



## The Jack Case Center



*Jack Case*

The long time Y-12 Plant Manager and namesake for the new Y-12 **Jack Case Center** recently completed at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, TN

Jack Case articles written by: D. Ray Smith  
January 2006 – July 2007

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Articles on Jack Case first published in The Oak Ridger, The Oak Ridge Observer and Y-Source – the  
online news medium at the Y-12 National Security Complex  
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## Introduction



Jack Case, the Y-12 Plant Manager with the longest tenure (15 Years) was a compelling and effective leader who was well liked by all levels in the organization. He worked his way up from a Tool and Die Maker to Plant Manager. Along the way he contributed significantly to Y-12 in numerous ways.

Case was sent to Oak Ridge because of his Tool and Die Maker background. He contributed to Y-12's success from the beginning of his career, helped start Y-12's second era, equipped the plant to help win the Cold War and now is being honored by the largest office building in Y-12 bearing his name.

The articles in this booklet were first published in the Oak Ridge Observer, The Oak Ridger and Y-Source - the online news medium at the Y-12 National Security Complex. They are reprinted here as first published. Although there may be some duplication, each article contains unique elements and thus all articles are included here.

It is my hope that by publishing these articles, Jack Case will become better known to the present generation of Y-12 workers and Oak Ridge residents and that he and his contribution to Y-12, the Oak Ridge community and the world, will be better appreciated.

Truly, the Jack Case Center, his namesake, is fast on its way to becoming a thriving and exciting central facility housing key Y-12 personnel. The Jack Case Center will quickly become the consolidated leadership hub for all of Y-12's missions. Jack Case's leadership style would flourish in the environment that will undoubtedly be created by the consolidation of a large portion of Y-12 leadership into one building. He would be proud indeed!

Ray Smith  
7/4/07

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## **Section 1: Published in The Oak Ridger**

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online news medium at the Y-12 National Security Complex  
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## ***Jack Case: Namesake for new Y-12 building***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridger (1/11/06)**

Groundbreaking was held recently for the two new office buildings being built using private financing at the Y-12 National Security Complex. Both buildings have been given meaningful names: the largest one is the Jack Case Center and the smaller one located on Scarboro Road is the New Hope Building.



An artist's rendering of the Jack Case building.

The larger office building will contain 1,200 offices and will be the center of support for Y-12's primary mission. Naming this building after Jack Case is in keeping with the long-term service Y-12 has provided the nation as a nuclear weapons site. Case came to Y-12 in 1944 as a "tool and die maker" and soon became very important to Y-12's continued presence in Oak Ridge.

When the Uranium 235 separation mission was completed at Y-12 with the dropping of "Little Boy," the plant's population of more than 22,000 people was reduced to just 3,000. Jack Case was among the three individuals sent to Los Alamos to learn what was needed to machine uranium for additional atomic weapons and thus introducing Y-12's second era as a special machine shop for manufacturing components for nuclear weapons.



Y-12 continues to support America's nuclear weapons program today as well as other vital national security missions.

However, many people who knew Jack Case have now retired. Some just knew his name as manager and several at Y-12 do not recall him.

In an attempt to help educate some and remind others, a series of articles is being published telling the "Jack Case story." Much of the information for these articles is coming from old news articles from The Oak Ridger. The Case family has provided scrapbooks, photos and copies of old newspapers to help with the research. One story in particular tells much about how Jack Case rose from a "tool and die maker" to plant manager. The article was written by long-time Oak Ridger Dick Smyser, a major force behind The Oak Ridger for years. Another article, written by Joan Wallace, contains numerous quotes from many of the 700 people who attended Jack Case's retirement party - maybe the largest retirement party ever in Oak Ridge.

Jack Case

Through the use of past articles from The Oak Ridger and information provided by Larry, Linda and Patrick, the children of Jack Case, it is possible to relive a time in history when Oak

Ridge was growing from a Manhattan Project site with a single mission to a city with diverse and sustainable industry and healthy economic growth.

Telling the Jack Case story helps us recognize the past contributions of a strong and compelling leader in our community and also helps us focus on the positive changes being brought to our community through modernization at Y-12, new construction at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and other improvements being seen around our town.

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online news medium at the Y-12 National Security Complex  
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Thanks to good reporting in the past and one family's thoughtfulness to hold on to their memories, the  
Jack Case story can be told and enjoyed anew.

## ***Jack Case's contributions to Y-12 remembered***

A Case History (Part 2) -

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridger (1/18/06)**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *This is the second in a two-part article about Jack Case, the long-time Y-12 employee and eventual plant superintendent. A new Y-12 office building under construction has been named the Jack Case Center in his honor.*



Jack Case, left, with Oak Ridge Mayor Al Bissell at Case's retirement party in 1982.

More than 700 people attended Jack Case's retirement party, held on January 29, 1982.

The event was held in the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering's new building at the corner of Lafayette Avenue and Emory Valley Road. George Evans was responsible for setting up the event and had obviously found the only place in Oak Ridge that would hold that many people.

Joan Wallace, reporter for The Oak Ridger, covered the story and produced a front-page article with numerous quotes from individuals who, as she wrote, "exuded warmth" for Jack.

One of the most obvious characteristics of Jack's career of strong and compelling leadership at Y-12 was how well-liked he was by everyone. From the janitor to top management, all spoke highly of him. At his retirement party, while he indicated gratitude for working with everyone there, his highest compliments were reserved for the person who cleaned his office every day.

Jack stood near the entrance of the huge and just barely completed warehouse-type structure of the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering building for more than an hour shaking hands with those who came to wish him well in retirement. The building did not even have heat installed in it yet. It was the retirement party for the man known to personify excellent leadership and who brought the "can-do" attitude to Y-12 and by doing so enhanced the reputation of all of Oak Ridge.

He was presented with a large number of awards and had numerous letters read, but likely the one item that held the most meaning for him was the leather-bound scrapbook of photos from his career at Y-12. Clyde Hopkins presented that keepsake to him, and his family still has that fine old leather album.

Larry, Jack's oldest son, has shared the contents of that album with me to help tell his father's story. The photos accompanying this article come from that photo album.

Jack Case was a native of East Alton, Ill. He completed a four-year machinist apprentice program as a tool and die maker at Olin Cartridge Co. in his home town. Early in his career, he worked in aircraft plants in St. Louis and Los Angeles, and he received special engineering training at the University of California at Los Angeles.

He also worked in small arms tool design and fabrication with the U.S. Cartridge Co. at St. Louis, Mo. He joined the Tennessee Eastman Corp. at the Oak Ridge Y-12 plant in April 1944.

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The way Jack came to be selected to go to Oak Ridge was a bit unusual. In 1943, both Jack and his brother-in-law, Ben Karnosky, joined the Illinois National Guard. In April 1944, they both were being drafted into the regular Army at St. Louis. As they were going through the induction process, officers processing the paperwork explained that, civilian or military, this country was in desperate need of tool makers. The decision was immediately made to send Jack to a place called "Oak Ridge" in Tennessee. Jack didn't know what to think since Oak Ridge, being a secret city, wasn't even on the map.



His brother-in-law was going to war in the South Pacific, but Jack was being assigned to an unknown area in Tennessee with no hint of what he would be doing. What he really wanted was to help America win World War II ... and little did he know just how much he would contribute to actually winning the war in just over a year and a half!

He spent the first three months living in a dormitory before bringing his wife and son to live in Oak Ridge with him. Hazel, Jack's devoted wife (now deceased), willingly embraced a new life and an uncertain future in an unknown town in East Tennessee with their young son, Larry. Daughter Linda was born three years later and son Patrick completed the family. Linda and husband Jim live in Knoxville and have two children, Nathan and Michelle. Nathan resides in Nashville and Michelle lives in Knoxville. Patrick calls both Colorado and Florida his home.

Larry and wife Marilyn have two children, Stacey and Blake. Blake and wife Joanna have a six-month-old son who is named after his great grandfather - our own Jack Marion Case. Stacey and husband Todd have a five-month-old daughter, Ella.

Union Carbide  
Nuclear Division  
vice president  
Clyde Hopkins, left,  
presents a leather-  
bound photo album  
to Jack Case at  
Case's retirement  
party in the Oak  
Ridge Tool and  
Engineering  
building in 1982.

Over the years, Jack worked as a toolmaker, craft foreman, general foreman, general foreman for shops, maintenance department superintendent, maintenance division head, mechanical operations superintendent, assistant Y-12 plant superintendent, deputy superintendent for the Y-12 plant and, finally, Y-12 plant superintendent in 1967.

He served in that capacity until his retirement in January 1982. At his retirement, Clyde Hopkins, then vice president of Union Carbide Nuclear Division, said, "He began work April 10, 1944, as a toolmaker and in five years he was a superintendent. In 1954, he became manager of the largest production division in the plant - the old Mechanical Operations Division which involved 40 to 50 percent of the workers in the whole plant.

"In the 1960s, he was made assistant plant manager and a few years later plant manager. Few persons have been able to influence the lives of others as Jack Case did. He is one of the major reasons Y-12 has the reputation of a can-do outfit.

"And there is no question that people will tell you he was a great fellow to work with."

The name the Jack Case Center - a choice made by Y-12 employees that represented a 2-to-1 margin of more than 300 voters - is an indicator that several people still recall the Jack Case I am writing about. The retirement party held for him may well have been the largest one on record in Oak Ridge. His impact on Y-12 as the nation was preparing for winning the Cold War helped set the stage for the huge production levels in the 1980s that eventually led to the end of the Cold War, the Berlin Wall coming down, and a new era being ushered in for the world.

Additional details of Jack Case's career will be published as the new 1,200-office building at Y-12 named in his honor is being constructed.

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## ***A Case History: A look back at a Y-12 Pioneer***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer (1/4/06)**

The Jack Case Center is the name selected for the new production support facility. The name — chosen by a 2 to 1 margin with more than 300 voting — honors the memory of Jack M. Case, the Y-12 Plant Manager with the longest tenure — 15 years.

Case served from 1967 to 1982 as Y-12's strong and compelling leader, but his involvement in Y-12's history goes much further back. Over the next several months, we will share stories about his contributions to our history. Today's anecdotes are provided courtesy of Bill Wilcox.

The first story of Jack's personal involvement in our history begins during Y-12's first major mission transition. Y-12 was constructed in about 18 months, beginning in February 1943, to house the 1152 calutrons required to separate the uranium 235 needed for the first atomic bomb used in warfare (some 50 kg was actually shipped to Los Alamos). The nine major buildings and all the necessary support structures were built in 18 months; today the two privately financed buildings — the New Hope Building and the Jack Case Center — are also scheduled for completion in 18 months.

Shortly after the war's end in 1945, Y-12's employee population dropped from 22,000 to close to 3,000. Only Building 9204-3 (Beta 3) and Building 9731 (the Pilot Facility and first building completed) continued to function as calutron buildings. The uranium 235 separation mission moved from Y-12 to K 25, because the gaseous diffusion method was more economical than the electromagnetic separation process. Y-12 was without a mission, and workers began preparations to remove the calutrons and return the 14,700 tons of silver borrowed from the U.S. Treasury for electrical conductors because of the copper shortage during the war.

In July 1947, with unrest regarding Russia already hinting at the Cold War, more atomic bombs were to be manufactured. Some of the research-oriented top officials of Los Alamos were reluctant to get into the post-war business of producing the stockpile of nuclear weapons requested by the government. They did not have the staff or facilities to undertake any major expansion of production work with uranium.

