Colonel Edward N. Hall
Inducted 1999

Edward N. Hall was born in New York City on 4 August 1914. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering from College of the City of New York in 1935 and a professional degree in chemical engineering in 1936. In 1948, he earned a Master of Science in aeronautical engineering (propulsion option) from California Institute of Technology.

Hall entered the Air Corps on 26 September 1939. During World War II he served in England in engineering assignments associated with aircraft repair. His introduction to missiles came near war's end when he was assigned to acquire intelligence on Germany's wartime propulsion work. He analyzed German rocket equipment, insofar as parts recovered from exploded V-2 specimens or retrieved through spy networks allowed. At war's end, he led an Air Force Propulsion Group through German rocket plant--especially the underground assembly facilities at Work Camp Dora--and, subsequently, assisted in the division of captured missile equipment between the U.S. and England.

After a second European tour, which covered further propulsion developments, Hall became Assistant Chief, Non-Rotating Engine Branch, Power Plant Laboratory, Wright-Patterson AFB, where he participated in the development of solid and liquid rocket power plants. These included work on the propulsion systems for the Bomarc, Navaho, Snark, Rascal, and Falcon. In 1951, he was one of four people at Wright Air Development Center (WADC) who were instrumental in the initiation of Project MX-1593, the Atlas program. During this period, Hall authored and delivered a paper to the American Rocket Society on the subject of solid propulsion for long-range rockets. Between November 1953 and February 1954, he served as the WADC representative at meetings of the Air Force Strategic Missiles Evaluation Committee--popularly dubbed the Teapot Committee.

On 3 August 1954, Hall joined Western Development Division as Chief, Propulsion Development, where he was responsible for the programs leading to development of engines for the Atlas, Titan, and Thor missiles. In summer 1957, he became director of the Weapon System 315A (Thor) development program and, subsequently, oversaw installation of Thor missiles in England. He next took advantage of a Navy request for DoD approval of a solid-propellant ballistic missile and obtained permission for the Air Force to undertake general work on such a capability. Led by Col Charles Terhune, his immediate superior, Hall briefed Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff Gen Curtis LeMay on the potential of solid-propellant ICBMs. The briefing so impressed LeMay that he arranged for Hall to brief the Secretary of Defense, who supported acceleration of the Air Force effort with a $50 million infusion of funds. Hall directed the Weapon System 133A (Minuteman) program until the eve of the missile's first complete flight test.

Following his success with the Minuteman program, Col Hall was selected to take the lead in designing, developing, producing, and deploying a nuclear-tipped intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) for NATO. Hall served as founding director and chief engineer for a group of French, German, Italian, and English engineers who set up the largest solid-rocket engine plant in Europe at St. Medard, France. Their labor resulted in the only European nuclear IRBM—the French Diamant. After retiring from the Air Force on 27 October 1959, Hall joined United Aircraft Corporation, where over the course of 14 years his efforts included the development of the means to operate economically--i.e., profitably--in space.
Colonel Hall died in January 2006.