

## JANUARY 2023

January 1848 (175 years) The **first lighthouse at Cape Canaveral** was completed. It stood 65-feet tall; a 55-foot tower with a 10-foot lantern room equipped with 15 lamps. See entry dated 21 May 1838.

January 1958 (65 years) The Ocean Range Vessel, Sword Knot, was placed in operation as instrumentation ship.

January 1963 (60 years) The need for an **Air Force oriented space museum** had been recognized for some time, during 1962 various staff members conducted studies related to the establishment of such a museum. Major General Leighton I. Davis, commander of the Air Force Missile Test Center, Patrick Air Force Base, concurred in the recommendations and in early January 1963 he forwarded the study to General Bernard Schriever with a request that action be initiated to establish an Air Force Space Museum at Cape Canaveral.

January 1963 (60 years) The Department of Defense (DOD) agrees that the Florida Launch Operations Center (LOC) will manage and serve the 87,000-acre Merritt Island Launch Area (MILA). The Air Force continues to act as the host agency for the 15,000-acre Cape Canaveral launch area.

01 January 1958 (65 years) Air Force acquired 680 Wherry Housing units, bringing PAFB Government Housing unit total to 721.

02 January 1953 (70 years) Netherlands Government gave permission for preliminary reconnaissance flights over Dutch Guiana for purpose of considering sites for an instrumentation station.

03 – 04 January 2023 **Quadrantids Meteor Shower.** The Quadrantids is an above average shower, with up to 40 meteors per hour at its peak. It is thought to be produced by dust grains left behind by an extinct comet known as 2003 EH1, which was discovered in 2003. The shower runs annually from January 1-5. It peaks this year on the night of the 3rd and morning of the 4th. This year the nearly full moon will block out most of the fainter meteors. But if you are patient, you may still be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Bootes, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

04 January 1643 (380 years) Isaac Newton's birthday. According to the Julian calendar in use in England at the time, he was born on Christmas Day in 1642, but on 04 January 1643 using the new style calendar. Newton was an English mathematician, physicist, astronomer, alchemist, theologian and author.

04 January 1958 (65 years) **Sputnik 1**, first satellite in space, falls from orbit, launched by the Soviet Union on 4 October 1957.

04 January 2023 **Earth at Perihelion**. At that point in its orbit, the Earth is 91.4 million miles from the Sun, the closest it will be all year. See also 06 July 2023.

06 January 1913 (110 years) An explosion and fire aboard a yacht called the *Huntress* about 12-miles northeast of Cape Canaveral claims the life of Harry Osman, who is buried at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station near the former location of Stinkmore/Stinktown. A wooden cross was added to the grave site in 2002.



06 January 1998 (25 years) First launch of an Athena II from the Cape, carried the Lunar Prospector spacecraft to examine the moon's crust for buried ice. Launched at 9:28 p.m. EST from Complex 46, reached the moon on 11 January. This was the first commercial launch from LC-46.

06 January 2023 **Full Moon**. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Wolf Moon because this was the time of year when hungry wolf packs howled outside their camps. This moon has also been known as the Old Moon and the Moon After Yule.

07 January 1968 (55 years) Surveyor 7 launched from Complex 36A aboard an Atlas-Centaur booster. Became the last of the Surveyor series of spacecraft to soft land on the surface of the Moon on 10 January 1968.

09 January 1958 (65 years) The X-17 Project Office was discontinued.

10 January 1958 (65 years) First launch from Complex 12, Atlas 10A.

11 January 1998 (25 years) **Lunar Prospector** arrives at moon, launched from Complex 46 on 06 January 1998.

13 January 1958 (65 years) New policy regarding display of warning signals preceding missile launchings were announced to press representatives by General Yates.

13 January 1978 (45 years) **Women are selected** for the first time by NASA in a group of astronaut candidates.

14 January 1953 (70 years) The 6545<sup>th</sup> Missile Test Squadron moved its headquarters and all assigned personnel, except technicians receiving on-the-job training to Jupiter AAFB to San Salvador AAFB.

14 January 1958 (65 years) Last Jupiter-A launch, Complex 6.

14 January 1958 (65 years) Advance information on missile activities to be provided to news media.

14 January 1988 (35 years) A roll-out ceremony for the Titan IV Expendable Launch Vehicle was held at CCAFS, the ceremony also celebrated the refurbishment of Complex 41 and the rebirth of the Titan Program.

15 January 1953 (70 years) The Electronic Engineering Company began installing the tracking radar, computers, and plotting boards at San Salvador AAFB.

15 January 1958 (65 years) Downrange Affairs Office established to represent Hq AFMTC and Range Contractor in their relations with local governments in downrange areas.

16 January 1948 (75 years) The political climate in Mexico precluded the possibility of obtaining permission from the Mexican Government for the establishment of a guided missile range extending from El Centro, California, over the Gulf of California. This information was contained in a telegram to the U.S. Secretary of State from the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico. Consequently, consideration of the El Centro site was abandoned, and the Secretary of the Air Force requested the Secretary of the Navy to reserve the Banana River Naval Air Station as a possible base site.

16 January 1953 (70 years) Radio teletype service was initiated at San Salvador AAFB.

16 January 2003 (20 years) Launch of **STS-107** (Space Shuttle Columbia) at 10:39 a.m. EST, from KSC. Crew: Rick D. Husband, William C. McCool, Michael P. Anderson, Kalpana Chawla, David M. Brown, Laurel B. S. Clark, and Ilan Ramon. KSC landing was planned for Feb. 1 after a 16-day mission but, Columbia and crew were lost during reentry over East Texas at about 9 a.m. EST, 16 minutes prior to the scheduled touchdown at KSC. Ilan Ramon, an Israeli Air Force pilot, became the first Israeli to fly in space.

17 January 1953 (70 years) France gave permission for preliminary reconnaissance flights in vicinity of Cheyenne, French Guiana for possible selection of an instrumentation site.

17 January 1958 (65 years) Last Navy X-17 launch, reentry vehicle testing, also the last launch from Complex 3.

17 January 1963 (60 years) NASA pilot Joe Walker qualifies for astronaut wings by flying the North American X-15 to an altitude of 271,700 feet, or 51.46 miles. He is the 11<sup>th</sup> man to pass the fifty-mile mark.

18 January 1973 (50 years) Representative Charles E. Bennett (D-Fla.) introduced H.J.R. 198, to **re-designate Cape Kennedy as Cape Canaveral**. See entry dated 09 October 1973.

21 January 1958 (65 years) Representatives of Department of Labor visited AFMTC to discuss application of the Davis-Bacon Act to Range Contractor operations.

22 January 1963 (60 years) **Last launch from Complex 26**, Pad-A, Jupiter. Last NATO combat launch, program cancelled on 12 February 1963.

22 January 1968 (55 years) **Apollo 5** launched, unmanned test of the Lunar Module ascent and descent propulsion systems in Earth orbit, last launch from Complex 37 until ULA began launching Delta IV boosters.

22 January 2003 (20 years) Pioneer 10 spacecraft sends its last signal to Earth, after more than 30 years of operations. The spacecraft was launched on 02 March 1972 from Complex 36A.

23 January 1953 (70 years) Week of 23 January 1953, operations under the RV-A-10 program, testing effects of acceleration on large propellant motors in flight, were begun at AFMTC by the General Electric Company for the Army. See 11 February, 4 March, and 25 March 1953 entries.

23 January 1958 (65 years) News representatives were admitted to the Cape for the first time to observe an actual launch, however, launch was scrubbed. Representatives returned on 28 January to see a Thor launch.

25 January 1888 (135 years) Mary Burnham died at 7:30 pm at 68 years old. Buried in Cape Canaveral. One of the three Burnham windows at St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church in Titusville is in memory of Mary Burnham.



28 January 1948 (75 years) A proposal for the development of the Banana River-Bahama Islands Range was discussed with representatives of the Royal Air Force Mission to the U.S. The initial reaction of the British to the proposal was favorable. The proposal was forwarded to the Air Ministry in London for study and negotiations of an agreement through normal channels.

28 January 1998 (25 years) Colonel Stephen J. Duresky succeeded Lt. Colonel Stanley W. Holtschneider as 45<sup>th</sup> Support Group Commander.

30 January 1948 (75 years) Orville Wright dies in his hometown of Dayton, Ohio, at the age of 76.

31 January 1958 (65 years) Launch of **Explorer 1**, first American satellite, LC-26A. Forty-eight accredited news representatives witnessed the launching from Cape Press Site.

31 January 2008 (15 years) In conjunction with a special noon time ceremony commemorating the golden anniversary of the launch of Explorer I, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) recognized Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as a **national historic site**.

## FEBRUARY 2023

February 1953 (70 years) Headquarters AROC directed Hq AFMTC to transfer 60 trained Matador instructors to TAC, creating a shortage at Hq AFMTC of 5 officers and 25 airmen.

February 1953 (70 years) Trinidad and Ascension sites were visited while under consideration as possible instrumentation sites.

February 1958 (65 years) St. Lucia, Station No.10, placed in stand-by status.

February 1983 (40 years) The USNS Vandenberg was placed in the National Defense Reserve Fleet during this period.