Case, telling the story on Y-12's second-era's 40th anniversary in 1987, said the idea that Y-12 should get into this weapons business came from AEC Washington's General Manager Walt Williams, who thought the now-excess facilities at Y-12 could be used for machining uranium. Williams asked Y-12 to send a team to Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory to find out what would be needed to produce additional weapons of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki type designs, then come back to Y-12 and install the equipment to manufacture them.

Case (from the Machine Shops), Wimpy Hilton (from Tool Design), and John Strohecker (from Engineering) went to Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory (LASL), where they were admitted to the highly classified weapons areas. The morning of the first day they were shown "everything," but about noon — long before they had a chance to get much of the information they needed — someone "up the line pulled the plug," told the Y-12'ers their clearances were no good and had them ousted from the plant. Case said they "cooled their heels" out there for quite awhile phoning home, hiking and sightseeing while top AEC officials kept the phones lines hot trying to get things back on course. After an extended period, the team finally got back in.

When they came back to Tennessee, the team designed and built the facilities for machining uranium in hooded milling machines. They also created the first facilities for producing uranium metal from green salt (UF<sub>4</sub>) in greater than lab-scale quantities.

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LASL and AEC managers insisted Y-12 provide a cost estimate for producing a certain number and type of weapons components. The Y-12 team was at a complete loss as to how to estimate the cost, not knowing in any detail what equipment and labor would be needed. Y-12 had no experience at all with machining uranium metal parts, but the AEC insisted. The team finally came up with an estimate of \$500,000, which turned out to be just what was charged!

As these anecdotes indicate, Case played a central role in key decisions regarding Y-12 as early as 1947. In a future article, we will share the story of what happened in April 1944 when both he and his brother were being drafted into the Army and he was sent to Oak Ridge while his brother was sent to fight in the war overseas. The details of that story will come from Case's son, Larry. Larry Case has also agreed to provide photos of his dad that will be of interest to those of you who never met him.

## ***Jack Case – Tool and Die Maker***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This second installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the Jack Case Center - will focus on his early life and how he came to be at Y-12. As mentioned in the first article, the new 420,000 sq. ft. production support facility being constructed north of the site of the old Administration Building 9704-2 is named the Jack Case Center in honor of the memory of Jack M. Case, the Y-12 Plant Manager with the longest tenure – 15 years. Many of those who knew Mr. Case still recall his distinctive gravelly voice and his unique leadership style. Several who voted for the selection of Jack Case Center have said they take great pride in seeing his name chosen for one of the new privately financed buildings.

Mr. Case was a native of East Alton, Illinois. He served a four-year Toolmaker apprentice program at Olin Cartridge Company in his home town. Early in his career he worked in several aircraft plants in California where he received special engineering training at the University of California at Los Angeles. He also worked in small arms tool design and fabrication with the U. S. Cartridge Company at St. Louis, Missouri. He joined the Tennessee Eastman Corporation at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant in April, 1944.

The way Jack came to be selected to go to Oak Ridge was a bit unusual. In 1943, both Jack and his brother-in-law, Ben Karnosky, joined the Illinois National Guard. In April 1944, they both were being drafted into the regular Army at St. Louis, Missouri. As they were going through the induction process, one of the officers processing the paperwork said to Jack, "You are going to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. You can either go as a civilian or as military, but you are sure going! They want you because you are a 'toolmaker'." Jack did not necessarily know what to think. As far as he knew there was no such place as "Oak Ridge, Tennessee." His brother-in-law was going to fight in the war and here he was getting sent to somewhere in Tennessee that he had never heard tell of, doing what - he had no idea - and what he really wanted was to help win the war. Little did he know just how much he would contribute to actually winning the war in just over a year and a half! He and his brother-in-law parted company there and Jack came to Oak Ridge. He spent the first three months here alone and then brought his family to live in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

His young son, Larry – the first born child in the family, was less than four months old at the time the Case family moved here. In addition to Larry, others in the Case family are: wife Hazel (deceased), daughter Linda Fellers and son Patrick. Larry and his wife Marilyn have two children – Blake and Stacey. Blake's son, born in June 2005 is named for his great grandfather – our own Jack Marion Case. Stacy has a daughter – Ella Ruth Rumpsa born July 2005.

Over the years, Jack Case worked as a Toolmaker, a Craft Foreman, General Foreman, General Foreman for Shops, Maintenance Department superintendent, Maintenance Division Head, Mechanical Operations Superintendent, Assistant Y-12 Plant Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent for the Y-12 Plant and finally Y-12 Plant Superintendent in 1967. He served in that capacity until his retirement in January 1982.

At his retirement, Clyde Hopkins, then Vice President of Union Carbide Nuclear Division, said, "He began work April 10, 1944 as a Toolmaker, and in five years he was a superintendent. In 1954, he became manager of the largest production division in the plant – the old Mechanical Operations division which involved 40 to 50 percent of the workers in the whole plant. In the 1960's he was made assistant plant manager and a few years later plant manager. Few persons are able to influence the lives of others as Jack Case has. He is one of the major reasons Y-12 has the reputation of a can-do outfit. And there is no question but people will tell you he is a great fellow to work with."

The name - Jack Case Center – a choice made by Y-12 employees that represented a 2-1 margin of over 300 voters is an indicator that several people still recall the Jack Case about whom I am writing. In

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coming installments, more comments from his retirement party will demonstrate even further the great esteem with which he was held by the 700 people who attended his retirement party in the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering building that was so new in 1982 that it did not yet have any heat. George Evans was responsible for the logistics of the retirement party and likely found the only structure in Oak Ridge that would hold 700 people at the time!

The content for the above story came from Larry Case, Jack's oldest son and also from the February 1, 1982 edition of The Oak Ridger, where Joan Wallace's top (above the fold!) front page coverage of Jack's retirement article is entitled "Hundreds exude warmth for Y-12 chief."

## ***Jack Case – Hundreds exude warmth for Y-12 chief***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This third installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the Jack Case Center - will focus on comments made at his retirement party held on January 29, 1982. As mentioned in the last article, over 700 people attended his retirement held in the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering's new building at the corner of Lafayette Avenue and Emory Valley Road. George Evans was responsible for setting up the event.

John Murray, Y-12 Plant Manager from 1954 to 1961, said, "This plant would not be what it is today if it were not for Jack Case."

Bill Sahr, supervisor, Y-12 Fabrication Division, "If someone asked 'Can you make this?' Jack would say 'Yes' if we could or couldn't – but then we would make it!"

J. D. Davis, Y-12 Fabrication Division machinist for 31 years said, "Jack Case reminds me of President Roosevelt. He was always for the working man, the poor man. Jack always talks to you anywhere you see him – you can't say that about some others."

B. W. Hensley, former head of Atomic Trades and Labor Council said, "Jack was one manager you could always depend on to do what he said he'd do." At the time, Hensley was head of the metal trades department of the AFL-CIO in Washington, DC.

"He's the most compassionate person I've ever seen in my life. Whether he's with a cleaner, a machinist, a superintendent, he looks at every individual as an individual. He tries to be fair to all" said Tom Webber, General Machine Shop Department Superintendent and veteran of 37 years at Y-12.

Hal Simerly, shift superintendent and with 31 years at Y-12 said, "We are losing a jewel, we really are."

"You couldn't ask for a better boss" said Kay Steed, Case's long time secretary. Her husband, B. M. Steed, a lubricator at Y-12 with 24 years experience added one word to describe Case – "Perfect!"

"I don't know anyone more personable, responsible, always fair and honest and a tremendous craftsman" said Tally Livingston, regional director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

Theo Thompkins, salvage department worker with 15 years at Y-12 said, "If he met you in New York, he would know you and talk to you. He is a fine person."

Bobbie Hill, who worked as a secretary in the plant manager's office said, "He's one of the nicest guys, has the most friends of anyone I know, and one of my favorite people!"

Jack M. Case stood near the entrance of the huge just barely completed warehouse type structure – Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering building for over an hour shaking hands with those who came to wish him well in retirement. The building did not even have heat installed in it yet, and remember, this was January 29 – likely a bit of chill in the air – but 700 people enjoyed food and drink (there were five cash bars) and honored one very well-liked man – Jack Case. And anyone who was anyone at all in Union Carbide Nuclear Division spoke that night as did several other dignitaries at what may well have been the largest retirement party in Oak Ridge's history. It was the retirement party for the man known to personify excellent leadership and who brought the "can do" attitude to Y-12 and by doing so enhanced the reputation of all of Oak Ridge.

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Among the people speaking at Jack's retirement from Union Carbide were: George Evans, Bill Thomas, Roger Hibbs, Paul Vanstrum, George Jasney, John Davidson, and Charlie Robinson. Speakers from other locations were: Steve Root, assistant director weapons division, Lawrence Livermore Scientific Laboratory; Jack Altarcuse, Goodyear Atomic manager for operations, Hershell Hickman, Doe contract administrator for Y-12, Clay Zerby, Manager of Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant, and Ken Sommerfeld, executive director ORNL. Gordon Fee, new superintendent of the Y-12 Plant, and Case's replacement introduced Mr. Case.

Case concluded the evening by saying, "I am amazed to see so many people here. I really respect so many here who have helped me. When I came here I was 24 years old – the Army made me come, either in uniform or out. I was a tool and die maker, but on my lunch hour I was told to empty the spittoons. In those days you weren't allowed to smoke in the shop. So I carried them out, emptied them, cleaned them. It makes you humble", he smiled.

"I've enjoyed it all, the rough and the good times. There are some here I've worked closely with who I'll really miss." He drew attention to his secretary, calling Mrs. Steed a fine, intelligent, helpful woman he's spent more time with than his late wife. Case also mentioned George Mitchell and Claude Hensley who were also present. "Claude's the best man anywhere on his feet in a machine shop. When he sit down, he's not that good."

He said he'd always admired the union people and always listened to them. "I respect the man who sweeps my office every day – he does a fine job," he said matter-of-factly. "People have asked why I'm retiring. I'll be 64 in April, and I'd like to do something else. I'm satisfied that I've done a satisfactory job – not great, but okay. I want to go out while I'm feeling good and try something else," Case concluded.

Clyde Hopkins' remarks highlighting Case as the person who gained Y-12 its "can do" reputation were included in a previous article.

Roger Hibbs, president of Union Carbide Nuclear Division, said of Case, "Many say Jack was a pioneer – he was the first EEO (equal employment opportunity) type. Long before equal rights, women's liberation and so on, Jack took on the job of training 700 women who didn't know a milling machine from a washing machine to produce very precise graphite parts."

"He built the first materials testing reactor and took it to Idaho. It was the most intense reactor until Jack built the HFIR (High Flux Isotope Reactor). He built all sorts of exotic shapes to make the country's nuclear arsenal. And he was a pioneer in fusion. The Elmo Bumpy Torus would not have reached fruition without Jack. Then there were the wonderful space objects to sample the lunar surface and return with lunar integrity intact. But more important than all of these – all the years Jack was managing Y-12 – all those thousands of hours, people were five to ten times safer at work than at home." Hibbs then presented Case a special UCND award presented for only the second time. Hibbs concluded, "Jack is a very firm, fair manager and a helluva fine guy."

"Y-12 is better. Oak Ridge is better. DOE programs have benefited, in fact the country is better off because of Jack Case's tremendous ability. His creative work has kept the United States in front of the defense program," said Paul Vanstrum, Senior Vice President, UCND.

