

John Knudsen Northrop

John Northrop



John Northrop, 1895-1981

Born	10 November 1895 Newark, New Jersey
Died	18 February 1981
Occupation	Aeronautics Engineer Industrial Designer

John Knudsen "Jack" Northrop ([November 10, 1895](#) – [February 18, 1981](#)) was an [American](#) aircraft industrialist. He co-founded the [Lockheed Corporation](#) in 1927. He was the founder and [eponym](#) of the [Northrop Corporation](#) in 1939.

Entering aviation

Northrop's first job in aviation was in working for Loughead Aircraft Manufacturing Company (later [Lockheed Corporation](#)) in [1916](#). In [1923](#), Northrop joined [Douglas Aircraft Company](#). He became chief engineer, but later rejoined Loughead — now renamed Lockheed. During his second tenure there, he worked on the [Lockheed Vega](#), the civilian transport flown by [Amelia Earhart](#).^[1]

Company founding

In [1928](#), Northrop struck out on his own, founding the Avion Corporation, which Northrop was forced to sell to [United Aircraft and Transport Corporation](#) in [1930](#). In [1932](#), Northrop, backed by [Donald Douglas](#) of Douglas Aircraft, founded another company, the [Northrop Corporation](#), in [El Segundo, California](#). This company built two highly successful monoplanes, the [Northrop Gamma](#) and [Northrop Delta](#).^[2]

By [1939](#), the Northrop Corporation had become a subsidiary of Douglas, so Northrop founded another completely independent company of the same name in [Hawthorne, California](#). While working at this company, Northrop focused on the [flying wing](#) design, which he was convinced was the next major step in aircraft design. He produced a number of flying wings, including the [Northrop N-1M](#), [Northrop N-9M](#), [Northrop YB-35](#), and [Northrop YB-49](#).

Awards

In 1947 he received the St Louis Medal from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for "meritorious service in the advancement of aeronautics."^[*cite this quote*] Investiture in the International Aerospace Hall of Fame came in 1972 and in the Aviation Hall of Fame in 1974. The [B-2 Spirit](#) stealth bomber has the same wingspan as Jack Northrop's jet-powered flying wing, the YB-49.^[3]

Quote

Shortly before his death he was taken to see the then highly classified B-2, he is quoted as saying "Now I know why God let me live so long."^[*cite this quote*]

[\[edit\]](#) References

1. [^] National Aviation Hall of Fame, [NAHF: John Northrop, Biography](#), accessed [May 2, 2007](#).
2. [^] [Jack Northrop \(1895-1981\)](#), accessed [May 2, 2007](#).
3. [^] [Jack Northrop](#), accessed [May 2, 2007](#).



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