01 February 1968 (55 years) The Office of the Commander, CKAFS, was established as an extension of the Office of the Commander, AFETR. The general mission of the Commander, CKAFS, was to provide an "on-the-scene" command element to assure the most effective integration, control, and utilization of CKAFS facilities and base support activities.

01 February 2003 (20 years) **Shuttle Columbia** disintegrated during reentry...launched on 16 January, crew of seven lost. The Space Shuttle Columbia broke up during re-entry into the atmosphere 16 minutes before touchdown at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida, after a successful 16-day science mission in Earth orbit. The breakup started over California as the spacecraft and debris scattered over the lower part of the central United States from Texas to the Gulf of Mexico. At the time of its breakup Columbia was traveling at more than Mach 12 at an altitude of approximately 200,000 feet.

04 February 1958 (65 years) Concurrent with an internal reorganization of the Air Force Ballistic Missile Division, the AF Ballistic Missile Test Detachment at PAFB became Office of Assistant Commander for Missile Tests, AFBMD.

05 February 1958 (65 years) Second attempt to place a Vanguard satellite in earth orbit failed after 57 seconds into the flight.

05 February 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Snow Moon because the heaviest snows usually fell during this time of the year. Since hunting is difficult, this moon has also been known by some tribes as the Hunger Moon.

06 February 1963 (60 years) First attempted launch of a Titan II ICBM by an all-Air Force crew succeeds, the missile flew 5,871 miles down the Atlantic Missile Range and its reentry impacted in the target area. Also known as a "Blue Suit" launch.

06 February 2018 (5 years) First Falcon Heavy launch, also known as the Falcon Heavy demonstration mission. Launch was from Complex 39A at the Kennedy Space Center and both boosters were recovered at Landing Zone 1 and 2 at Cape Canaveral. The payload for this launch was a cherry red Tesla Roadster with a mannequin known as "Starman" behind the steering wheel.

07 February 1968 (55 years) Last Minuteman II launch, Complex 32B.

08 February 1828 (195 years) **Jules Verne** born, author of such science fiction novels as *From the Earth to the Moon*, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, and *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

08 February 1953 (70 years) The 536<sup>th</sup> Air Force Band was activated and assigned to the 6550<sup>th</sup> Air Base Group.

09 February 1883 (140 years) Sixteen very large whales drifted ashore on the sea beach near Cape Canaveral, between the old Ladona wreck and the bight of the Cape. They are said by some to be the sperm whale. Some of them measured 15 paces in length. Noted author Francis R. Stebbins visited the whales and collected forty-five teeth, each from four to five inches long, and two large ribs.

09 February 1993 (30 years) First Pegasus launch from a B-52 aircraft over the Cape, Brazilian satellite. Not the very first Pegasus, the first over the Cape.

10 February 1763 (260 years) **Treaty of Paris of 1763** officially ended the French and Indian or Seven Years' War. Florida transferred to England from Spain in exchange for Cuba. The Spanish population in Florida numbered about 7,000, practically all of whom fled to Cuba when the English took possession. They were accompanied by 89 Indians of various tribes. The death of the last of the Ais was recorded in Cuba in 1783. This should not be confused with the Treaty of Paris of 1783 that ended the American Revolutionary War.

10 February 2018 (5 years) Celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> "birthday" of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse at the "**Lighthouse Festival**" sponsored by the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Foundation: [www.canaverallight.org](http://www.canaverallight.org)

11 February 1953 (70 years) First RV-A-10 launch, near the area of Complex 3 and 4. See also 04 March, and 25 March 1953.

11 February 1963 (60 years) Skid Strip at CCMTA was designated an auxiliary landing strip for PAFB. The Skid Strip had restricted usage for daylight use only.

14 February 2008 (15 years) Sauer, Inc. was awarded an \$8,645,500 contract for the construction of Patrick's new 31,055-square-foot Child Development Center (CDC) on this date. The new center replaced the base's old 20,717-square-foot childcare facility that had been built in 1958.

14 February 2023 **Florida Space Day**: Florida's space industry representatives will visit Tallahassee to participate in Florida Space Day. Private companies, local, state and federal agencies, and academic institutions will participate in this unique, annual event, meant to educate our state leaders on the challenges and opportunities Florida has during this dynamic time in the space program. For more information, go to: <https://www.spaceflorida.gov/>

15 February 1963 (60 years) **First work** began on the Titan III Integrate-Transfer-Launch (ITL) area. In a ceremony aboard the *Pittsburgh*, Major General Ben I. Frank, Chief of the Air Force Space Systems Division, started the giant dredging operation that would see the creation of sand islands in the Banana River to support the Titan III.

18 February 1893 (130 years) Referring to your letter of 20 Dec. 1892, and other correspondence relative to Cape Canaveral light-station, Fla., you are informed that the Board approves the new site recommended as well as the method of carrying on the work of moving Cape Canaveral light-station to that site. The Board therefore, authorizes you to move Cape Canaveral light-station from the old site to the approved new site, by the method proposed.

18 February 1968 (55 years): Joseph Abad of Park Ridge, New Jersey, proclaimed the symbolic **one millionth visitor** to the Air Force Space Museum at Cape Kennedy Air Force Station. Mr. Abad and his family; daughters Judith and Patricia, sons David and Joseph Jr., and wife Lois, were driven around the museum grounds aboard a LARC amphibious rescue vehicle. Young David cut a ribbon **officially opening the museum blockhouse** to the general public, who now can see the blockhouse interior as it was when Explorer 1, America's first Earth satellite, was launched in 1958.

19 February 1473 (550 years) Nicholas Copernicus born, a Renaissance- and Reformation-era mathematician and astronomer who formulated a model of the universe that placed the Sun rather than the Earth at the center of the universe. Died 24 May 1543 (480 years ago).

20 February 1948 (75 years) The first Boeing B-50 Super-fortress is delivered to Strategic Air Command (SAC).

20 February 1963 (60 years) Last Minuteman IA launch, Complex 32B.

21 February 1973 (50 years) First Army Pershing 1A launched at Complex 31 as part of Follow-On Tests (FOTs). A total of four Pershing 1A missiles were launched on the same day by the 84<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, U.S. Seventh Army.

21 – 23 February 2023 **SPACECOM** The Global Commercial Space Conference & Exhibition. **49<sup>th</sup> Space Congress**, Orlando, Florida.  
<https://spacecomexpo.com/about-spacecom/2023-conference/>



24 February 1888 (135 years) President & Mrs. Grover Cleveland visit Rockledge as a wedding trip. The President said it had been the most enjoyable day of his life.

25 February 1958 (65 years) Last flight under the Navaho XSM-64 test program. Two additional launches occurred as part of Project Rise, see entries dated 11 September and 18 November 1958.

27 February 1958 (65 years) Approval is given to USAF to start research and development of an ICBM program that will later be called "Minuteman".

## MARCH 2023

March 1953 (70 years) The first group of five foreign scientists arrived at Hq AFMTC for employment as consultants in various phases of the instrumentation and missile testing programs. Two additional scientists were to arrive in April and May 1953.

March 1953 (70 years) When Congress approved only one of the two launching facilities requested (for Redstone and Navaho) in the FY-53 budget, Hq ARDC decided to use the appropriated \$535,000 to start construction of the Navaho facility; and to use Pad 4 for the first firing of the Redstone missile.

March 1958 (65 years) Ocean Range Vessels Timber Hitch, Rose Knot, and Coastal Sentry made operational as floating instrumentation stations.

01 March 1953 (70 years) Reorganization of AFMTC was accomplished. Resulting structure was Headquarters AFMTC with six subordinate groups and one group-level organization.

01 March 1953 (70 years) The 6541st Missile Test Wing was redesignated the 6541st Operations Group (Range), and the titles of all its assigned squadrons were changed accordingly.

01 March 1953 (70 years) Headquarters, 6550th Air Base Wing was discontinued. The 6550th Medical Group, 6550th Maintenance and Supply Group, and 6550th Air Base Group were reassigned to Headquarters AFMTC.

01 March 1953 (70 years) The 6550th Air Support Group was discontinued; the 6550th Air Support Squadron and the 1st Crash Rescue Boat Flight were reassigned to the 6550th Air Base Group. The 6550th Boat Squadron was discontinued.

01 March 1953 (70 years) The 6555th Guided Missile Wing was redesignated the 6555th Guided Missile Group. The 6556th Guided Missile Squadron and the 6555th Test Support Squadron were discontinued, leaving the 1st and 69th Pilotless Bomber Squadrons, Light, and the 6555th Guided Missile Squadron assigned to the Group.

01 March 1968 (55 years) The Hubert H. Humphrey Bridge in Cocoa, Florida was dedicated by Hubert H. Humphrey, 38<sup>th</sup> Vice Pres. of the U.S. from 1965 to 1969.

01 March 2013 (10 years) Last Falcon 9 (VI.0 variant) launch, Complex 40.

04 March 1953 (70 years) The second RV-A-10 test vehicle was fired from the Cape, it impacted 7.5 miles offshore of Vero Beach, Florida. See also 11 February and 25 March 1953.

05 March 1958 (65 years) Extension of submarine cable from Puerto Rico to Antigua, at cost of \$4 million, approved by Defense Department.