Charlie Robinson, President of the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, said of Case, "He began work with a union card in his pocket and he never forgot that. He built the biggest machine shop in the free world, or as far as I know in the world. I've had a lot of supervisors, line foreman, general foremen, department heads, division heads. The only person I ever called my boss with dignity is Jack Case. We've had disagreements, but he always treated me fairly."

Case was presented with a number of plaques and mementos, a tall wooden gun rack and a thick leather-covered album of pictures of him and co-workers through the years. Jack's son, Larry has provided us access to this fine old leather album and other materials for use in writing these articles.

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Our next article will feature a reprint of a news article from The Oak Ridger published Friday, January 29, 1982 and written by Dick Smyser about the community's perception of Jack Case.

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online news medium at the Y-12 National Security Complex  
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## ***Jack Case – Working up through the ranks***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This fourth installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the Jack Case Center - will feature a reprint of the news article on Page 4 of The Oak Ridger published Friday, January 29, 1982 on the actual date of his retirement. The last article highlighted many comments from his peers and co-workers. This article will reflect the community's perspective of Jack Case the person known locally and nationally as "Mr. Y-12."

"The people who work for him would almost rather have his word than a written contract."

That's the way one of his closer associates sums up the feelings about Jack Case, whose retirement at the Y-12 plant becomes official today.

Case's official job description in more recent years has been plant superintendent. But he likely would have had no objection, and perhaps might have even preferred, had he been listed as "machinist" or more precisely "toolmaker."

Jack Case, like few other people in Carbide management here, or industrial management anywhere, truly came up through the ranks. He was – is – a machinist, or more precisely a toolmaker, and proud of it. And this fact has made him one of the best-liked, most-respected and most credible Carbide managers in Oak Ridge's now nearly 40-year history.

"He's got a lot of manufacturing intelligence."

"His ability to get along with other is unsurpassed."

"No matter what sort of oddball thing they wanted us to build out here (at Y-12) he could look at the proposal and steer us in the right direction."

"He would lay out the fine points and give us a goal and then give us a lot of room. Sure, he pushed us if we got bogged down."

"Working with him was like taking a graduate course in the humanities."

These are some of the other things that those closest to him say.

The Y-12 plant is the local facility that is always most difficult to describe. This is because it is the plant that is least understood by Oak Ridgers themselves. For, although it is the plant geographically closest to the community - because of its major weapons role - it is also the plant area that is least accessible to visitors.

But the best description is that it is probably the world's largest, most sophisticated, most innovative machine shop.

For out of the original need of the Manhattan Project, for not only devices and equipment never before manufactured, but also never before conceived – parts, gadgets as small as a pin (and likely smaller) and as large as a battleship (well almost) – has come into being this unique facility and its unique staff of workers and craftsmen and superintendents like Case who can, literally, do, make most anything. And they have made most anything, for the nuclear project's military missions, of course, but also for its more recent and much broader and more positive missions as well. And for many other federal programs too, most especially the space program.

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And Case has been the key person in Y-12's accomplishments since the plant's very origins in 1944 – first as a craft foreman, then as a general foreman, general foreman for shops, maintenance department superintendent, maintenance division head, mechanical operations superintendent, assistant plant superintendent, deputy plant superintendent and, since 1969, plant superintendent.

That is working one's way up through the ranks. There is the basis for the kind of confidence and affection that Case has earned from his fellow workers. It is entirely appropriate that they honor him tonight at what promises to be one of the most genuinely warm and personal, if hugely attended, retirement parties in this community that has said in more recent years to have made retirement parties its second largest industry.

May we join in the congratulations and best wishes to Jack Case, toolmaker virtually without peer, for long and fulfilling years ahead.

In the next installment of the Jack Case history series we will look at some letters he received from friends near and far at the time of his retirement.

## ***Jack Case – Letters from friends***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This fifth installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the **Jack Case Center** - will focus on letters received at his retirement from people across the nation who respected Jack Case and what he had accomplished at the Y-12 Plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

This first letter is from Pat Fourney, a fellow Carbide manager, and is written on personal stationary.

*Dear Jack,*

*In my forty-plus years with Carbide, I have not attended any other retirement party where so many people from so many walks of life were gathered together to honor the retiree. There were, in addition to the top brass, an awful lot of hourly people, union representatives, and retirees from all payrolls at your party. I know you were pleased to see that B. W. Hensley had come in from Washington, that Tally Livingston had come in from Atlanta, and that many others had traveled a long way to let you know how they felt about you.*

*Over the years, you've had the common touch and have let all those with whom you did business know that you were concerned about their problems as well as your own.*

*I have enjoyed very much working with you during the period I have been in Oak Ridge and join with your many other friends in wishing you success and happiness during your retirement years.*

*Sincerely,*

*Pat*

A second letter is from William W. Hoover, a Major General in the US Air Force.

*Dear Jack,*

*I am sorry that a very heavy travel schedule in January precluded me from contacting you personally prior to your retirement. I certainly want to let you know of the great appreciation I have for the devoted service and professional management which you have demonstrated as the Plant Manager of Y-12. Your personal commitment to getting the job done under what has frequently been less than ideal conditions has contributed greatly to our overall mission success and has been particularly beneficial in the development of a close and harmonious working relationship between Union Carbide and the Department.*

*All of the members of the Office of Military Application join me in wishing you the very best in health, prosperity, and happiness in your retirement. It is certainly no more than you deserve.*

*Sincerely,*

*William W. Hoover,  
Major General, USAF  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application*

A third letter is from Hershel Hickman, Assistant Manager for Defense Programs at DOE Oak Ridge Operations.

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*Dear Jack:*

*Congratulations on your forthcoming retirement following a long and distinguished career.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your many contributions to DOE programs, and in particular, to the weapons program. Your outstanding leadership and management ability will certainly be missed. It has been a pleasure working with you, and your cooperation and support have made my job easier.*

*I join your many friends in wishing you the best of health, happiness, and success in your future endeavors.*

*Sincerely,*

*H. D. Hickman, Assistant Manager for Defense Programs*

A fourth letter is from Robert L. Vaughn of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers

*Dear Mr. Case:*

*Best wishes on your retirement, and let me add that your work and support on programs of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers is well known. I would like to express my appreciation for your 25 years as a member of SME, your active work in membership recruitment and retention, your expertise in developing technical conferences and clinics, and your role for many years as a leader at the cutting edge of manufacturing.*

*The strong friendship between Union Carbide and SME is, in great measure, due to your efforts.*

*Again, congratulations on your retirement and best wishes for the future.*

*Sincerely,*

*Robert L. Vaughn*

A final letter is from Donald M. Kerr, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory.

*Dear Jack:*

*On behalf of my staff and myself, I'd like to extend my very best wishes on the occasion of your retirement. Your contributions since 1944 have significantly enhanced our national security.*

*The relationship between the Laboratory and Y-12 has been all the more pleasant and productive as a direct result of your leadership and friendship. I wish you every happiness and good health, Jack, and may those wells you're drilling produce bountifully.*

*Best regards,*

*Donald M. Kerr, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory*

The next article will highlight something known as the JCMS (Jack Case Management System).

## **Jack Case – JCMS (Jack Case Management System)**

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This sixth installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the **Jack Case Center** - will focus on a single letter received at his retirement from a Union Carbide Corporation manager extolling the virtues of a style of leadership he learned at the feet of Jack Case while working at the Y-12 Plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

Anyone who knew Mr. Case will agree with the effectiveness of the simple yet profound management style he practiced consistently and without ever faltering. Successful managers learned from him and unsuccessful ones who did not were not long left in positions of responsibility and power - it was that simple.

This letter is from A. L. Conte, manager of Union Carbide Battery Products Division.

*Mr. Jack Case  
Union Carbide Corporation  
Nuclear Division  
Box Y  
Oak Ridge, Tenn. 37830*

*Dear Jack,*

*If I were making a speech on the occasion of your retirement from Union Carbide, this is what I would want the other guests to know.*

*It doesn't seem possible that enough years have gone by for you to be retiring, but then I remember that after 10 ½ years in Oak Ridge, I have now been in Cleveland for 20 years. I wish you good health and much happiness as you leave Y-12. Fortunately for the Nuclear Division you will leave behind a host of colleagues who have learned the "JCMS", Jack Case Management System, after which the good parts of the Union Carbide Management System (UCMS) must have been taken.*

*I have never forgotten how good and important you made me feel about myself and my job when I was fresh out of college and just starting my UCC career at Y-12. I called you about a work order (because somebody laughingly suggested it) I had sent to the machine shop for the Health Physics Department. You invited me to the shop so I could explain the problem in more detail. In spite of all the really important work you had to do, you took time to give me a tour of the shop and introduce me to all of your department supervisors and to personally explain the shop priority system. That was a grand day for me and I use it often as an example of the human side of top management.*

*As I worked for you in my assigned task of project engineering for the then Mechanical Operations Division, I often pondered what it was about Jack Case that brought out the very best in all the people who worked for him from superintendents to machinist and machine operators. I call it the Jack Case Management System now that I am more attuned to such Corporate thoughts. Back then, I just knew that Jack Case was a "hell of a Guy" and it might be wise to emulate the attributes I had been exposed to.*

*What then is the Jack Case Management System? Well the way I perceived it is as follows:*

- 1. Select well trained, hard working and objective people who are considerate and concerned about the general well being of their subordinates.**
- 2. Tell them what you want to accomplish.**

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### **3. Trust them and let them do the job.**

*The results, the development of able men like Claude Hensley, Jim Thorpe, John Gordon, Pete Rinderer, Harold Alvey, Lyle Langdon, Harold Babb, Henry Spec, just to name a few but a host of others who always rose to meet the deadlines and get the work out.*

*When I left Oak Ridge to take a job with the Battery Products division, I took “JCMS” with me and have used it since. I am grateful that I had an opportunity to know you and to work for you. Thanks for what you taught me.*

*Not too many people come to Cleveland just for the fun of it, but if you should for any reason, I would be proud to have you visit our home as well as our Battery Division facilities including our new R&D Laboratory.*

*With warmest best wishes,  
A. L. Conte*

The simple three-step process described by Conte in his letter remains profound today. Select well-trained, hard working and objective people, let them know what needs to be done and then trust them to do their job - simple, but still effective.

The next article will tell the story of how Jack Case contributed to the effort to get Y-12 ready for the Cold War.

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## ***Jack Case: Building Y-12 for the Cold War***

By: **D. Ray Smith | Special to The Oak Ridge Observer**

This seventh installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the Jack Case Center – tells the story of how he prepared Y-12 to become the world's leading and most precise machine shop – one that could lead the way toward eventually winning the Cold War. Who ever thought that one manufacturing facility in a place called Bear Creek Valley in Oak Ridge, Tennessee would ultimately have such a significant and worldwide impact twice! Little Boy to help end World War II and then with Herculean effort produce so many nuclear weapons secondaries to result in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the defeat of Communism in the Soviet Union!

