AEDC. With 43 years of noteworthy achievements, Mr. Cable was widely recognized as one of the worlds leading authorities in aeroballistic range design and development.

A native of Salisbury, England, Mr. Cable received his bachelor's and master's degrees in aeronautical engineering from the University of Bristol in England. Before beginning a 30-year career at AEDC, Mr. Cable worked at the Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment in the United Kingdom before immigrating to the U.S.

Mr. Cable's technical and leadership contributions in the development and upgrade of AEDC's ballistic ranges played a significant role in enhancing AEDC's test capabilities. He joined AEDC in December of 1963, serving as a supervisor of range operations launch systems and in 1970 he was appointed supervisor of range operations for Sverdrup Technologies, Inc.

In 1976, Mr. Cable earned a master's degree in engineering administration from the University of Tennessee Space Institute and two years later he became a state-registered engineer. During his career, he authored or co-authored more than 50 published papers, journal articles and AEDC technical reports.

Instrumental in organizing the world-renowned Aeroballistics Range Association (ARA), Mr. Cable served as chairman of the association from 1977 to 1979. By 1992, the organization had grown from three U.S. charter members in 1961 to 63 organizations from 20 countries. In 1985, ARA awarded Mr. Cable its initial Ballistic Award for technical achievements and advancement of ballistic range technologies worldwide.

Through Mr. Cable's technical leadership, techniques have been developed to allow separate measurements of quantities of material ablated by chemical effects and by mechanical erosion from clear air or ice crystal/cloud/dust-particle environments. These data sets have provided the basis for major advancements in development and validation of today's reentry vehicle ablation and erosion codes.

Mr. Cable's leadership and technical expertise also led to a major breakthrough for the range/track system, the measurement of boundary layer transition distances on the nosetips of reentry materials that were then tested in actual reentry conditions. Another success for Mr. Cable was validation of transpiration cooled nosetip designs, including repeat flights and recoveries

From 1980 to 1990, Mr. Cable was a range operations supervisor and in 1989 he began leading a team in a \$13.3 million upgrade of the Range G launcher, track and recovery systems, designed to further advance AEDC in "soft" impact launch and wake physics capabilities.

Mr. Cable was actively involved in the community and worked with the Boy Scouts for 15 years. In 1979, Cable and his wife, Julie Maxfield Cable, received the Lamb Award by the Department of National Youth Agency Relationships of the Lutheran Council in the U.S. Cable and his wife were also instrumental in the formation of the Tullahoma branch of Habitat for Humanity in 1988, for which he acted as treasurer until 1993.

Mr. Cable passed away in November 2001.