Army Aviation Hall of Fame 1989 Induction

In 1943 John Geary was already a Master Sergeant in the Army when appointed to attend the Military Academy at West Point. After graduation he took pilot training at San Marcos, Tex., and then graduated from the Air Force Test Pilot School at Edwards AFB, Calif, where he achieved the highest academic grade in his class as one of a very few U.S. Army pilots to undergo that training.

After earning his M.S. Degree in Aeronautical Engineering at the University of Michigan in '56, Geary eventually emerged as one of the Army's most qualified and experienced engineering test pilots, with flight time in 35 different varieties of fixed wing aircraft (many of them experimental) and 20 types of helicopters.

A Master Army Aviator with more than 4,000 hours (including 300 logged in combat in Korea and Vietnam), he pioneered the concept of "lead the fleet" testing while assigned to the U.S. Army's Transportation Test and Support Activity at Ft. Rucker. Under his direction new model helicopters were flown under a demanding, accelerated schedule to discover potential problems in maintenance and logistic support requirements as early as possible.

On one occasion four helicopters of the same type were flown 1,000 hours each in an elapsed time of 82 days, an astonishing accomplishment that under normal circumstances would take six months to achieve the same results.

A CH-47 Chinook Project Manager at one point, his last post before retirement was as Director of Research, Development and Engineering at the U.S. Army Aviation Systems Command in St. Louis.

Above all, John Geary was a soldier, giving to the Army and his country 34 years of selfless, dedicated, highly effective service.