The following was sent from Los Alamos National Laboratory to be read at Jack Case's retirement:

*To: Jack M. Case, Manager Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant*

*Those of us who have spent a substantial period of time in the nuclear business think of the Y-12 Plant as the real image of "getting the job done." In a large measure, this feeling comes from the kind of direction and leadership that Jack Case provides and inspires. Regardless of the complexity and long-term schedule vagaries of our business, Jack gets to the heart of the difficulty and when convinced the problem warrants direct attention, no one in the entire complex has any doubts but that it gets the best of our resources and effort.*

*Jack, we at Los Alamos feel that we go back a long way together with memories of tough, almost impossible tasks developed and executed on even more impossible time scales. For those of us who have already (or are about to) perform the "step aside" maneuver, we thank you for what you have meant to our way of life for the past 37 years. Max Roy sends his special regards.*

*I had hoped to join you for the occasion but I am committed to a similar function on January 30.*

*Best Ever,*

*Jay Wechsler, WX Division Leader*

In many ways, Jack Case recognized the vital nature of what was needed to be done at Y-12 to sustain the country's need for nuclear weapons after World War II and when Russia began to build and explode their own nuclear weapons. It was apparent that Russia was intent upon taking the lead in this very new and virtually unknown field. That was not acceptable to the United States government. The nuclear weapons program was called upon to take giant steps and was expected to perform flawlessly in the creation of, the testing of and the deployment of thermonuclear weapons as quickly as possible.

While Jack Case and the others who were sent to Los Alamos in 1947 to bring back the information necessary to produce additional uranium and plutonium bombs, it soon became evident that Russia was not limiting themselves to those type weapons. Larger and larger yields were being created in each new bomb. The "Cold War" weapons race was on almost as quickly as Y-12 determined how to produce nuclear weapons components. Jack Case saw it coming. He began almost immediately to prepare Y-12 for the future demands of the Cold War. In his various positions over the years as he was moving up through the ranks to become the Plant Manager, he was known as a very productive employee and one who led the way to solutions to difficult problems. Jack managed several of Y-12's main organizations as superintendent prior to his top manager role.

From the early efforts at Y-12 to manufacture nuclear weapons using uranium components to the additional special materials required to produce the more powerful thermonuclear weapons, Y-12 was a

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major production element in the nuclear weapons complex. Hundreds of specialized machine tools were purchased and modified for use at Y-12. Many of the machine tools were computerized with enhanced capability, extremely high accuracy and tolerances beyond anything available anywhere else in the world. Y-12 maintained and often established the state-of-the-art in machining technology. Much of this advance in capability was accomplished under the leadership of Jack Case. The often-mentioned “can do” attitude of Y-12 was well known throughout the Nuclear Weapons Complex.

There is a story told about a specific weapons part that Los Alamos scientists wanted Y-12 to produce. Jack Case is said to have told them Y-12 could produce it as quick as they needed it regardless of the timeframe. The scientists felt the part could be designed and manufactured in approximately one month of joint design and manufacturing effort. Jack Case decided that by Y-12 doing its own design and manufacture of the specialized part the time could be reduced considerably. In fact, the weapon part was designed AND produced overnight! That was astounding to the Los Alamos scientists and proved to add considerably to the confidence the weapons design labs came to have for Y-12.

As the Cold War continued and the need grew for additional and new weapons systems, after the uranium mission came to Y-12, the next major change in mission and addition to Y-12's overall capability was the separation of lithium. Y-12 was again chosen because of availability of the huge empty space of the large buildings that had housed the Calutrons now that they had been removed and the 14,700 tons of silver returned to the U. S. Treasury. The lithium separation processes at Y-12 were designed and construction begun in 1950 and the huge systems were operational by 1953. The Russians exploded their first thermonuclear device on August 12, 1953.

In March 1954, the U. S. tested its first deliverable thermonuclear weapon at the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands. It might be of interest to note that the very first test of a nuclear device after World War II was conducted at Bikini Atoll on June 30, 1946. Five days later, on July 5, 1946, French fashion designer, Louis Reard, created a scandal by unveiling his latest creation, the bikini bathing suit. It consisted of four tiny triangles of fabric and a handful of string. The Vatican denounced the suit as immoral, and it was prohibited in Spain and Italy. Reard chose the name bikini because it was “an explosive fashion.”

Just about the time Jack Case was beginning his tenure as Y-12 Plant Manager, the large metal case manufacturing was added to Y-12's uranium machining and lithium separation missions. In 1962 all uranium machining in the nuclear weapons complex was consolidated at Y-12. This came about primarily because of the efforts Y-12 had made to achieve and maintain a reputation second to none.

The next installment of this history series will contain stories about Jack Case that have been shared with me by present employees at Y-12 who recall Jack's low gravelly voice and distinct leadership for so many years. Anyone who has stories they would like see published as a part of the Jack Case history series, please contact me by phone at 865-851-6423 or by e-mail at [draysmith@comcast.net](mailto:draysmith@comcast.net).

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### **Section 3: Published in Y-Source – Y-12's online news**

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## ***Jack Case, part of Y-12's foundation***

### **Community Stories**

Jack M. Case, Y-12 Plant Manager for 15 years and namesake of the new Production Interface Facility (1/4/06)

*By Ray Smith* — The Jack Case Center is the name selected for the new production support facility. The name — chosen by a 2 to 1 margin with more than 300 voting — honors the memory of Jack M. Case, the Y-12 Plant Manager with the longest tenure — 15 years.

Case served from 1967 to 1982 as Y-12's strong and compelling leader, but his involvement in Y-12's history goes much further back. Over the next several months, we will share stories about his contributions to our history. Today's anecdotes are provided courtesy of Bill Wilcox.

The first story of Jack's personal involvement in our history begins during Y-12's first major mission transition. Y-12 was constructed in about 18 months, beginning in February 1943, to house the 1152 calutrons required to separate the uranium 235 needed for the first atomic bomb used in warfare (some 50 kg was actually shipped to Los Alamos). The nine major buildings and all the necessary support structures were built in 18 months; today the two privately financed buildings — the New Hope Building and the Jack Case Center — are also scheduled for completion in 18 months.

Shortly after the war's end in 1945, Y-12's employee population dropped from 22,000 to close to 3,000. Only Building 9204-3 (Beta 3) and Building 9731 (the Pilot Facility and first building completed) continued to function as calutron buildings. The uranium 235 separation mission moved from Y-12 to K-25, because the gaseous diffusion method was more economical than the electromagnetic separation process. Y-12 was without a mission, and workers began preparations to remove the calutrons and return the 14,700 tons of silver borrowed from the U.S. Treasury for electrical conductors because of the copper shortage during the war.

In July 1947, with unrest regarding Russia already hinting at the Cold War, more atomic bombs were to be manufactured. Some of the research-oriented top officials of Los Alamos were reluctant to get into the post-war business of producing the stockpile of nuclear weapons requested by the government. They did not have the staff or facilities to undertake any major expansion of production work with uranium. Case, telling the story on Y-12's second-era's 40th anniversary in 1987, said the idea that Y-12 should get into this weapons business came from the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington's General Manager Walt Williams, who thought the now-excess facilities at Y-12 could be used for machining uranium. Williams asked Y-12 to send a team to Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory to find out what would be needed to produce additional weapons of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki type designs, then come back to Y-12 and install the equipment to manufacture them.

Case (from the Machine Shops), Wimpy Hilton (from Tool Design), and John Strohecker (from Engineering) went to LASL, where they were admitted to the highly classified weapons areas. The morning of the first day they were shown "everything," but about noon — long before they had a chance to get much of the information they needed — someone "up the line pulled the plug," told the Y-12'ers their clearances were no good and had them ousted from the plant. Case said they "cooled their heels" out there for quite awhile phoning home, hiking and sightseeing while top AEC officials kept the phones lines hot trying to get things back on course. After an extended period, the team finally got back in.

When they came back to Tennessee, the team designed and built the facilities for machining uranium in hooded milling machines. They also created the first facilities for producing uranium metal from green salt (UF<sub>4</sub>) in greater than lab-scale quantities.

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Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and AEC managers insisted Y-12 provide a cost estimate for producing a certain number and type of weapons components. The Y-12 team was at a complete loss as to how to estimate the cost, not knowing in any detail what equipment and labor would be needed. Y-12 had no experience at all with machining uranium metal parts, but the AEC insisted. The team finally came up with an estimate of \$500,000, which turned out to be just what was charged!

As these anecdotes indicate, Case played a central role in key decisions regarding Y-12 as early as 1947. In a future article, we will share the story of what happened in April 1944 when both he and his brother were being drafted into the Army and he was sent to Oak Ridge while his brother was sent to fight in the war overseas. The details of that story will come from Case's son, Larry. Larry Case has also agreed to provide photos of his dad that will be of interest to those of you who never met him.

## ***Jack Case comes to Oak Ridge***

### **Community Stories**



Case served as Y-12 Plant Superintendent until his retirement in January 1982

*By Ray Smith – (1/12/06):* We continue our history of Jack Case — namesake of the Jack Case Center — by focusing on his early life and telling the story of how he came to Y-12. As mentioned in the first article, the 420,000-square foot production support facility being constructed north of the site of the old Administration Building 9704-2 is named the Jack Case Center in honor of Case, the Y-12 plant manager with the longest tenure (15 years). Many of those who knew Case recall his distinctive voice and unique leadership style.

Case was a native of East Alton, Illinois. He served a four-year toolmaker apprenticeship at Olin Cartridge Company in his home town. Early in his career he worked in several aircraft plants in California, where he received special engineering training at the University of California at Los Angeles. He also worked in small arms tool design and fabrication with the U.S. Cartridge Company at St. Louis, Missouri. He joined the Tennessee Eastman Corporation at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant in April 1944.

In 1943, both Case and his brother-in-law, Ben Karnosky, joined the Illinois National Guard. In April 1944 they were being drafted into the Army at St. Louis, Missouri. As they were going through the induction process, officers processing the paperwork explained that the country was in desperate need of tool makers, whether civilian or military. The decision was immediately made to send Case to a place called “Oak Ridge” in Tennessee.

Case didn't know what to think, because Oak Ridge, being a secret city, wasn't even on the map. His brother-in-law was going to war in the South Pacific, but he was being assigned to an unknown area in Tennessee with no hint of what he would be doing. What he really wanted was to help America win World War II. Little did he know just how much he would contribute to actually winning the war in just over a year and a half!

Case spent his first three months in Oak Ridge living in a dormitory before bringing his wife and son to join him. Hazel, Case's wife (now deceased), willingly embraced a new life and an uncertain future in an unknown town. Their young son, Larry – the first born child in the family, was less than four months old at the time. In addition to Larry, others in the Case family are: daughter Linda Fellers and son Patrick. Larry and his wife Marilyn have two children – Blake and Stacey. Blake's son, born in June 2005 is named for his great grandfather – our own Jack Marion Case. Stacy has a daughter – Ella Ruth Rumpsa born July 2005.

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Over the years, Case worked as

- a toolmaker,
- a craft foreman,
- a general foreman,
- a general foreman for shops,
- Maintenance Department superintendent,
- Maintenance Division head,
- Mechanical Operations superintendent,
- Assistant Y-12 Plant superintendent,
- Y-12 Deputy superintendent and
- Y-12 Plant superintendent beginning in 1967.

He served as Y-12 Plant superintendent until his retirement in January 1982.

At Case's retirement, Clyde Hopkins, then Vice President of Union Carbide Nuclear Division, said, "He began work April 10, 1944, as a toolmaker, and in five years he was a superintendent. In 1954, he became manager of the largest production division in the plant — the old Mechanical Operations division, which involved 40 to 50 percent of the workers in the whole plant. In the 1960's he was made assistant plant manager and a few years later plant manager. Few persons are able to influence the lives of others as Jack Case has. He is one of the major reasons Y-12 has the reputation of a can-do outfit. And there is no question but people will tell you he is a great fellow to work with."