05 March 1963 (60 years) The CCMTA Skid Strip was opened to daylight Government administrative traffic having official business at the Cape. The FAA authorized the designation and use of CCMTA as an Auxiliary Air Force Base.

06 March 1958 (65 years) The first production Northrop SM-62 Snark intercontinental missile is accepted by the Air Force after four previous successful launchings.

07 March 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Worm Moon because this was the time of year when the ground would begin to soften and the earthworms would reappear. This moon has also known as the Crow Moon, the Crust Moon, the Sap Moon, and the Lenten Moon.

08 March 1923 (100 years) President Warren Harding visits Brevard County.

08 – 10 March 2023 **Robert H. Goddard Memorial Symposium**, John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel MD. See website below:  
<https://astronautical.org/events/goddard/>

10 March 1783 (240 years) The last naval battle of the **American Revolution** was fought off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Florida. **Well, maybe**---some historians are now reevaluating this long held belief and widely accepted story. The current thinking is that the area of Cape Canaveral was used only as a known landmark on the east coast of Florida. The battle it is believed to actually have occurred closer to an area off of the West Palm Beach to Boca Raton areas. Nonetheless, the waters off of Florida was the site of the last naval battle of the American Revolution.

10 March 1943 (80 years) Fourteenth Air Force is formed under the command of Major General Claire Chennault.

10 March 1953 (70 years) Last of the Stage I (N-25 or Research Test Vehicle) Snark was launched from Cape Canaveral. This launching was followed by preparations for the firing of the first N-69 Snark (test version of the ultimate B-62 missile).

10 or 11 March 1918 (105 years) 3-masted schooner named Lizzie E. Dennison ran aground on Chester Shoals about 9 miles N.E. of Cape Canaveral. Crew came ashore at Desoto beach on a raft after the schooner broke up.

11 March 2003 (20 years) Boeing launched its first military Delta IV space mission from Pad 37B. The flight featured the Defense Satellite Communications Systems III-A3, the mission was successful.

11 March 2023 **International Conference on Aerospace Engineering and Conceptual Design of Flight Vehicles (ICAECDFC)**, Miami, FL

<https://conferenceindex.org/event/international-conference-on-aerospace-engineering-and-conceptual-design-of-flight-vehicles-icaecdfv-2023-march-miami-us>

15 March 2008 (15 years) A DELTA II carrying the GPS IIR-19 (M) flight from Pad 17A on this date. The spacecraft sustained and enhanced the accuracy of America's GPS constellation, which was the most accurate navigation aid ever developed.

16 March 1998 (25 years) Last Atlas II Centaur launch, Complex 36A.

16 March 2023 **International Space Convention 2023**, Virtual!

<https://spacenews.com/event/international-space-convention-2023/>

17 March 1958 (65 years) Launch of **Vanguard 1** into Earth orbit, now the "oldest manmade object in orbit" and expected to be there for 200 to 1,000 years! This was the second successful U.S. satellite in orbit, it revealed the Earth was "pear shaped." Was also first solar powered satellite.

19 March 1943 (80 years) Lt. General H. H. Arnold is promoted to four-star rank, a first for the Army Air Forces.

19 March 1973 (50 years) Last launch from Complex 31, a Pershing IA. A total of four Pershing 1A missiles were launched on this date.

20 March 1958 (65 years) The first organized **press tour** of the Cape Canaveral launch area was conducted.

20 March 2023 **March Equinox**. The March equinox occurs at 21:17 UTC. The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.

21 March 1963 (60 years) Last launch from Complex 30A, Pershing I, last launch from Complex 30 was a Pershing 1 on 24 April 1963.

21 March 1988 (35 years) Last launch from Complex 16, Pershing II. A total of five Pershing II missiles were launched on this date.

22 March 1928 (95 years) The 60-foot yacht, Dorothy L. of Daytona Beach is a total loss this week, the result of running into a submerged boiler about four miles north of the Canaveral Lighthouse while about 200 feet off shore. The yacht ran into the old boiler at midnight Saturday. Those on board did not have any trouble getting ashore nor was there anyone injured. The yacht immediately started to go to pieces being fast onto the old wreck which is that of the British steamer, "Albert Soper",

which was beached at the location some time ago.

24 March 1963 (60 years) Opening ceremony held to commemorate **Chapel No. 2** located in the Capehart Housing Area at PAFB. Final acceptance was made on 8 May 1963, beneficial occupancy date, except for air conditioning, was 15 March. Total cost of the chapel was \$298,651.

25 March 1953 (70 years) Third and fourth RV-A-10 rockets were launched, ending such launches. See also 11 February and 04 March 1953.

25 March 1953 (70 years) Six AFMTC airmen had been integrated into Bomarc operations of the Boeing Airplane Company, and 9 additional airmen were assigned to work with the Willow Run Research Center at PAFB.

26 March 1958 (65 years) U.S. satellite, *Explorer III* placed in Earth orbit by a Juno I rocket, this was the third U.S. satellite to reach orbit, launched from Complex 5.

26 March 1958 (65 years) Construction started on Range Contractor Building 423, Base Communications, and Religious Education Buildings.

27 March 1968 (55 years) **Yuri Gagarin**, first human in space, died in a MIG-15 crash northwest of Moscow.

28 March 1958 (65 years) Indrio Camera Annex No.2 activated.

30 March 2008 (15 years) The Ascension Island Heritage Society hosted a Day of Remembrance and Memorial Dedication on Ascension Island. The event marked the 66th anniversary of the arrival of the 38th Combat Engineering Regiment on Ascension Island. Following a memorial service at the Grotto of Our Lady of Ascension, four new heritage storyboards were unveiled at various historic sites on the island.

31 March 1953 (70 years) Matador #11045 was launched from Cape Canaveral. This was the first B-61A launched by an all-military crew of the 1st Pilotless Bomber Squadron test team.

31 March 1953 (70 years) The Shoran geodetic survey of the 1,000 nautical mile Florida Missile Test Range was completed.

## **APRIL 2023**

April 1968 (55 years) In an April 1968 letter from General James Ferguson, Headquarters Air Force Systems Command (AFSC) to Air Force Eastern Test Range (AFETR) Commander Maj. Gen. David M. Jones, the suggestion was made and approval given to “deal informally with the Air Force Museum people and SAFOICS” (Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Information) and then to “propose formally that the **Air Force Space Museum at Cape Kennedy** be considered a branch or annex of the Air Force Museum.” This has been done, and following a November 1968 visit by the director of the Air Force Museum and certain members of his staff, the Director proposed formally to SAFOI that the Space Museum become an annex of the Air Force Museum.

02 April 1513 (510 years) Thinking that this land was an island, Ponce de León named it “**La Florida**”, because it had a very pretty view of many cool woodlands, and it was level and uniform; and because, moreover, they discovered it in the time of the Flowery Festival [Pascua Florida] Juan Ponce wished to conform in the name with the two facts. He went on land to take information and possession.

02 April 1968 (55 years) The fifty-fifth anniversary of the movie **2001: A Space Odyssey**. The movie had its world premiere at the Uptown Theatre in Washington, D.C., is considered by many to be one of the best science fiction films ever made.

04 April 1958 (65 years) 556th Strategic Missile Squadron (Snark) conducted its first simulated launch training exercise.

04 April 1968 (55 years) **Apollo 6** is launched, last unmanned Apollo test flight, LC-39A.

04 April 1983 (40 years) First launch of the **Space Shuttle Challenger**, mission STS-6.

04 April 1988 (35 years) Lori Kay Gillan-Laubenheimer died in an auto accident when a KSC tour bus ran a stop light. She worked as a laboratory assistant for EG&G Environmental.

05 April 1973 (50 years) **Pioneer 11 launched** on an Atlas Centaur booster from Complex 36B, (06 April UTC). First probe to encounter the planet Saturn, is now beyond the Solar System.

06 April 1978 (45 years) Last launch from Complex 13, Atlas-Agena, DOD payload.

06 April 2023 **Full Moon**. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Pink Moon because it marked the appearance of the moss pink, or wild ground phlox, which is one of the first spring flowers. This moon also known as the Sprouting Grass Moon, the Growing Moon, and the Egg Moon. Many coastal tribes called it the Fish Moon because this was the time that the shad swam

upstream to spawn.

08 April 2003 (20 years) A TITAN IVB/CENTAUR carrying the MILSTAR-6 spacecraft was launched from Complex 40 on this date. The mission was highly successful. The MILSTAR-6 completed the MILSTAR (Block I and Block II) military communications satellite constellation.

09 April 1953 – 20 May 1953 (70 years) The cable ship Monarch laid 488 nautical miles of the AFMTC submarine cable between Powell Point (Eleuthera Island) and Sand Cay (just beyond Grand Turk AAFB).

10 April 1963 (60 years) First Polaris A-3 launch from USS Observation Island.

11 April 1783 (240 years) Congress declares the end of war with Great Britain, officially ending the **American Revolution**.

11 April 1953 (70 years) The 6550th Communications Squadron completed installation of a North American Dial Telephone System at Jupiter AAFB.

12 April 1993 (30 years) The **Fresnel lens** that had been in use at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse was replaced with a rotating searchlight beacon. The new beacon, a DCB-224 marine beacon has the same 18-mile range as the original light. The Fresnel lens that was once here at Cape Canaveral is now on display at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse & Museum, Ponce Inlet, FL.

