What's doing at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft

Today's leadership...a reflection of policies established in aviation's infancy

Back in The Roaring Twenties, the magic dream picured American families someday using the light personal airplane as freely as the family car. Among the realities, however, was a handful of men who were unshakable in their conviction that the real future of aviation lay with bigger, aircraft, higher speeds, greater ranges — all possible only through engines of higher power and more reliability than those of that era.

In the spring of 1925, six of these men of vision founded a company in Hartford to undertake the development of a new aircraft engine — an all-metal radial. The year's end heralded their aerial victory in the decisive battles of aviation's infancy. The world's commercial airliners and many of our nation's first line and air mail planes used this new, lightweight, high-speed radial engine as a milestone in aviation's history and as the standard for almost three decades of record-breaking advances.

The Engines

The Original Wasp, the P & W W-15 engine — designed, fabricated and assembled in just seven months. Weighting under 500 pounds and developing 410 horsepower for basic use, this lightweight, high-speed radial engine was a milestone in aviation's history and as the standard for almost three decades of record-breaking advances.

The Wasp Major, a 28-cylinder engine with piston arranged in four rows of seven each and a 3600-horsepower rating. It powered the famous Golden Eagle in 1931. Its unique engine cylinder configuration suggests the significance of the years of research and development leading to its successful operation.

The J-47, a five-cylinder jet engine in history so recently that its former plans and specifications are sketchy. As the jet engine concept was developed, it became a working engine before 1939. Since then, the J-47 has continuously undergone improved development, in the years of the Second World War. It is now said to be the most powerful jet engine standardized in the field of aviation.