Naming the production interface building the "Jack Case Center," a choice made by Y-12 employees by a 2 to 1 margin of more than 300 voters, indicates people remember Case's contributions.

In future stories, we will share more comments from his retirement party that also indicate the great esteem with which he was held by the 700 people who attended. The party was held in the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering building, likely the only structure in Oak Ridge that would hold 700 people at the time. And it was so new that it didn't yet have heat.

The above story came from two sources — Larry Case, Jack's oldest son, and the February 1, 1982, edition of The Oak Ridger, in which Joan Wallace's front page coverage of Jack's retirement article is entitled, "*Hundreds exude warmth for Y-12 chief.*"

## ***Hundreds exude warmth for Y-12 chief***

### **Community Stories**



Jack Case, warmly remembered.

*By Ray Smith – (1/23/06):* More than 700 people attended Jack Case's retirement on January 29, 1982. This third installment in Case's history focuses on some of their comments regarding their admiration, respect and affection for him.

Case's retirement was held in the Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering's new building at the corner of Lafayette Avenue and Emory Valley Road. George Evans was responsible for setting up the event. "This plant would not be what it is today if it were not for Jack Case."

— John Murray, Y-12 Plant Manager from 1954 to 1961

"If someone asked 'Can you make this?' Jack would say 'Yes' if we could or couldn't, but then we would make it!"

— Bill Sahr, supervisor, Y-12 Fabrication Division

"Jack Case reminds me of President Roosevelt. He was always for the working man, the poor man. Jack always talks to you anywhere you see him; you can't say that about some others."

— J. D. Davis, Y-12 Fabrication Division machinist for 31 years

"Jack was one manager you could always depend on to do what he said he'd do."

— B. W. Hensley, former head of Atomic Trades and Labor Council. (At the time, Hensley was head of the metal trades department of the AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C.)

"He's the most compassionate person I've ever seen in my life. Whether he's with a cleaner, a machinist, a superintendent, he looks at every individual as an individual. He tries to be fair to all."

— Tom Webber, General Machine Shop Department Superintendent and veteran of 37 years at Y-12

"We are losing a jewel, we really are."

— Hal Simerly, shift superintendent and with 31 years at Y-12

"You couldn't ask for a better boss."

— Kay Steed, Case's long time secretary.

"Perfect!"

— Steed's husband, B. M. Steed, a lubricator at Y-12 with 24 years experience

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“I don't know anyone more personable, responsible, always fair and honest and a tremendous craftsman.”

— Tally Livingston, regional director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service  
“If he met you in New York, he would know you and talk to you. He is a fine person.”

— Theo Thompkins, salvage department worker with 15 years at Y-12  
“He's one of the nicest guys, has the most friends of anyone I know, and one of my favorite people!”

— Bobbie Hill, who worked as a secretary in the plant manager's office

Case stood near the entrance of the huge just barely completed warehouse type structure - Oak Ridge Tool and Engineering building for over an hour shaking hands with those who came to wish him well in retirement. The building did not even have heat installed in it yet, and remember, this was January 29 - likely a bit of chill in the air - but 700 people enjoyed food and drink (there were five cash bars) and honored one very well-liked man.

Anyone who was anyone at all in Union Carbide Nuclear Division spoke that night as did several other dignitaries at what may well have been the largest retirement party in Oak Ridge's history. It was the retirement party for the man known to personify excellent leadership and who brought the “can do” attitude to Y-12 and by doing so enhanced the reputation of all of Oak Ridge.

Among the people speaking at Jack's retirement from Union Carbide were John Davidson, George Evans, Roger Hibbs, George Jasney, Charlie Robinson, Bill Thomas and Paul Vanstrum. Speakers from other locations were Jack Altarcuse, Goodyear Atomic manager for operations;

Hershell Hickman, DOE contract administrator for Y-12; Steve Root, assistant director weapons division, Lawrence Livermore Scientific Laboratory; Ken Sommerfeld, executive director ORNL; and Clay Zerby, Manager of Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. Gordon Fee, new superintendent of the Y-12 Plant and Case's replacement, introduced Case.

Case concluded the evening by saying, “I am amazed to see so many people here. I really respect so many here who have helped me. When I came here I was 24 years old. The Army made me come, either in uniform or out. I was a tool and die maker, but on my lunch hour I was told to empty the spittoons. In those days you weren't allowed to smoke in the shop. So I carried them out, emptied them, cleaned them. It makes you humble,” he smiled.

“I've enjoyed it all — the rough and the good times. There are some here I've worked closely with who I'll really miss.” He drew attention to his secretary, calling Mrs. Steed a fine, intelligent, helpful woman with whom he's spent more time than his late wife. Case also mentioned George Mitchell and Claude Hensley. “Claude's the best man anywhere on his feet in a machine shop. When he sits down, he's not that good.”

He said he'd always admired the union people and always listened to them. “I respect the man who sweeps my office every day - he does a fine job,” he said matter-of-factly. “People have asked why I'm retiring. I'll be 64 in April, and I'd like to do something else. I'm satisfied that I've done a satisfactory job - not great, but okay. I want to go out while I'm feeling good and try something else,” Case concluded. Clyde Hopkins' remarks highlighting Case as the person who gained Y-12 its “can do” reputation were included in a previous article.

Roger Hibbs, president of Union Carbide Nuclear Division, said of Case, “Many say Jack was a pioneer - he was the first EEO (equal employment opportunity) type. Long before equal rights, women's liberation and so on, Jack took on the job of training 700 women who didn't know a milling machine from a washing machine to produce very precise graphite parts.

“He built the first materials testing reactor and took it to Idaho. It was the most intense reactor until Jack built the HFIR. He built all sorts of exotic shapes to make the country's nuclear arsenal. And he was a

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pioneer in fusion. The Elmo Bumpy Torus would not have reached fruition without Jack. Then there were the wonderful space objects to sample the lunar surface and return with lunar integrity intact. But more important than all of these - all the years Jack was managing Y-12 - all those thousands of hours, people were five to ten times safer at work than at home.” Hibbs then presented Case a special UCND award presented for only the second time. Hibbs concluded, “Jack is a very firm, fair manager and a helluva fine guy.

“Y-12 is better. Oak Ridge is better. DOE programs have benefited. In fact, the country is better off because of Jack Case's tremendous ability. His creative work has kept the United States in front of the defense program,” said Paul Vanstrum, Senior Vice President, UCND.

Charlie Robinson, President of the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, said of Case, “He began work with a union card in his pocket and he never forgot that. He built the biggest machine shop in the free world, or as far as I know in the world. I've had a lot of supervisors, line foreman, general foremen, department heads, division heads. The only person I ever called my boss with dignity is Jack Case. We've had disagreements, but he always treated me fairly.”

Case was presented with a number of plaques and mementos, a tall wooden gun rack and a thick leather-covered album of pictures of him and co-workers through the years. Jack's son, Larry, has provided us access to this album and other materials for use in writing these articles.

The quotes in this article came from the front page article by Joan Wallace in the February 1, 1982, edition of The Oak Ridger. Our next article will feature comments contained in a news article from The Oak Ridger written by Dick Smyser about the community's perception of Jack Case.

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## ***Jack Case – Working up through the ranks***

*By Ray Smith* - This fourth installment in the history of Jack Case - namesake for the Jack Case Center - will feature comments in a news article on Page 4 of The Oak Ridger published Friday, January 29, 1982 on the actual date of his retirement. The last article highlighted many comments from his peers and co-workers. This article will reflect the community's perspective of Jack Case the person known locally and nationally as "Mr. Y-12."

The article is titled: *Jack Case: The personification of working up through the ranks*, and is reprinted here with permission of The Oak Ridger.

"The people who work for him would almost rather have his word than a written contract."

That's the way one of his closer associates sums up the feelings about Jack Case, whose retirement at the Y-12 plant becomes official today.

Case's official job description in more recent years has been plant superintendent. But he likely would have had no objection, and perhaps might have even preferred, had he been listed as "machinist" or more precisely "toolmaker."

Jack Case, like few other people in Carbide management here, or industrial management anywhere, truly came up through the ranks. He was – is – a machinist, or more precisely a toolmaker, and proud of it. And this fact has made him one of the best-liked, most-respected and most credible Carbide managers in Oak Ridge's now nearly 40-year history.

"He's got a lot of manufacturing intelligence."

"His ability to get along with others is unsurpassed."

"No matter what sort of oddball thing they wanted us to build out here (at Y-12) he could look at the proposal and steer us in the right direction."

"He would lay out the fine points and give us a goal and then give us a lot of room. Sure, he pushed us if we got bogged down."

"Working with him was like taking a graduate course in the humanities."

These are some of the other things that those closest to him say.

The Y-12 plant is the local facility that is always most difficult to describe. This is because it is the plant that is least understood by Oak Ridgers themselves. For although it is the plant geographically closest to the community, because of its major weapons role, it is also the plant area that is least accessible to visitors.

But the best description is that it is probably the world's largest, most sophisticated, most innovative machine shop.

For out of the original need of the Manhattan Project for not only devices and equipment never before manufactured, but also never before conceived – parts, gadgets as small as a pin (and likely smaller) and as large as a battleship (well almost) – has come into being this unique facility and its unique staff of workmen and craftsmen and superintendents like Case who can, literally, do, make most anything. And they have made most anything, for the nuclear project's military missions, of course, but also for its more recent and much broader and more positive missions as well. And for many other federal programs too,

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most especially the space program.

And Case has been the key person in Y-12's accomplishments since the plants very origins in 1944 – first as a craft foreman, then as a general foreman, general foreman for shops, maintenance department superintendent, maintenance division head, mechanical operations superintendent, assistant plant superintendent, deputy plant superintendent and, since 1969, plant superintendent.

That is working one's way up through the ranks. There is the basis for the kind of confidence and affection that Case has earned from his fellow workers. It is entirely appropriate that they honor him tonight at what promises to be one of the most genuinely warm and personal, if hugely attended, retirement parties in this community that has said in more recent years to have made retirement parties its second largest industry.

May we join in the congratulations and best wishes to Jack Case, toolmaker virtually without peer, for long and fulfilling years ahead.

Although not credited in the article from the Oak Ridger, likely the above news article was written by long-time Oak Ridge resident and major force behind The Oak Ridger for years - Dick Smyser. In the next installment of the Jack Case history series we will look at some letters he received from friends near and far at the time of his retirement.