12 April 2023 Celebration of “**Yuri’s Night**” (Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin) first person to fly in Space. Yuri’s Night is observed each year on April 12. Yuri’s Night is also popularly known as **The World Space Party**. This day commemorates the first man to launch into space, as well as humankind’s extraordinary achievements in space exploration. This day also celebrates all that humanity brings with us as we explore the cosmos — music, art, science, culture, and each other! The day aims to use space to bring the world together, to empower the greatest parts of who we are, and to give a vision of where we are going. It is also the realization that great things can happen in space exploration and astronomical sciences if human beings live together in peace and harmony.

14 April 2008 (15 years) The ATLAS V mission launched from Complex 41 on this date featured ICO Global Communications Limited’s ICO-G1 commercial communications satellite. The 27-foot-tall spacecraft weighed 14,700 pounds, and it was touted as the largest and heaviest commercial satellite launched on an ATLAS V space vehicle up to that time.

15 – 16 April 2023 **Cocoa Beach Air Show** featuring the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds  
<https://cocoabeachairshow.com/>

17 – 20 April 2023 **Space Symposium**, Space Foundation. <https://www.spacesymposium.org/>  
National Space Symposium, Colorado Springs, CO.

18 April 1958 (65 years) First launch from Complex 25A, a Polaris flight test vehicle (FTV) to conduct a reentry test in support of the Navy's Polaris missile program.

18 April 1958 (65 years) First flight from modified launcher by a Bull Goose missile.

19 April 1923 (100 years) A wooden drawbridge across the Banana River was opened to the public linking Merritt Island to Cocoa Beach. To pay for the bridge, there was a round trip toll of \$0.20 for car and driver plus \$0.04 for each additional passenger. Upon completion of State Road 520 in 1941, the old bridge was dismantled.

20 April 2023 **Volunteer Recognition Day** is observed every year on April 20. As the name suggests, it is a day to honor, recognize and celebrate the selfless individuals who volunteer their time and energy to help others and promote good causes.

21 April 1918 (105 years) Rittmeistar Manfred von Richthofen, also known as Baron von Richthofen or simply as the "Red Baron", was shot down and killed in action over France by Capt. Arthur "Roy" Brown, a Canadian. Germany's Red Baron is credited with eighty aerial victories.

21 April 1948 (75 years) Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal assigns the primary responsibility for air defense to the United States to the Air Force.

22 April 2023 **Earth Day**. This observance always falls on April 22. On Earth Day, enjoy the tonic of fresh air, contact with the soil, and companionship with nature! Walk through the woods in search of emerging wildflowers and green moss. Go outside, no matter what the weather! Earth Day is the annual event dedicated to awareness about the various environmental challenges that face our planet. Co-ordinated by the Earth Day Network, 193 countries around the world have their own version of celebrations. The 2023 version of Earth Day will be the 50th anniversary of the event and has the theme of 'Restore our Earth'.

<https://www.earthday.org/>

22 – 23 April 2023 **International Conference on Advanced Aerospace Engineering and Spacecraft Technologies** (ICAAEIST), Boston, MA.

<https://conferenceindex.org/event/international-conference-on-advanced-aerospace-engineering-and-spacecraft-technologies-icaaeist-2023-april-boston-us>

22 – 23 April 2023 **International Conference on Spacecraft and Structural Flexibility** (ICSSF) in New York, NY.

<https://conferenceindex.org/event/international-conference-on-spacecrafts-and-structural-flexibility-icssf-2023-april-new-york-us>

22 – 23 April 2023 **Lyrids Meteor Shower.** The Lyrids is an average shower, usually producing about 20 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by dust particles left behind by comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher, which was discovered in 1861. The shower runs annually from April 16-25. It peaks this year on the night of the night of the 22nd and morning of the 23rd. These meteors can sometimes produce bright dust trails that last for several seconds. The thin crescent moon will set early in the evening leaving dark skies for what should be an excellent show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Lyra, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

23 April 1958 (65 years) The **Frist launch of the Thor-Able** was accomplished at AFMTC. The purpose was to study re-entry problems at intercontinental ranges. This Thor-Able also carried "**Laska**", a mouse, in the nosecone. Launch failed because of malfunction in the second stage, first stage cut off prematurely and second stage did not ignite, the nosecone was not recovered.

24 April 1953 (70 years) Construction of emergency power facilities at Cape Canaveral AAFB, started 25 July 1951, was completed, at a cost of \$412,600.

24 April 1963 (60 years) Last launch from Complex 30, Pershing I. Last launch from Complex 30A was on 21 March 1963.

25 April 1958 (65 years) U.S. Navy took beneficial occupancy of its portion of the Canaveral harbor facilities.

27 April 2008 (15 years) Brigadier General Susan J. Helms completed a ceremonial countdown leading to the toppling of Complex 40's old Mobile Service Tower (MST). Though the MST would be cut up and carted off as salvage, portions of the old Complex 40 infrastructure remained to be reused by SpaceX for the new FALCON 9 space launch vehicle program.

30 April 1953 (70 years) Major construction completed on Station #6, Mayaguana.

30 April 1953 (70 years) The Geodetic survey from Cape Canaveral through Puerto Rico was completed.

## **MAY 2023**

May 1953 (70 years) Installation of the Instrument Monitoring System was completed at San Salvador AAFB and was awaiting final checkout and acceptance. Installation of the equipment was completed at Grand Turk on 24 May 1953 and also awaiting acceptance.

May 1953 (70 years) Carioca Swing, a project to prove the suitability of the Sabana de la Mar site in the Dominican Republic as an instrumentation site, was completed.

May, 1988 (35 years) The Eastern Test Range Commander selected Mr. Ed Gormel for the newly established position of Eastern Test Range Manager. The Range Manager position replaced the old military post of Deputy Commander for the Eastern Test Range.

01 May 1958 (63 years) The Florida Missile Test Range was re-designated the Atlantic Missile Range.

01 May 1963 (60 years) Dedication ceremonies for the first Advanced Range Instrumentation Ship (ARIS) were held at Port Canaveral. The ship was christened the General Henry H. Arnold.

02 – 04 May 1923 (100 years) Lt. Oakley G. Kelly and Lt. John A. Macready complete the first nonstop transcontinental flight. The trip from New York to San Diego takes 26-hours, 50 minutes in a Fokker T-2 aircraft.

02 – 04 May 2023 **Space Tech Expo USA**, Long Beach, CA. <https://www.spacetechexpo.com>

03 May 1968 (55 years) Al and Marguerite Riley are the **first couple to be married** at the Cape Kennedy Air Force Station. Ceremonies were held at Launch Complex 26, among the rockets of the Air Force Space Museum. See 30 June 1973 for information concerning another wedding. Miss Marguerite Milligan (23) and Al Riley (31) both worked at the Cape, she for RCA and him for Pan American World Airways.

04 May 1948 (75 years) An aerial survey of the Bahama Islands was begun by a joint Army, Navy, and Air Force task force to determine exact requirements for downrange instrumentation sites. A surface survey was to be conducted in June 1948---75-years ago.

4 May 2023 **Registration** will open on this date for the **Space Force T-Minus 10-Miler** that will take place December 9, 2023 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. This second annual event celebrates the fourth anniversary of the branch focused on global space operations and features a 10-mile race and finish line festival. With warm December weather and a flat terrain, the course offers a great opportunity to set a personal best or train for longer events. <https://runspaceforce.com/contact-us/>

05 May 1953 (70 years) The 7th OSI Detachment, 1005th Special Investigation Unit, Washington, D.C., was attached to Hq AFMTC for administration and logistical support.

05 May 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Flower Moon because this was the time of year when spring flowers appeared in abundance. This moon known as the Corn Planting Moon and the Milk Moon.

05 May 2023 **Space Day and International Space Day.** Space Day is a fantastic day to celebrate all things to do with aerospace, planets, stars and their observation. The day is dedicated to the extraordinary achievements and opportunities that the exploration and use of outer space bring us. It was created with the aim to promote STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects among young people however, it also aims to encourage the public to take an interest and learn more about space and space exploration. Space Day is an unofficial educational holiday that was first created in 1997 by Lockheed Martin - an American aerospace company. In 2001, a former astronaut and American Senator John Glenn expanded Space Day to be International Space Day and it is now celebrated all across the world. <https://www.twinkl.com/event/space-day-2023>

06 – 07 May 2023 **Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower.** The Eta Aquarids is an above average shower, capable of producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. Most of the activity is seen in the Southern Hemisphere. In the Northern Hemisphere, the rate can reach about 30 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust particles left behind by comet Halley, which has been observed since ancient times. The shower runs annually from April 19 to May 28. It peaks this year on the night of May 6 and the morning of the May 7. The nearly full moon will be a problem this year, blocking out all but the brightest meteors. If you are patient, you should still should be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

09 May 1963 (60 years) Boeing Atlantic Test Center officially presented a Minuteman I missile to PAFB which had been installed for static display in front of the Technical Laboratory.

09 May 2008 (15 years) The Four-Dimensional Lightning Surveillance System (4DLSS) was added to the Eastern Range's family of weather systems on this date.

