

Nekoma, ND - The Safeguard Ballistic Missile System complex in North Dakota was officially designated the Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex in a memorialization ceremony here Tuesday.

Stanley R. Mickelsen, who died March 28, 1966, was a pioneer in the field of missiles and a former commander of the Army Air Defense Command (ARADCOM). He was a native of St. Paul.

The Tuesday ceremonies also marked the "equipment readiness date" achievement in the schedule of construction for the free world's first antiballistic missile site. Equipment readiness means simply that the Safeguard system has been checked out and is functional.

The final date in the construction schedule is slated next summer when the system is integrated into the nation's active defense forces through the Ballistic Missile Defense Center in Colorado. The BMDC provides the interface between the commander in charge of the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) and the North Dakota site command.

Participating in the memorialization ceremonies were the late Gen. Mickelsen's three daughters, Mrs. Helen Mickelsen Henion, Mrs. Ruth Mickelsen Rountree, and Mrs. Patricia Mickelsen Kays, and one of two sisters, Mrs. Helen Mickelsen Irvine. All three daughters are married to carrier military men.

A plaque designating the North Dakota site in honor of Mickelsen, who reached the rank of lieutenant general, was unveiled during the program held in the theater of the community center on the Missile Site Radar complex grounds here.

Introductory remarks were given by Brig. Gen. Robert M. Mullens, US Army Safeguard commander, and he also introduced Maj. Gen. George Mayo, Jr., deputy Ballistic Missile Defense Program manager.

Mayo said the ERD achievement is the "consumation of research" that has gone on since 1955. At the conclusion of his review of the achievements of Mickelsen, he said that despite the advancements that have been made in the missile field since 1966, "with his background, he would have no trouble adapting" to the complex network of technology involved in the Safeguard system.

Mickelsen was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Coast Guard Artillery Corps after his graduation from the University of Minnesota in 1917 and advanced to assistant secretary of the War Department General Staff in 1941. He was appointed chief of the Guided Missiles Group at Army Headquarters in 1949. On July 1, 1952, he was appointed commandant of the Anti-aircraft and Guided Missile Center at Fort Bliss, TX, and in September, 1954, became commanding general, Headquarters Anti-aircraft Command at Ent Air Force Base, CO. That organization was the predecessor of ARADCOM.

Mayo replaced Maj. Gen. Robert C. Marshall, Ballistic Missile Defense Program manager, as the speaker. Marshall had participated in the "turnover" ceremonies here Friday.

Also participating in the dedication program and events was Maj. Gen. Bates C. Burnell, commanding general of the Ballistic Missile Defense Systems Command, Huntsville, Alabama.