## **Jack Case – Letters from friends**

*By Ray Smith – (2/13/06) — This segment of history about Jack Case — namesake for the Jack Case Center — provides readers a chance to read some of the letters received at his retirement from people across the nation who respected Case and what he accomplished at Y-12.*

### **From Pat Fourney, a fellow Carbide manager:**

*Dear Jack,*

*In my forty-plus years with Carbide, I have not attended any other retirement party where so many people from so many walks of life were gathered together to honor the retiree. There were, in addition to the top brass, an awful lot of hourly people, union representatives, and retirees from all payrolls at your party. I know you were pleased to see that B. W. Hensley had come in from Washington, that Tally Livingston had come in from Atlanta, and that many others had traveled a long way to let you know how they felt about you.*

*Over the years, you've had the common touch and have let all those with whom you did business know that you were concerned about their problems as well as your own.*

*I have enjoyed very much working with you during the period I have been in Oak Ridge and join with your many other friends in wishing you success and happiness during your retirement years.*

*Sincerely,*

*Pat*

### **From William W. Hoover, a Major General, U.S. Air Force:**

*Dear Jack,*

*I am sorry that a very heavy travel schedule in January precluded me from contacting you personally prior to your retirement. I certainly want to let you know of the great appreciation I have for the devoted service and professional management which you have demonstrated as the Plant Manager of Y-12. Your personal commitment to getting the job done under what has frequently been less than ideal conditions has contributed greatly to our overall mission success and has been particularly beneficial in the development of a close and harmonious working relationship between Union Carbide and the Department.*

*All of the members of the Office of Military Application join me in wishing you the very best in health, prosperity, and happiness in your retirement. It is certainly no more than you deserve.*

*Sincerely,*

*William W. Hoover,  
Major General, USAF  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Military Application*

### **From Hershel Hickman, Assistant Manager for Defense Programs at DOE Oak Ridge Operations:**

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*Dear Jack:*

*Congratulations on your forthcoming retirement following a long and distinguished career.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your many contributions to DOE programs, and in particular, to the weapons program. Your outstanding leadership and management ability will certainly be missed. It has been a pleasure working with you, and your cooperation and support have made my job easier.*

*I join your many friends in wishing you the best of health, happiness, and success in your future endeavors.*

*Sincerely,*

*H. D. Hickman, Assistant Manager for Defense Programs*

**From Robert L. Vaughn of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers:**

*Dear Mr. Case:*

*Best wishes on your retirement, and let me add that your work and support on programs of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers is well known. I would like to express my appreciation for your 25 years as a member of SME, your active work in membership recruitment and retention, your expertise in developing technical conferences and clinics, and your role for many years as a leader at the cutting edge of manufacturing.*

*The strong friendship between Union Carbide and SME is, in great measure, due to your efforts.*

*Again, congratulations on your retirement and best wishes for the future.*

*Sincerely,*

*Robert L. Vaughn*

**From Donald M. Kerr, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory:**

*Dear Jack:*

*On behalf of my staff and myself, I'd like to extend my very best wishes on the occasion of your retirement. Your contributions since 1944 have significantly enhanced our national security.*

*The relationship between the Laboratory and Y-12 has been all the more pleasant and productive as a direct result of your leadership and friendship. I wish you every happiness and good health, Jack, and may those wells you're drilling produce bountifully.*

*Best regards,*

*Donald M. Kerr, Director, Los Alamos National Laboratory*

Watch Y-Source for the next article, where the Jack Case management system will be highlighted.

## **Jack Case – Jack Case Management System**

*By Ray Smith – (3/16/06): This article about the history of Jack Case — namesake for the Jack Case Center — focuses on a letter received at his retirement from A. L. Conte, manager of Union Carbide Battery Products Division, which extols the virtues of a leadership style he learned at the feet of Jack Case while working at Y-12.*

Anyone who knew Mr. Case will agree with the effectiveness of the simple yet profound management style he practiced consistently and without fail. Successful managers learned from him; unsuccessful ones who didn't were not long left in positions of responsibility — it was that simple.

*Dear Jack,*

*If I were making a speech on the occasion of your retirement from Union Carbide, this is what I would want the other guests to know.*

*It doesn't seem possible that enough years have gone by for you to be retiring, but then I remember that after 10½ years in Oak Ridge, I have now been in Cleveland for 20 years. I wish you good health and much happiness as you leave Y-12. Fortunately for the Nuclear Division you will leave behind a host of colleagues who have learned the "JCMS," Jack Case Management System, after which the good parts of the Union Carbide Management System (UCMS) must have been taken.*

*I have never forgotten how good and important you made me feel about myself and my job when I was fresh out of college and just starting my UCC career at Y-12. I called you about a work order (because somebody laughingly suggested it) I had sent to the machine shop for the Health Physics Department. You invited me to the shop so I could explain the problem in more detail. In spite of all the really important work you had to do, you took time to give me a tour of the shop and introduce me to all of your department supervisors and to personally explain the shop priority system. That was a grand day for me, and I use it often as an example of the human side of top management.*

*As I worked for you in my assigned task of project engineering for the then Mechanical Operations Division, I often pondered what it was about Jack Case that brought out the very best in all the people who worked for him from superintendents to machinist and machine operators. I call it the Jack Case Management System now that I am more attuned to such Corporate thoughts. Back then, I just knew that Jack Case was a "hell of a Guy" and it might be wise to emulate the attributes I had been exposed to.*

*What then is the Jack Case Management System? Well, the way I perceived it is as follows:*

- 1. Select well-trained, hard-working and objective people who are considerate and concerned about the general well being of their subordinates.***
- 2. Tell them what you want to accomplish.***
- 3. Trust them and let them do the job.***

*The results were the development of able men like Claude Hensley, Jim Thorpe, John Gordon, Pete Rinderer, Harold Alvey, Lyle Langdon, Harold Babb, Henry Spec, just to name a few, and a host of others who always rose to meet the deadlines and get the work out.*

*When I left Oak Ridge to take a job with the Battery Products division, I took "JCMS" with me and have used it since. I am grateful that I had an opportunity to know you and to work for you. Thanks for what you taught me.*

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*Not too many people come to Cleveland just for the fun of it, but if you should for any reason, I would be proud to have you visit our home as well as our Battery Division facilities, including our new R&D Laboratory.*

*With warmest best wishes,*

*A. L. Conte*

The simple three-step process described by Conte in his letter remains profound today. Select well-trained, hard-working and objective people; let them know what needs to be done and then trust them to do their job — simple, but still effective.

The next article will include an e-mail from a reader who expanded upon the JCMS from his personal experience.

## ***Jack Case Management System – there's more***

*By Ray Smith – (3/28/06):* An interesting thing is happening with the publication of the Jack Case history series. Many people are contacting me with stories and information about their memories and experiences of Jack Case.

One such experience comes from Ed Bailey, who adds a fourth element to the Jack Case Management System.

Ed Bailey came to Oak Ridge in 1945 as a military member of the Special Engineer Detachment working at K 25. In 1948 he transferred to Y-12, bringing with him the knowledge of statistical quality control that was being introduced here. You may be familiar with Dr. Deming's approach to statistical quality management; what Bailey brought to Y-12 was a forerunner of that philosophy.

It is interesting to note that Y-12 was practicing statistical quality control well before Deming introduced it to Japan after World War II, leading that country's ascendancy in quality. Over the years, Y-12 has quietly continued to use statistical quality control as a primary method of maintaining the world's highest quality machining capability.

In 1950, Bailey became the superintendent of Dimensional Inspection when Jack Case was the superintendent of Mechanical Operations. In 1960, Bailey moved to Development where he was instrumental in developing the air-bearing spindle and other machining advances that kept Y-12 in the forefront of machining. He then went with John Murray to another assignment for several years.

In 1972 Bailey returned to Oak Ridge working for the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Operations in Quality Assurance with Joe Lenhard. In 1984 he returned to Y-12 as Special Assistant to Gordon Fee. Bailey shares his perception of the Jack Case Management System.

The Oak Ridge Observer today talked about the JCMS and listed three elements observed by A. L. Conte. I believe that there is a fourth element that was so very important.

Here is the way he did it:

People involved in a specific project would meet in Jack's office to talk about knotty problems and what we were going to do about them. After good interchange of ideas and as the meeting was drawing to a close, Jack would always end the meeting with the question:

'OK, now what do you need from me?'

Usually no one asked for anything. With that question, he took away all our excuses for failing. If you did ask for something, Jack would give you the help you needed. But if you did not, you were really motivated to solve the problems. The monkey was on your back.

So, the Jack Case Management System with Ed Bailey's addition is:

- 1. Select well-trained, hard working and objective people who are considerate and concerned about the general well being of their subordinates.**
- 2. Tell them what you want to accomplish.**
- 3. Trust them and let them do the job.**

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**4. When problems arise, let the team identify solutions and ask, “Now, what do you need from me?”**

As I continue writing about the history of Jack Case, many people tell me how much they appreciate seeing the articles and almost everyone has a story to tell. Although I cannot always use all the stories for one reason or another, many of them will eventually turn up in this series.

One thing that is becoming clear is that anyone who interacted with Jack Case recalls him fondly and respected his ability to lead people. This is obviously refreshing to recall in today’s world, which is quite different than the times we are recalling. Yet, effective leadership still depends on the simple basic truths of relationship, skills (both technical and people) and the ability to see a vision and clearly communicate that vision to others. Jack Case did those things well.

## ***Jack Case – Building Y-12 for the Cold War***

*By Ray Smith – (4/5/06):* This is the story of how Jack Case prepared Y-12 to become the world's leading and most precise machine shop — one capable of leading the way in eventually winning the Cold War. Who would have thought that one manufacturing facility in the Bear Creek Valley of Oak Ridge, Tenn., would ultimately have such a significant and worldwide impact — Little Boy to help end World War II, then production of nuclear weapons secondaries to result in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the defeat of Communism in the Soviet Union?

The following is an excerpt from a letter from Jay Wechsler, WX Division Leader, Los Alamos National Laboratory, sent to be read at Case's retirement:

Those of us who have spent a substantial period of time in the nuclear business think of the Y-12 Plant as the real image of "getting the job done." In a large measure, this feeling comes from the kind of direction and leadership that Jack Case provides and inspires. Regardless of the complexity and long-term schedule vagaries of our business, Jack gets to the heart of the difficulty and when convinced the problem warrants direct attention, no one in the entire complex has any doubts but that it gets the best of our resources and effort.

Jack, we at Los Alamos feel that we go back a long way together with memories of tough, almost impossible tasks developed and executed on even more impossible time scales. For those of us who have already (or are about to) perform the "step aside" maneuver, we thank you for what you have meant to our way of life for the past 37 years. Max Roy sends his special regards.

In many ways, Case recognized the vital nature of what was needed at Y-12 to sustain the country's need for nuclear weapons after World War II and as Russia began to build and explode their own nuclear weapons. It was apparent that Russia was intent upon taking the lead in this new, virtually unknown field when they exploded their first atomic bomb in 1949. That was not acceptable to the United States government.

It was also becoming evident, as Case and others were sent to Los Alamos in 1947 to bring back the information necessary to produce additional uranium and plutonium bombs, that Russia was not limiting itself to those type of weapons. President Truman announced in January 1950 that both atomic and thermonuclear bombs would be built.

Once that decision was made, intense pressure was put on all parts of the Nuclear Weapons Complex. The nuclear weapons program was called upon to take giant steps and was expected to perform flawlessly in creating, testing and deploying thermonuclear weapons as quickly as possible.

The U.S. exploded "Mike," our first thermonuclear test in October 1952. In 1953, the Russians exploded their first thermonuclear bomb.

Larger and larger yields were created in each new bomb tested. The race was on almost as quickly as Y-12 determined how to mass produce nuclear weapons components. Case saw it coming. He began preparing Y-12 for the future demands of the Cold War through strong leadership in whatever position he held.

All U.S. nuclear weapons have components from Y-12. Each new concept designed by the weapons laboratories required Y-12 to achieve greater accuracies using more exotic and never-before-machined materials.

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Case encouraged others and helped lead the changes necessary to keep Y-12 in the forefront of the weapons program, thus helping maintain the lead in the Cold War even as China exploded its first nuclear bomb in 1964 and India, eventually, exploded a nuclear device (they did not call it a bomb).