10 May 1868 (155 years) construction of the present **Cape Canaveral Lighthouse** was completed. Its new Fresnel lens used curved glass to refract and magnify light into an intense beam and was revolutionary at the time. The Cape light could be seen for 18-miles at sea, and reportedly up to 22-miles on exceptionally clear nights.

10 May 1998 (25 years) The 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing hosted a **ribbon-cutting ceremony** for the Complex 14 Blockhouse Conference Center. The ceremony also

celebrated the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the “Faith 7” Mercury mission which was launched from LC-14 on 15 May 1963.

11 May 1868 (155 years) **Iron Lighthouse first lit**, with a signature of one flash every minute. The illuminating apparatus is a lens of the first order, revolving, white, showing a light which attains its greatest brilliancy every minute. Its focal plane is 130 feet above sea level, and in clear weather the light should be visible from the deck of a vessel, at a distance of eighteen nautical miles. The tower is of iron, painted white, and in latitude 28° 27' (00") N., longitude 80° 13" (00") West from Greenwich. Position: 28-27-37.256N, 080-32-36.422W.

11 May 1988 (35 years) The check-house (a security gate house) constructed on South Patrick drive near State Road 404 was opened on this date. The check-house improved Patrick AFB’s security by moving the base’s perimeter about one mile farther south to include the hospital, Base Exchange and other high-value facilities.

11 May 2018 (5 years) First Falcon 9 Block 5 launch. This launch originated from LC-39A, at the Kennedy Space Center.

13 May 1948 (75 years) Bumper 1, the first of the Bumper series using a German V-2 missile and a U.S. Army WAC Corporal rocket was launched from Pad 33 at the White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. Bumper 1 – 6 were launched at White Sands, number 7 and 8 were launched from Cape Canaveral in 1950.

14 May 1948 (75 years) With the concurrence of all three military services, enabling legislation for establishment of a joint long-range proving ground was forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget, which conducted hearings on the legislation 4 June 1948 (75-years ago). The Bill (S 2761) was introduced in the Senate on 27 May 1948 (75-years ago) and referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

14 May 1958 (65 years) Responsibility for operational testing of Snark transferred to AFMTC from the missile contractor, Northrop Aircraft Company.

14 May 1973 (50 years) The **Skylab** space station is launched into Earth orbit, Complex 39A, last launch of a Saturn V booster.

15 May 1953 (70 years) The project to extend utilities to the Wherry Housing areas at PAFB, at a cost of \$317,900, and to renovate roads in the areas was completed and accepted. Cost of the road renovation was in addition to the utility’s extension.

15 May 1963 (60 years) **Fourth and final** manned orbital flight of the Mercury Program is launched with astronaut Gordon Cooper, an Air Force Major, from LC-14 at 8:04 a.m. The Mercury/Atlas-9 (Faith 7) mission was the first time that a U.S. astronaut remained in orbit for more than 24 hours, and was also the first time of a live television broadcast from a U.S.

spacecraft. A total of 22 orbits in 34-hours.

16 May 1958 (65 years) Eastern Test Range accepted the transfer of 76.53 acres located at the Cape Canaveral Light Station from the U.S. Coast Guard.

16 May 1963 (60 years) **Official incorporation of the City of Cape Canaveral.** The city of Cape Canaveral started in 1961 when a committee was formed to incorporate, the city charter was made into bill 167 and approved by the Florida State Legislature in Tallahassee on May 16, 1963.

16 May 1968 (55 years) **William B. Estes** died at LC-39A in preparation of the Mobile Service Structure to arrive. A faulty gage indicated it was safe to remove a pipe from the pad 150 psi water supply line. The pressure released the iron cap when he started disconnecting it and it struck him in the chest.

17 May 1893 (130 years) James M. Knight was discharged. In a letter from the Naval Secretary, Commander R.D. Evans to the Secretary of the Treasury asking for: "the immediate dismissal from the Light House Service, of Mr. James M. Knight, Keeper of the Cape Canaveral Light Station, Fla. Mr. Knight has been guilty of most disgraceful conduct while drunk and is totally unfit for retention in the Service. He has been drunk in uniform in public; he has treated his wife with cruelty and brutality, and plied his youngest boy with whiskey in a public bar room."

18 May 1958 (65 years) **First recovery** of an IRBM tactical nosecone after a full IRBM flight downrange. It was recovered from the Atlantic Ocean 4.5-hours after launching from CCMTA on a Jupiter missile from **Complex 26B**. The *USS Escape* made the recovery.

19 May 1958 (65 years) Strike by electricians halted construction on Titan Launch Complex.

20 May 1978 (45 years) The United States undertook a mission to the planet Venus, Pioneer Venus 1 was launched aboard an Atlas-Centaur booster from Complex 36A. The Venus 1 spacecraft, the first American craft to orbit Venus, used radar to map the surface of Venus. See entry dated 8 August 1978.

20 May 2008 (15 years) General Helms and Colonel Steven Kirkpatrick hosted the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Combined Command Post at Patrick AFB on this date. The event concluded many months of concerted effort involving members of the 45th Space Wing, the 920th Rescue Wing, and commercial contractors.

21 May 1838 (185 years) Charles Downing, a Delegate to the US House of Representatives from the Florida Territory, requests a **lighthouse to be built at Cape Canaveral**. Nathaniel Scobie was appointed as the first lighthouse keeper and oversaw the construction of the lighthouse. The 65-foot-

tall white conical brick tower and keeper's dwelling were completed in January 1848 (175 years ago) at the cost of \$13,300.

22 May 1958 (65 years) Maj Gen Donald N. Yates, AFMTC Commander, was awarded the Navy Legion of Merit in recognition of his contribution to the success of the Vanguard and Polaris programs.

22 May 2008 (15 years) In accordance with Headquarters Air Force Space Command (HQ AFSPC) Special Order GD017, the 45th Mission Support Squadron was re-designated the 45th Force Support Squadron on this date. The resources of the 45th Mission Support Group's Services Division were placed under the newly re-designated squadron.

23 May 1958 (65 years) Headquarters USAF created the first distinctive **missile badge** that recognized and identified those individuals with the Air Force who, by virtue of their job assignment, had a direct role in missile operations and maintenance.

23 May 1993 (30 years) First Red Tigress II launch, Complex 20.

24 May 1918 (105 years) US Army Air Service organized.

25 May 1973 (50 years) **First Skylab crew** launched, a 28-day stay aboard the space station, Astronauts Conrad, Kerwin, and Weitz, Complex 39B.

26 May 1953 (70 years) The Air Adjutant General, Hq AFMTC, was redesignated the Adjutant, Hq AFMTC.

26 May 1953 (70 years) **Canaveral Port Authority established.**

26 May 1958 (65 years) First launch of a Bold Orion Air launched Ballistic Missile (ALBM 199B) over the Atlantic Missile Range.

28 May 1958 (65 years) Capehart housing project officially opened as first duplex was completed for occupancy.

28 May 1958 (65 years) Last Snark flight under control of Northrop Test Crew was conducted.

29 May 1958 (65 years) Picatinny Arsenal Field Test Unit was established at Cape Canaveral to coordinate field testing activities relating to warheads and adaption kits.

28 May 1993 (30 years) Last Red Tigress II launch from Complex 20.

## **JUNE 2023**

June 1873 (150 years) Notice to Mariners No. 17, of 1873: Notice is hereby given that, for the purpose of making it more readily discernible in the daytime, the light-house tower at Cape Canaveral, Florida, will, in the month of June, 1873, be painted in **horizontal bands, alternately black and white**, there being three white and three black bands, the upper one, or that next to the lantern, being white. By order of the Light-House Board: Joseph Henry, Chairman.

June 1953 (70 years) Bids for the construction of five missile assembly buildings and vertical launching facilities at Cape Canaveral were received by the Army CE, Jacksonville. The District Engineers announced that this was their largest single project since World War 11.

June 1953 (70 years) St. Lucia Island was chosen in preference to Barbados Island as the site for Station No. 10; and, Ascension Island was selected over St. Helena Island for Station No. 12, the terminal station of the extended Range.

June 1993 (30 years) The range site at Argentina, Newfoundland was completed to support northbound flights of the TITAN IV from Cape Canaveral.

June 1988 (35 years) Computer Sciences Raytheon won its first Range Technical Services (RTS) contract for the Eastern Range.

03 June 1958 (65 years) Last launch of an Atlas-A Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, the launch occurred at Complex 12.

04 June 1958 (65 years) First launch from Pad 18B by Thor missile, also first to use tactical launcher.

04 June 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Strawberry Moon because it signaled the time of year to gather ripening fruit. It also coincides with the peak of the strawberry harvesting season. This moon has also been known as the Rose Moon and the Honey Moon.

05 June 1963 (60 years) AFMTC officially took over his first AN/FPQ-6 at Patrick Air Force Base and was declared operational in December 1963 (60 years).

