

OBITUARIES

THE GLOBE AND MAIL • FRIDAY, JULY 21, 2000

OWEN MAYNARD

Canadian engineer helped put a man on the moon

After Avro Arrow was scrapped he became a top manager in the Apollo program

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Special to The Globe and Mail

Owen Eugene Maynard, who died on Saturday at 75 in Waterloo, Ont., was a Canadian aeronautical engineer who became one of the top managers in the Apollo moon-landing program.

He went to the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1959 along with another 30 engineers from Avro Canada who had lost their jobs when the Canadian government cancelled the CF-105 Avro Arrow.

Mr. Maynard became part of the small group of engineers at NASA's Space Task Group (STG) that grew into today's Johnson Space Center, and in 1960 he was assigned to a new human-space-flight program called Apollo, which at the time had no specific goal or even authorization to proceed.

He helped sketch out the initial designs of what would become the Apollo command and service modules. The following year, when President John F. Kennedy gave Apollo the goal of landing on the moon, Mr. Maynard became involved in the debates that raged within NASA over what method they would use to get there.

Owen Maynard was born in 1924 in Sarnia, Ont. When the Second World War broke out, he left school and worked as a boat-builder and machinist before joining the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942. He flew a number of aircraft, including the Mosquito, in Canada and overseas, although hostilities ended before he could see combat.

After the war, he got work at Avro Canada while he earned his degree in aeronautical engineering at the University of Toronto. He held a number of jobs at Avro — working on the layout of the Avro Jetliner and the design and testing of the CF-105 Avro Arrow's weapons pack and landing gear — before moving to NASA.

A little more than a year after Mr. Kennedy's call to put a man to the moon, NASA had settled on sending astronauts there and bringing

them back by a method known as lunar-orbit rendezvous, or LOR.

Mr. Maynard had been among the first at the STG to see the wisdom of using LOR, and another Canadian working at NASA, James A. Chamberlin, proposed landing an astronaut on the moon using a Gemini spacecraft and a lunar "bug." Following Mr. Chamberlin's lead, Mr. Maynard began making the first serious sketches of what would become known as the lunar module.