All of these incidents caused the “doomsday clock” to be set closer to midnight and Y-12 to increase production time and again. Case's “Can Do” attitude kept the technological demands on Y-12 high and often caused the people working in the trenches to draw upon every resource available to meet the required deadlines. Y-12 never missed a shipment date during the entire race to win the Cold War.

When Case retired in 1982 the demands on Y-12 were already increasing beyond anything since the Manhattan Project days of 1944 and 1945.

More than 8,000 people worked three shifts to produce the secondaries required to keep the nuclear weapons stockpile growing at the rate needed to exceed the capacity of the Soviet Union. Y-12 was able to sustain that monumental effort for years because of the foresight of people such as Case, who bought machine tools and measuring tools, put computers on them, and created the single most capable machine shop in the world.

To say that Y-12 was state-of-the-art is misleading. Y-12 was continually establishing and then moving the state-of-the-art in machining and manufacturing. Case, known as “Mr. Y-12” to many at that time, played a huge role.

## ***Jack Case: Employees' stories***

*By Ray Smith – (4/19/06):* Over the past several weeks as the Jack Case articles have been published on Y-Source, several employees have contacted me with positive feedback regarding the stories. Many of you have also told me your personal “Jack Case stories.” Not all of the stories are ones I can publish, but many are fond memories and good stories. The following stories come from current Y-12 employees and retirees.

Bob Presley shares the following story.

David Sisson and I made and shipped a special round part that had been made for Los Alamos National Laboratory. The part was packed and shipped to LANL by motor freight. When the part arrived at LANL it was no longer round, but oval shaped having two flat sides.

The irate customer called Jack Case and said he wanted the persons responsible for making and shipping that part fired. Jack told the customer to ship the part back and we would make it good and get to the bottom of the problem. The day the part arrived back at Y-12 the customer from LANL and Jack Case were present for the opening of the returned part.

When the shipping container was opened the customer became more irate. Seems that the shipping department at LANL had used the same shipping container to send the part back in which we had sent the part to LANL, and had also used motor freight as the carrier. When packing the part for the return trip LANL had rotated the part in the shipping container 90 degrees making the part square when it arrived, now having four flat sides.

After looking at the part Jack asked the customer from LANL, “Just who should be fired?” but got no answer. Jack laughed, telling David and me to make sure the part got packed correctly next time. Jack walked out to his big green Buick, got in, and drove off, leaving the irate customer still fuming and standing on the dock alone.

Speaking of the “big green Buick,” Ed Tilley shares a story.

However, before you read Tilley's story, it will help you to know that “Tape Talk” was a weekly meeting held on Monday mornings at 7 a.m. in the 9212 No. 1 conference room, located on the second floor of Building 9723-25. (Long-time Y-12'ers understand this perfectly.) Before the meeting an audio tape was generated by a key person in each of the various production departments by passing it from one department to another, each department adding significant accomplishments or problem areas. Thus, the audio tape contained a record of the week's activities, highlighting any significant accomplishments and especially noting any troubling issues in each of the production areas of responsibility. The finished tape was then played in Case's “Tape Talk” meeting with all the division managers.

Now for Ed's story.

It was Ed's job to set up the audio tape player and to start the audio tape when Mr. Case gave him the signal, which was almost always worded in his low gravelly voice as, “Let's get the show on the road.” One of Ed's fears was that the tape player would fail each time he hit the play button, but it never did.

Ed recalled that it was Mr. Case's practice to drive his “big green Buick” right up to the front door of the entrance to 9723-25 and just get out, leaving the keys in the car. The unspoken rule was that someone moved the car and parked it for him, and right before he came out of “Tape Talk” the car was brought back to the spot in front of the door. The parking in front of 9723-25 has been a problem for a long time, huh?

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You may recall that another unspoken rule was that your division manager had better not learn anything new about something happening from “Tape Talk.” It was your job to be sure the division manager knew everything before it was put on tape. Communications tended to work better that way.

I want to thank each of you who have given me positive feedback about these articles on Jack Case. I also want to solicit your continued involvement by sending me stories we can share. If you have a “Jack Case” story, please email them to me at [smithdr@y12.doe.gov](mailto:smithdr@y12.doe.gov), or call me at 576-7781.

## ***What do Jack Case and Boss Hogg have in common?***

*By Ray Smith, (5/11/06):* Mike Bradshaw, Wackenhut retiree and long-time Y-12 employee, shares a humorous Jack Case story.

For many years in the 1970's and 1980's, there was a quarterly requirement for representatives from Y-12, along with all other Weapons Complex contractors, to travel to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to review production status, and cost and budget.

On one trip, Case accompanied Bradshaw and Bill Thompson. He gave them \$100 to buy him a white cowboy hat, telling them the required size. The two of them searched Albuquerque's western clothing stores. They found many cowboy hats, many of them white, but they were having a tough time finding one large enough for Case's specified size.

Finally, they found a specialty western clothing store that carried extra large clothing and hats. They hurriedly purchased the largest hat in the store, which happened to be the exact size Case had specified. It was a huge white Stetson with the crease running down the middle of the crown and the brim curved just right. (Roy Rogers, Gene Autry or Hopalong Cassidy would have been proud to be seen in this hat.) Bradshaw and Thompson even got a box for the hat. However, the box was so large that it would not fit into a suitcase, so they hand-carried it to the airport.

Case was elated with the excellent choice Bradshaw and Thompson had made, and the hat fit just right. He took it in the box through the airport ticket lines and gates, taking care to keep it with him at all times. The trouble began when he tried to fit the huge hat box anywhere in the airplane cabin. He had refused to check it at the ticket counter or when the stewardess tried to help stow it for the trip, afraid something would happen to it. It would not fit in the overhead carry-on luggage bin and would not go beneath the seat. After trying everything he could think of, Case found the solution — he would wear the hat. So, he discarded the box and put the hat on his head.

There was no missing him; the huge hat shone for all to see. Those of you who recall Case's appearance will not be surprised that when wearing that huge white Stetson he looked a bit like "Boss Hogg," the television character on the Dukes of Hazard. More than one person on the flight asked the attendants whether the person in the white cowboy hat was Boss Hogg.

Bradshaw and Thompson got a huge kick out of the spectacle of their boss being oblivious to the questions being asked about him and only being concerned with getting his prize cowboy hat home without any damage.

If you have a Jack Case story, please email it to me at [smithdr@y12.doe.gov](mailto:smithdr@y12.doe.gov), or call me at 576 7781.

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## ***Jack Case: A man of few words***

*By Ray Smith – (5/30/06):* As often happens when we run a Jack Case history article, it reminds others at Y-12 of their interactions with him. Ron Ragland of Financial Management shares his memories.

“Jack was well respected by the design laboratories, and I would be on a team making visits with him to the laboratories where Jack would be asked to comment on the ability of Y-12 to fabricate a certain design. The answer by Jack was always positive, and Y-12 always performed when the order hit the plant. The reputation of Y-12 as a 'can do' organization grew under Case's leadership.

“One of my most vivid memories was when I was the financial division manager for Y-12. I had only been in the job for approximately 2 months when it was time to prepare the budget. When the information was compiled, the staff said that Case had to approve the manpower numbers, and I went to Case's office with the spreadsheet containing the manpower levels by each division. Case studied the spreadsheet for a few minutes, looked up at me and said 'too high' and pushed the spreadsheet across the table to me. I said 'thank you' and left the office.

“Walking back to my office I wondered how I should deal with the issue. I got a car and made a visit to each of the major operating divisions and said to the division director, 'Mr. Case says the manpower numbers are too high, you need to rework,' and left the office.

“In two days time, the numbers were lowered, I revisited Case for approval. Case said the manpower numbers now look 'OK.' Jack Case was a man of few words, but he had the sense of the plant facilities and its people and had the respect of everyone.

Ron Ragland is an example of a long-time manager who recalls fondly the earlier days and continues to appreciate the present missions of Y-12, as well as anticipating the future.

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## ***Jack Case: An employee's stories***

*By Ray Smith – (6/14/06):* Ralph Lockhart, an electrician with 36 years experience at Y-12, recalls some early encounters with Jack Case. If you know Ralph, you would expect that his stories would have an unusual "truth is stranger than fiction" air about them. I enjoy listening to Ralph tell of his almost unbelievable misunderstandings with supervision over the years. One almost has to feel sorry for Ralph's supervisors because he seems to constantly be getting them in some sort of "fix" with their managers. He does not do this on purpose, he just seems to get into extremely unusual circumstances.

I recall sitting in Al Bissell Park one night when he and I were walking the Relay for Life to raise support for cancer as a part of the Y-12 team. He got to telling me stories about things that had happened to him during his career at Y-12. We talked for hours — well, Ralph talked. I listened and laughed until I could not laugh anymore.

The first story I relay is about Ralph building a snowman. One cold winter day when Ralph was waiting on the bus while standing directly across the street from Building 9737, he became bored just standing there getting cold. It was snowing, and the snow was building up a bit. So Ralph started rolling up balls of snow for a snowman. Ralph's department head saw what he was doing by looking out the window of the front of the building. He put his coat on and came out to where Ralph was rolling up the snow to tell him to quit doing that.

Right then the Y-12 Plant Manager, Jack Case, came driving by in his "big green Buick." Case stopped, got out of the car, and proceeded to help Ralph finish the snowman. He even put the finishing touch on the masterpiece by removing his own necktie and placing it on the snowman while the department head stood by without knowing what to say or do.

See what I mean? Ralph was just passing the time and the plant manager happened to pass by right at that time. It happens that way with Ralph.

Ralph tells of another unusual encounter with Case.

"On one occasion, I needed to go to Nashville to receive a certificate of appreciation for some work I had done in HAM radio, and I called Mr. Case to ask if I could get permission to do this on company time. He said sure. I told him that no one would believe me and asked if he would put that in writing for me. He agreed and I stopped by his office to pick up a yellow hand written note stating that I could travel to Nashville on company time.

"I took the hand written note from Mr. Case to my department head, and he did not believe it was a real note from Jack Case. He wadded it up and threw it in the trash can. I called Mr. Case and told him what had happened. He said, 'Ralph, you wait right there.'

"Well, Mr. Case arrived and stepped in the department head's office. He was on the phone and before he could get off the call, Mr. Case picked up the trash can and dumped the contents on the top of the desk. He picked up the yellow note, smoothed it out and said, 'When I send you a note I expect you to read it and do what it says.' Needless to say, that department head never forgot that little incident.

Ralph has many more stories of unusual encounters, especially with Y-12 managers and supervisors. I have enjoyed listening to him tell stories of his mishaps that are well intended but often go awry.

Do you have a story to share? If so, email Ray Smith or call him at 576 7781.

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## ***Jack Case: Don't tell anyone where you got this***

*By Ray Smith – (8/7/06):* Ward Marsh, a long time Y-12 manager, knew Jack Case and recalls fondly the relationship he saw between Case and one of his loyal managers, John W. (Bill) Ebert, who managed the Maintenance Division for many years. Ward describes his first encounter with Jack Case:

"When I had worked at Y-12 only a couple of years in the late 1960's, I got a call from the Maintenance division secretary telling me to be at the Plant Manager's office at a certain time. I asked, 'Should I know what this meeting is about?' She said, 'No, just be there on time.'

"I arrived a bit early and was seated outside Mr. Case's office. After a bit of a wait, I was told to go on in. When I arrived Mr. Case was seated at his desk. He did not ask me to be seated but rather reached into his desk drawer and pulled out an envelope, which he extended to me. His comment to me in the low gravely voice was, 'Son, don't you tell anyone where you got this or how much it is.'