06 June 1953 (70 years) The famous photograph "**Matador Over the Lighthouse**", a widely distributed photo of a B-61 just after launching from Cape Canaveral, was exhibited in an Armed Forces Day open house exhibit at the Pentagon, according to a letter received by Maj. Gen. William L. Richardson, commanding general of the Air Force Missile Test Center. The picture, submitted in a group of 12 for possible use in the exhibit, was taken by Mr. Theodore Welch of Cocoa Beach, formerly a technical sergeant at Patrick. Mr. Welch took the picture when he was head of the processing section at the Photo Lab. The image was later made into a postcard.



08 June 1953 (70 years) Construction of crash boat and LSIL facility at Cape Canaveral, started in late 1951, was completed at a cost of \$365,700.

10 June 1898 (125 years) The bids to widen the road from Banana River to Cape Canaveral lighthouse was opened and read, and the contract for the work awarded to N. O. Penny for the sum of \$75.

10 June 2003 (20 years) A Delta II carried the Mars Explorer Rover-A (MER-A) into space from Pad 17A. The MER-A's twin, MER-B, was launched from Pad 17B on 8 July 2003. Both spacecraft completed their interplanetary flights and landed safely on Mars in January 2004.

10 June 2008 (15 years) In accordance with Headquarters Air Force Space Command (HQ AFSPC) Special Order GD017, the 45th Mission Support Squadron was re-designated the 45th Force Support Squadron on this date. The resources of the 45th Mission Support Group's Services Division were placed under the newly re-designated squadron.

11 June 2008 (15 years) The purpose of the DELTA II launch from Pad 17B on this date was to place a "next generation" high energy gamma ray observatory in a low Earth orbit, 350 miles high. The Gamma Ray Large Area Space Telescope (GLAST) was a joint effort sponsored by NASA, the U.S.

Department of Energy and institutions in Germany, France, Japan, Italy and Sweden.

13 June 1958 (65 years) Thor data capsule was successfully recovered for the first time by the ORV **Coastal Crusader**, launched from Complex 17B.

13 June 1983 (40 years) Pioneer 10 leaves our Solar System, begins traveling in interstellar space, launched from LC-36A.

14 - 18 June 1963 (60 years) Soviet cosmonaut Valery Bykovsky set a record aboard Vostok 5 by orbiting Earth 81 times.

15 June 1883 (140 years) A **Post Office** was established at Cape Canaveral, a small wooden building at the end of a dock on the Banana River. The postmaster was Henry Wilson as postmaster. Wilson and Burnham also operated a small general store in conjunction with the post office. See entry for 13 July 1883 and 4 September 1913.

15 June 1953 (70 years) Four field offices were established at Patrick AFB and attached to Hq AFMTC for administration and logistical support.

15 June 1953 (70 years) Rehabilitation of PAFB utilities, started 1 June 1951 by the Paul Smith Construction Company, was completed at a total cost of \$1,206,700.

16 June 1953 (70 years) Occupancy began in the three new airman dormitories at PAFB, recently completed by the Leifert Construction Company of Miami. The original contract cost of \$634,537 had increased to \$766,913.

16 June 1963 (60 years) **First women in space, Cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova** aboard the Vostok 6 spacecraft. Made 48 orbits of Earth, spent nearly 3 days in space. Still the only solo spaceflight by a woman.

16 June 2008 (15 years) The Air Force awarded a \$26,244,033 contract to InDyne, Inc., on this date for the Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance Services Contract. The new contract was one of several major "breakouts" contracts designed to handle various kinds of base support services that had been managed under the umbrella of the Joint Base Operations Support Contract (JBOSC) since October 1998.

18 June 1983 (40 years) **First American woman in space, Astronaut Sally Ride**, STS-7, Space Shuttle Challenger, LC-39.

17 June 1958 (65 years) Boeing and Martin are named prime contractors to develop competitive designs for the Air Force's X-20 Dyna-Soar boost-glide space vehicle. This project, although later canceled, is the first step toward the Space Shuttle.

20 June 1898 (125 years) Bid of \$2,790 awarded to Messrs. Hunter & Heyward, of Charleston, S. C., for a telephone line connecting Cape Canaveral Light-Station, Fla., and the Florida East Coast Railway in the vicinity of Oak Hill,

Fla.

21 June 1893 (130 years) Mule by the name of “**Nancy Hanks**” delivered to the Canaveral Light Station by, Mr. B.J. Pacetti, for use in hauling sections of the lighthouse to its new location.

21 June 1913 (110 years) Eighteen-year-old Georgia “Tiny” Broadwick becomes the first woman to make a parachute jump in the U.S. Her 1,000-foot leap took place over Los Angeles, CA.

21 June 2023 **June Solstice**. The June solstice occurs at 14:51 UTC. The North Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its northernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Cancer at 23.44 degrees north latitude. This is the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Southern Hemisphere.

23 June 1863 (160 years) USS Beauregard assigned to blockade duty north of Cape Canaveral. See entry dated 5 November 1863.

24 July 1948 (75 years) The first appearance of the character **Marvin the Martian** appears in a Looney Tunes theatrical short (cartoon) called Haredevil Hare with Bugs Bunny.

24 June 1958 (65 years) Last of the Navy’s X-17 reentry test launches, Complex 25A.

25 June 1953 (70 years) Only 10 applications for family housing were in the files of the PAFB Housing Office, indicating the improvement in availability of quarters.

26 June 1998 (25 years) The Visual Information Technical Contract (VITC) was awarded to Johnson Controls World Services. The contract replaced the Range Visual Information Technical Services (RVITS) contract. Following a monthlong phase-in period, full contract performance began on 1 August 1998.

27 June 1958 (65 years) 556th Strategic Missile Squadron launched its first missile under supervision of 6555th Guided Missile Squadron.

27 June 2013 (10 years) Budget cuts due to **sequestration** caused the twice a week free bus tours of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station to be canceled. Free bus tours of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station began 14 June 2006, offered on the second Wednesday of every month. Tours began at 8:45 a.m. from the South Gate Security and ID building parking lot. All potential visitors had to sign up in advance by calling a number at Patrick AFB by the Friday prior to the tour. In August 2011 the tours were changed to twice a week and originated and ended at the Air Force Space and Missile History Center, now called the Sands Space History Center.

29 June 1953 (70 years) Installation of telemetry equipment began at Grand Turk AAFB. The equipment was expected to be operational by 15 July 1953.

29 June 1998 (25 years) The 5th Space Launch Squadron was inactivated, and its resources were absorbed by the 3rd Space Launch Squadron on the same date. (The squadron was reactivated on 1 December 2003. See "1 Dec 03" entry, below.)

30 June 1893 (130 years) In 1890 Congress appropriated \$80,000 for moving this light-station to a safe site, should continue encroachment of the sea upon the site make such action necessary. Before the appropriation was made, however, wooden works of protection were built, which resulted in securing the safety of the station temporarily. As these have been in position more than three years and have begun to decay, it was considered advisable to begin the work of moving the light-station before their deterioration had progressed so far as again to subject the tower to danger from the sea. The preparatory steps have been taken to move the tower to the site selected, about 1 ¼ miles to the westward of its present location. Materials for building a wharf, storehouse, quarters, wooden tramway, and a temporary beacon, together with a working party, were sent to the station. The schooner *Pharos* sailed with the working party on June 26<sup>th</sup>, and arrived at the anchorage in the bight of Cape Canaveral on June 30, 1893.

30 June 1953 (70 years) The National Safety Council Award of Honor for the best accident reduction record in ARDC was presented to the Ground Safety Division by the AFMTC Commander.

30 June 1953 (70 years) Procedures for the hiring of indigenous personnel became effective for AFMTC installations on Grand Bahama and Eleuthera Islands. These procedures were to be extended to the other downrange sites as they became operational.

30 June 1953 (70 years) A Letter of Intent was given to Pan American World Airways, Inc., providing for a maximum expenditure of \$400,000 for interim operation of portions of the Florida Missile Test Range. Negotiations were to begin immediately for a definitive cost-plus-fixed fee contract, which was expected to be completed before 1 October 1953. Pan Am's proposal was submitted jointly with RCA Corporation.

30 June 1953 (70 years) All AFMTC land cable had been installed at downrange stations from Cape Canaveral to Grand Turk Island, except at Mayaguana Island. At Cape Canaveral, Jupiter, Grand Bahama, and Eleuthera the land cables were laid by the 4<sup>th</sup> Communications Construction Squadron from Robins AFB, Georgia.

30 June 1953 (70 years) The Interference Control Building at Cape Canaveral AAFB, built at a contract cost of \$165,000, was occupied. Construction had started 21 April 1952.

30 June 1958 (65 years) Capital Plant Investment of AFMTC approximately \$430 million.

30 June 1958 (65 years) Working population of AFMTC - 16,908.

30 June 1973 (50 years) Candace Johnson, 21, of Cape Canaveral, got her **marriage** to Joel King, 26, off to a flying start when they took their vows at Launch Complex 26, site of the Air Force Space Museum. Bride indicated she wanted an outdoor wedding, since King worked for NASA, a launch pad seemed appropriate. According to Air Force officials, the couple was not first to be married at the museum, they are the first to have a public ceremony there however. See 3 May 1968 for information about **an earlier wedding**.

30 June 1993 (30 years) Brigadier General Robert S. Dickman succeeded Brigadier General Jimmey R. Morrell as 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing Commander.