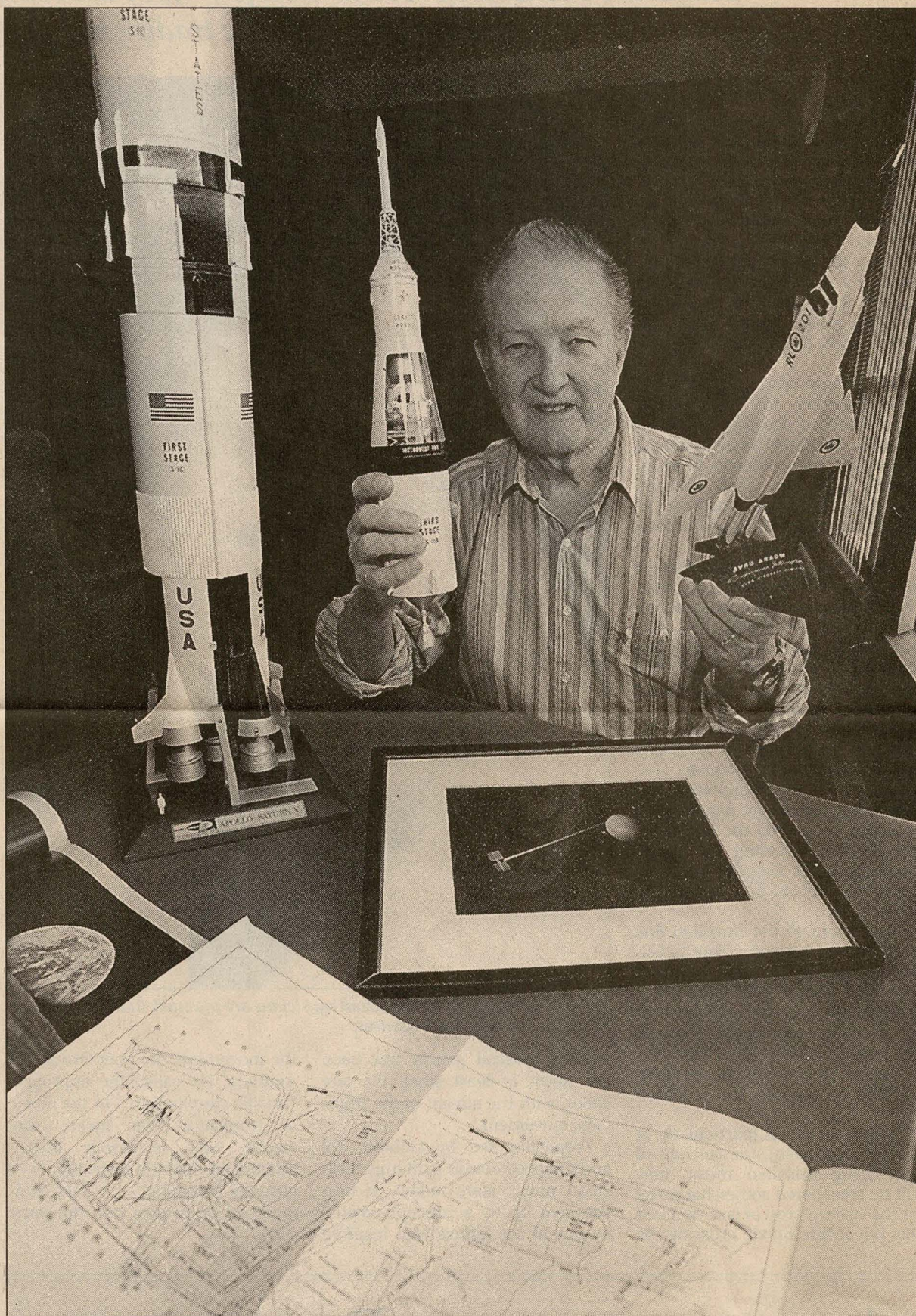
By 1963, Mr. Maynard was chief of the lunar-module engineering office, and by 1964 he was promoted to chief of the systems engineering division in the Apollo

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Spacecraft Program Office. To many people, this made Mr. Maynard Apollo's chief engineer. His responsibilities boiled down to making sure the constituent parts of the Apollo spacecraft worked among themselves and also with the launch vehicle and ground facilities.

He moved out of systems engineering in 1966 to head the mission-operations division and organized an Apollo lunar-landing symposium in June of 1966, at which the leadership of NASA and contractors got their first detailed technical preview of Apollo's mission.

After a fire inside an Apollo spacecraft on the launch pad killed three astronauts in January of 1967, Mr. Maynard moved back to systems engineering, where he remained until he left NASA in 1970, after helping to land a man on the moon on July 11, 1969.



Owen Maynard displays memorabilia at his home in 1999.

DEREK OLIVER/Kitchener-Waterloo Record

Mr. Maynard joined the aerospace giant Raytheon in the Boston area, where he worked on many aerospace programs.

During this time, he advocated satellites to collect solar power for use on Earth, and the use of solar power collected on Earth for powering spacecraft.

He retired from Raytheon in 1992, and he and his wife Helen re-

turned to Canada, settling in Waterloo. He leaves his wife, three daughters and a son, and six grandchildren.

Mr. Maynard received many honours during his life, including two NASA Exceptional Service Medals and an honorary doctor of engineering degree in 1996 from the University of Toronto. He also has an asteroid named after him.

In receiving his honorary degree, Mr. Maynard repeated an observation he often made about himself and the team that built Apollo: "The extraordinary had been accomplished by quite ordinary people."

Chris Gainor is writing a book about the Canadians who worked on the Apollo program.