"Nothing else was said except my 'Yes, Sir,' and I left his office. I did not even know there was an incentive program at the time and I surely did not expect to get such recognition from the plant manager.

Marsh's memory of the personal attention paid him by Case has stayed with him all these years, and I dare say it has continued to impress on him the importance placed on his work by a Y-12 plant manager. Over the years Marsh has managed many different organizations at Y-12 and for a few years managed an Energy Systems-wide maintenance program office. On occasion he has been able to provide recognition to others, and I am sure he has found this personally satisfying.

Case's tradition of rewarding individuals and teams at Y-12 continues to be a part of our overall management strategy. Throughout the years there have been Awards of Excellence, Awards Night, Special Incentive Awards, Special Recognition Awards, Short-Term Incentive Awards and many other recognition programs. All have a positive effect on those recognized for their special contributions.

However, I doubt that any of them that Marsh has received carry more meaning than that one brief visit to Case's office where an experienced and successful leader took the time to impress a young engineer by personally handing him a check and telling him, "Son, don't you tell anyone where you got this or how much it is."

Do you have a story to share? If so, email Ray Smith or call him at 576 7781.

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## ***Jack Case in 1964 simply expected an outstanding job from every supervisor***



**ASSISTANT PLANT SUPERINTENDENT JACK M. CASE** (insert) addresses a recent Supervisory Conference. The subject of Case's presentation is "What Management Expects of the Supervisor in the Y-12 Plant."

*By Ray Smith*

The following information is taken from the Y-12 Bulletin of January 29, 1964. The entire article is printed here for your reading pleasure. The reason for choosing this particular article is that the points made by Mr. Case are just as pertinent for supervisors today as they were in 1964.

The article reads:

### **Jack Case Leads Supervisory Conference on What Management Expects of Supervisors**

Current Supervisor Conferences in Y-12 are being conducted by Jack M. Case, assistant Y-12 plant superintendent. The subject of the conferences is "What Management Expects of the Supervisor in the Y-12 plant."

There are two questions each supervisor must ask himself, Case points out, "What is my job?" and "How can I do my job well?"

Certain goals were outlined... a well trained and competent work force, high morale in employees, pride in work and pride in organization, good working relations with others in the plant, and good knowledge of plant policies and procedures.

A supervisor's most important tool, he pointed out, is the people who work for him. "Understanding people is a tough job because there are so many different kinds. Most people work because they want to get something for their effort, and pay is only one of the things they are looking for. They also want to enjoy security, recognition, and job satisfaction."

## **Enthusiasm Contagious**

Case also listed a few qualities supervisors could work on. "Enthusiasm, for instance, if we are enthusiastic about our work our people will usually be enthusiastic too, because this is contagious. Enthusiasm has won many a ball game and has got many a supervisor over some fairly rough places and has also got them promotions, I might add. Consciously try to develop greater enthusiasm for your supervisory job."

*"Honesty and Integrity...* If your people can trust you, know that you keep your word and know that you are always honest, you have gone a long way toward being a successful supervisor. It is difficult to follow a leader that is erratic in this area. Your employees deserve your honest and loyal support as does your boss."

*"Concern for your people...* If you develop a real concern for your people it will pay big dividends. If your people give you their best, the least you can do is to be concerned about their future, their personal well being, and their performance. Even in the Army one of the rules that every officer is directed to follow is 'take care of your men.' "

*"Develop your ability to communicate..."* This is extremely important to you, your supervisor and your people. Being able to discipline an employee and get across just exactly what you mean without being unjust or doing unintentional damage requires real communication ability. Also you need to be able to communicate effectively in order to sell your ideas to your boss and to your people."

## **Results are Gratifying**

"The various levels of supervision have different problems and somewhat different things are expected from each," Case concluded. "I have made no attempt to outline all that is expected of us in detail. What I have tried to accomplish is suggest an approach of achieving what is expected of you and me as supervisors. That approach is simply to do the job in an outstanding manner. If you put out the effort the results will be gratifying to you, your people, and your supervisor."

The conferences are running through Thursday, January 30, 1964. They are conducted in the Conference Room of the Cafeteria Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m. for straight day employees, and Mondays and Tuesdays at 5 p.m. for employees on shift rotations. The 5 p.m. conferences are held in the Conference Room of the Plant Shift Superintendents, in Building 9706-2.

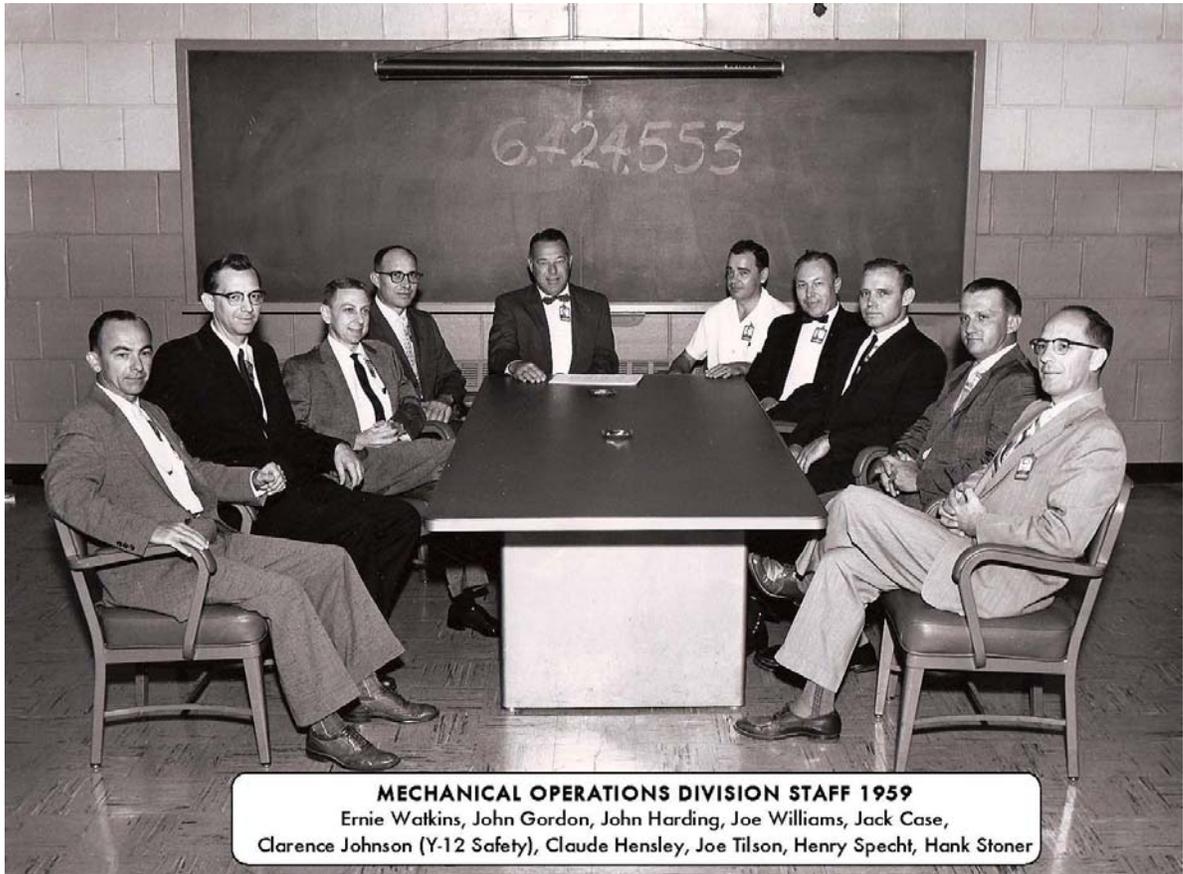
The Training Department has arranged the conferences...and Superintendent Case is introduced by Training's B. R. Pearson at the meetings.

The above article shows that Mr. Case understood what was expected of supervisors at Y-12 and that he knew how to effectively communicate those expectations to others. Don't you just wish you could have been in the Cafeteria Conference Room to have personally heard him give this talk!

If he were here today, in that characteristic gravelly voice he just might say, "Those same expectations for supervisors in 1964 apply to you young folks today in 2006!" After all what Mr. Case expected was simply an approach to the job of a supervisor that he stated as, "That approach is simply to do the job in an outstanding manner."

A note about documents with historical value: This bulletin was kept by John M. Mills, Jr. who was in the Y-12 Classification office for a number of years. It was located in the vault along with some other historical documents. Do you have or know of any similar locations where old documents are stored that might have historical value? If so, please contact Jennifer Dixon, 576-5715, userid (JEN) or Ray Smith at 576-7781, userid (SRD)

## ***John Gordon – a unique relationship***



*By Ray Smith* -: This Jack Case story comes from Judie Gordon Henegar, of Information Services in the Information and Materials Division. She remembers fondly the relationship between her dad and Mr. Case.

“My father, John Gordon, worked with and later for Jack Case from the mid-1940's when he came to Y-12 as a tool and die maker from Kenosha, Wisconsin, until he lost his sight due to complications from diabetes in 1962. Shortly before my dad left, he was Superintendent of Mechanical Operations and was transitioning to K-25 to a job later shouldered by Ken Sommerfeld. You may recall A. L. Conte, as the Union Carbide executive and former Y-12'er who was profiled in one of the earlier articles discussing the Jack Case Management System. In this article my dad was mentioned as one of able men arising from Mr. Case's leadership who always rose to meet deadlines and get the work out.

“I went with my dad to Mr. Case's retirement party on January 29, 1982. It was quite an honor and made a lasting impression on me to see so many old timers talk with my dad, Mr. Case and others about the history they had helped make at Y-12. Some of the stories I heard were funny, some were touching, and some can't be repeated, but all were interesting, and I will never forget the retirement celebration.

“One story I want to relate happened when Mr. Case came to my parents' home shortly after my father became permanently blind. I was eleven years old at the time. Mr. Case had petitioned the Atomic Energy Commission, the forerunner of DOE, to let my father continue to work at Y-12 because he needed him. Mr. Case became emotional when he told my dad and mother that he had failed to convince the AEC

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leadership that he still needed and could use a blind John Gordon. Mr. Case cried when he told my parents that when he pleaded his case, he told the AEC leadership he already had people with eyes, what he needed was a man with my dad's brains.

“Over the years, Mr. Case kept in touch with my dad and came to our house to visit either by himself or with other Y-12 coworkers from the early years. A funny story that my dad liked to tell involved a time when the men were all sitting around the bar in our house downstairs. Mr. Case was there along with several others who had come to visit and reminisce about the early days of Y-12. My dad, always the good host, fixed drinks for and served his guests. Dad's guests had been there for quite some time in the evening when during a lull in the conversation, one of his visitors asked my dad, who of course could not see, 'Would it be alright if we turned on some lights?'

That completes Judie's story about her dad, a special friend and an obvious good worker for Jack Case. When Judie called to tell me about the above story, she was looking for a photograph of Clyde Hopkins for a friend and we were able to locate one for her. She said she was glad to see the Jack Case Center being named in honor of Mr. Case as he was special to her family. She went on to ask if it would be alright to send me a short story and of course I said yes! If you have stories you would like to share about Jack Case or other Y-12 individuals, please send them to me at (srd) or call me at 576-7781. Good stories help define our Y-12 experience and keep us well grounded.