## **JULY 2023**

July 1953 (70 years) Construction started on two guidance laboratories at Cape Canaveral AAFB.

July 1958 (65 years) Signal Liaison Office {USAOSA} established.

July 1958 (65 years) Launch Pads 16,19, and 21 declared ready for occupancy.

July 1963 (60 years) The instrumentation ship American Mariner was added to the Eastern Range's operations during this month.

July 1993 (30 years) Computer Sciences Raytheon won the RTS contract for the Eastern Range for the second time.

July 2008 (15 years) During this period Computer Sciences Raytheon powered down the 45th Space Wing's old legacy HF (High Frequency) communications systems for the last time. The shutdown occurred mere days after officials accepted the Defense Department's new worldwide HF Global Communications System (HFGCS).

01 July 1953 (70 years) The Technical and Humidity Control Warehouse at PAFB, started 11 September 1952, was completed by the Burnup and Sims Construction Company at a cost of \$278,500. AFMTC accepted the warehouse in November 1953.

01 July – 14 July 1953 (70 years) The second increment (500 units) of Wherry Housing was completed at PAFB, making 680 non-Government family housing units available on the Base.

01 July 1958 (65 years) FY-1959 option for contract operation of the Range by Pan American was negotiated for the estimated amount of \$67,758,536.

01 July 1958 (65 years) Construction of Titan Complex 15 completed.

03 July 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Buck Moon because the male buck deer would begin to grow their new antlers at this time of year. This moon known as the Thunder Moon and the Hay Moon.

06 July 2023 **Earth at Aphelion.** At that point in its orbit, the Earth is 94.5 million miles from the Sun, the farthest it will be all year. See also 04 January 2023.

07 July 1838 (185 years) U.S. Navy Lieutenant G. N. Hollins sends a letter to the Hon. Levi Woodbury, Secretary of the Treasury, expressing the need for a lighthouse at Cape Canaveral. "...This is an important point. Because of the shoals, opposite, vessels are required to keep close in with the cape. This light would also allow coasting vessels drawing

ten feet water, bound south, to use an inside passage; thereby shortening the distance, and avoiding the Gulf stream..."

07 July 1958 (65 years) Titan Complex 15 was inspected and accepted by the Air Force.

08 July 1953 (70 years) Last Lark launch, officially ending the Lark project at AFMTC.

08 July 1953 (70 years) Detachment 1, 915th Engineer Aviation Group was attached to Hq 6550<sup>th</sup> Installations Group.

08 July 2003 (20 years) A Delta II carried the second of two Mars Explorer Rovers (MER-B) into space Pad 17B, both rovers landed safely on Mars.

09 July 1953 (70 years) The first test of a Matador employing full power during terminal dive was conducted.

09 July 1958 (65 years) First full range Thor-Able flight carried the first re-entry vehicle to cover the full ICBM range. This launch set a new distance record for the U.S. at the time, and carried "**Minnie**" the mouse in its nosecone. The capsule and Minnie were not recovered!

09 July 1958 (65 years) **First fatality** at the Cape, **Mr. Fred D. Adams** fell from an Atlas service tower and died as a result of his injuries.

13 July 1883 (140 years) First mail delivered to the new post office by Mr. Sam Norton. See entry for 15 June 1883.

13 – 16 July 1948 (75 years) Desoto and False Cape, Florida were examined as alternate sites for the launch area instead of Cape Canaveral in order to avoid conflict with the Canaveral Port Authority.

13 – 15 July 2023 U.S. Space & Rocket Center Reunion Weekend, at Huntsville, Alabama.  
<https://rocketcenterfoundation.org/sponsor-reunionweekend/>

15 – 22 July 1933 (90 years) Famed aviator Willey Post, flying the Lockheed Vega "Winnie Mae", becomes the first person to fly around the world solo. The 15,596-mile flight takes 7 days, 18 hours, and 49 minutes at an average speed of 134.5 miles per hour.

16 July 1953 (70 years) The position of Staff Secretary, Hq AFMTC, was discontinued.

17 July 1963 (60 years) Last Mace (TM-76) launch, last launch from Complex 21.

17 July 2008 (15 years) First Atlas V (521 variant) launch, Complex 41. Not the first Atlas V, but was the first of the 521 configuration.

18 July 1963 (60 years) USAFS General Hoyt S. Vandenberg was rechristened at ceremonies held at Baltimore, Maryland. It arrived at Port Canaveral on 21 July 1963 to begin checkout and testing on the Atlantic Missile Range. The ship was formerly named the General Harry Taylor.

18 July 2008 (15 years) Colonel Charles J. Beck assumed command of the 45<sup>th</sup> Mission Support Group, succeeding Colonel Mark D. Bontrager.

19 July 1913 (110 years) In the skies over Seattle, Washington, Milton J. Bryant begins a new form of advertising---skywriting.

19 July 1958 (65 years) First Series B Atlas launched, it exploded at T+43 seconds. First launch from Complex 11.

20 July 1998 (25 years) Colonel Thomas F. Deppe succeeded Colonel Ronald L. Larivee as 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing Vice Commander.

20 July 2023 **Space Exploration Day** every year on July 20. Also known as **National Moon Day**, President Ronald Reagan created this holiday to commemorate the first crewed mission to the moon and moon landing, which took place on July 20, 1969. The day also seeks to inspire and encourage young people to pursue careers in space sciences and space exploration. So, let's look to the heavens and remember the incredible space advances humanity has made thus far, and dream of where we will still go.

22 July 1948 (75 years) 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Raymond C. Barwick was designated by Headquarters AMC to represent the USAF in the transfer of the Banana River Naval Air Station to the Department of the Air Force. On 22 July 1948, he discussed the transfer with RAdm E. W. Litch, Commandant of the Seventh Naval District, and with other Naval Officials at Jacksonville, Florida.

23 July 1958 (65 years) Thor-Able rocket launched with the mouse "**Wickie**" aboard from Complex 17-A.

24 July 1958 (65 years) First launch from Complex 21, Bull Goose.

25 July 1988 (35 years) A civilian aircraft crashed into the Atlantic Ocean about 1,000 meters East of the Patrick AFB Officers' Open Mess. The pilot, who was the only person aboard, was killed in the crash.

26 July 1958 (65 years) Explorer IV placed in earth orbit by Jupiter-C missile. First Jupiter launched under the direction of ARPA.

26 July 1963 (60 years) Syncom 2, the world's first synchronous 24-hour orbit satellite is launched aboard a Delta booster from Complex 17.

26 July 1983 (40 years) Last launch of SRAM, Short Range Attack Missile, from a B-52 aircraft.

27 July 1953 (70 years) Representatives of AFMTC, Pan Am, and RCA met to explore procedures for phase-in of contractor operations of the Range.

28 July 1928 (95 years) A large swordfish with a sword 43 ½ inches long was captured in the nets of the Johnson & Sons Fish Company at Canaveral harbor by J.W. Martin and A.H. Merrill, employees of the company. The sword from the fish was brought to Cocoa and is on display at the Chamber of Commerce office.

28 July 1973 (50 years) Second of three manned **Skylab** crews launched, spent 59 days in orbit, Astronauts Bean, Garriott, and Lousma, Complex 39B.

28 – 29 July 2023 **Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower.** The Delta Aquarids is an average shower that can produce up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by comets Marsden and Kracht. The shower runs annually from July 12 to August 23. It peaks this year on the night of July 28 and morning of July 29. The nearly full moon will block most of the fainter meteors this year. But if you are patient, you may still be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Aquarius, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

29 July 1958 (65 years) NASA's 60'th birthday, President Eisenhower signs into law the **NASA Act of 1958.**

30 July 1853 (170 years) Mills Olcott Burnham appointed Keeper of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse, replacing Keeper Ora Carpenter. Burnham would remain the keeper until 1886.

## AUGUST 2023

August 1953 (70 years) The electronic school at Jupiter AAFB was closed as an economy measure. Training moved to Patrick AFB and Cape Canaveral AAFB.

August 1953 (70 years) The vertical service stand, for missiles such as the Redstone, was erected at Pad No.4 Cape Canaveral AAFB. It was designed and constructed by the Noble Company of California at a cost of \$428,000, then transported to the Cape by a special 14-car rail shipment.

August 1953 (70 years) Construction of a 4,000-foot fair-weather airstrip at Eleuthera AAFB was completed by the 1902d Engineer Aviation Battalion. AFMTC aircraft operations were then transferred from the Rock Sound commercial airstrip to the new packed earth runway.

August 1953 (70 years) Work started on the rerouting of the Queen's Highway on Eleuthera in order to construct a permanent 5,800-foot asphalt airstrip. Work was done by the 835<sup>th</sup> Engineer Aviation Battalion.

August 1953 (70 years) The Azusa system equipment installation was started at Cape Canaveral.

August 1958 (65 years) Construction completed at Station No.11, Fernando de Norhona.

August 1963 (60 years) The Air Force awarded an \$850,000 contract to Sperry Piedmont Company for a facilities addition to Central Control at the Cape. The addition to be called the Range Control Center was to relieve crowding and permit simultaneous countdown of two launches and global support of another orbital vehicle.

August 1968 (55 years) Beneficial occupancy was taken on an unusual facility, the **Lunar Landing Training Facility**. This was a \$164,000 project funded by NASA. Construction included a landing and take-off pad at the west end of the Skid Strip, a run-up pad near Hangar H, a telemetry van at the Skid Strip, and miscellaneous modifications and utilities.

August 1888 (35 years) Pan American won the Launch Base Services (LBS) contract for Cape Canaveral.

August 2008 (15 years) Radtec Engineering, Inc., delivered a new TDR 43-250 weather radar system to the Eastern Range during this period. It replaced the 45th Weather Squadron's old WSR-74C weather radar at Patrick AFB. The new radar enhanced weather forecasters' ability to detect pre-lightning conditions and provide better lightning and wind warnings, hail advisories, and heavy rain alerts.

01 August 1953 (70 years) The Florida Electronic Automatic Computer (FLAC) was placed in

operation at Patrick AFB. Development of the FLAC started in April 1951 and cost slightly more than \$1,000,000.

01 August 1958 (65 years) Reorganization of Headquarters AFMTC and Air Base Group

01 August 1988 (35 years) The ground-breaking ceremony for the USAF's first satellite pharmacy (i.e., a facility set apart from the hospital's main pharmacy), took place at Patrick AFB on this date. By the end of FY 1988, construction for the facility was underway on the north side of the Base Exchange Mall.

01 August 2023 **Full Moon, Supermoon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Sturgeon Moon because the large sturgeon fish of the Great Lakes and other major lakes were more easily caught at this time of year. This moon has also been known as the Green Corn Moon and the Grain Moon. This is also the **first of two supermoons for 2023.** The Moon will be near its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual. See entry dated 31 August 2023.

02 August 1958 (65 years) First launch from Complex 13, Atlas 4B. The Atlas-B ICBM, in its first test with full propulsion system, impacted 2,500 miles downrange.

04 August 1953 (70 years) AFMTC Memorandum listed the order of priority in which phase-in of contractor operations would be conducted. Nine priority areas were listed by order of phase-in. 04 August 1958 (65 years) Industrial and Labor Relations Office established to represent the Commander AFMTC in dealing with labor problems affecting the operation of the Range.

05 August 1943 (80 years) Woman's Air Force Service Pilots (**WASP**) forms, headed by **Jacqueline Cochran.**

06 August 1953 (70 years) First Snark N-69, test version of the ultimate B-62 missile, was launched from Cape Canaveral AAFB, Complex 1.

06 August 1968 (55 years) The first closed launch from the Cape since 1963 was conducted. It was a classified payload boosted by an Atlas/Agena D, Complex 13.

06 August 1993 (30 years) USNS Redstone was officially deactivated and transferred to the Reserve Fleet at James River, Norfolk, Virginia.

07 August 1958 (65 years) First launch from Cape Canaveral of a Bomarc interceptor missile initiated by a signal sent from the SAGE control center in Kingston, New York. Launched from Complex 4A.

07 August 1998 (25 years) Demolition of Patrick's oldest hangar---Hangar 312---was completed by this date. The hangar served as a PBM seaplane maintenance facility during World War II, and later as the Patrick Base Operations/Flight Terminal.

07 August 2023 **National Lighthouse Day** is celebrated on August 07, 2023. On August 7, 1789, the US Bureau of Lighthouses was created by the 9th Act of the first Congress which placed lighthouses under federal control. Legislation to declare August 7 the National Lighthouse Day was introduced to Congress in the spring of 1988 and signed by President Ronald Reagan.

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-lighthouse-day/>

08 August 1978 (45 years) The United States undertook a mission to the planet Venus, Pioneer Venus 2 was launched aboard an Atlas-Centaur booster from Complex 36A. Pioneer Venus 2, the sistership to Pioneer Venus 1, consisted of the main spacecraft, a large probe, and three identical small probes—all designed to collect data as they descended toward the surface of Venus. Amazingly two probes survived the hard impact and one transmitted data from the surface for 67.5 minutes. See entry dated 20 May 1978.

08 – 10 August 2023 **Space & Missile Defense Symposium**, Huntsville, AL.

<https://smdsymposium.org/>

11 August 1958 (65 years) Contract for rehabilitation of the 680 Wherry Units awarded to Southern Construction Company.

11 August 2023 **Space Collectible Show and Sale** to be held at the Sands Space History Center, just outside the gate (Gate 1) of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. web site: [www.capemuseum.org](http://www.capemuseum.org)

12 August 1958 (65 years) Contract let and construction started on Launch Complex 29, to be used for the Polaris program.

12 August 1963 (60 years) **Ground was broken** for the Titan III Integrate Transfer Launch area on an island formed in the Banana River by dredging operations. The construction to include a 23-story Vertical Integration Building (VIB) and launch pads. See entry dated 15 February 1963 for when the dredging began.

12 August 1998 (25 years) A Titan IV-A Centaur carrying an NRO payload was launched from LC-41, a wiring short caused the vehicle to fly off course and the mission ended when it disintegrated. No one was killed or hurt in the mishap, but the estimated cost of the destroyed vehicle was 1.35 billion dollars. This was the last of 14 Titan IV-A Centaur launches from Cape Canaveral.

12 – 13 August 2023 **Perseids Meteor Shower.** The Perseids is one of the best meteor showers to observe, producing up to 60 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by comet Swift-Tuttle, which was discovered in 1862. The Perseids are famous for producing a large number of bright meteors. The shower runs annually from July 17 to August 24. It peaks this year on the night of August 12 and the morning of August 13. The crescent moon should not be too much of a problem this year. Skies should still be dark enough for a good show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Perseus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

14 August 1958 (65 years) First Jason research sounding rocket launch, all six were launched in 1958; 27 August, 29 August, two on 30 August, and the last on 02 September 1958.

15 August 1953 (70 years) The 1902d Engineer Aviation Battalion completed its phase of the downrange construction program and was replaced at Mayaguana AAFB (Bahamas) by the 835th Engineer Aviation Battalion.

15 August 1958 (65 years) First all military launch of Bomarc missile by 6555th Guided Missile Squadron.

15 August 1958 (65 years) One hundred and twenty members of the 6555th Guided Missile Squadron became the first to wear the new USAF Guided Missile Insignia.

16 August 1963 (60 years) The first set of pilings for the VAB at Kennedy Space Center were driven for the structure that would eventually cost \$100 million.

16 August 1968 (55 years) First Minuteman III launched, LC-32B.

16 August 1968 (55 years) First test launch of the Navy's Poseidon weapon system, also first launch from Complex 25C.

17 August 1948 (75 years) Immediate transfer of the **Banana River Naval Air Station** to the U.S. Air Force was authorized by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. See 24 August 1948 entry.

17 August 1958 (65 years) First lunar probe launched by Thor Able I. Experiment ended unsuccessfully when the vehicle exploded after 77 seconds of flight. Launch was from Complex 17A.

18 August 1993 (30 years) McDonnell Douglas's Delta Clipper Experimental (DC-X) subscale single-stage-to-orbit prototype makes a 60-second first flight at the White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. The 42-foot-tall vehicle

takes off vertically, hovers at about 150-feet, moves laterally approximately 350-feet, and lands tail down.

20 August 1953 (70 years) The Army's Redstone Arsenal launched the **first Redstone** missile from the test range at Cape Canaveral. The launch occurred at Complex 4, and was the largest missile launched on the range to this date.

20 August 1993 (30 years) Colonel Glenn C. Waltman succeeded Colonel Michael R. Spence as 45<sup>th</sup> Operations Group Commander.

21 August 1998 (25 years) Space Gateway Support (SGS) of Herndon, Virginia was awarded the Joint Base Operations and Support Contract (J-BOSC). The contract covered work formerly handled under Kennedy Space Center's Base Operations Contract and the 45th Space Wing's Launch Base Support (LBS) contract. Following a formal 23-day phase-in period, the contract started 1 October 1998.

23 August 1928 (95 years) Arrangements were completed during the past week for the erection of a 315-foot ocean pier and breakwater at Canaveral Harbor which when finished will be used by the F.S. Johnson & Sons Fish Company as a landing dock for their ocean fishing vessels. According to the manager, the pier to be built, will occupy a site approximately 300 feet north of the Canaveral Harbor Casino. Mr. Ewing owns 309 feet of ocean frontage there which he purchased for the purpose recently. The pier will be of modern construction, creosoted pine pilings will be used; the pier to be 12 feet wide with a T-head of 40 x 50 dimensions upon which will be built a warehouse for packing fish and shrimp that will be received from vessels using the dock. Mr. Constable says that he expects between 75 to 150 fishing boats to operate out of the harbor this fall and winter. The breakwater will be built about 100 feet ahead of the pier and will be V-shaped. This will act as a protection for boats while loading and unloading from the pier and will also protect the anchored vessels from storms which might arise. The pier will go out to the water 15 feet deep. A small grocery, and hardware store, a gasoline and oil station and possibly a lunch room will be opened when the pier is completed, to take care of the needs of the small fishing village that is expected to spring up as a result of the construction of the pier. See entry dated 15 October 1928.

23 August 1963 (60 years) Airman McCubbin was fatally injured in a fall from an 80-foot tall antenna tower. He was dismantling the tower at the time of the accident.

23 August 1963 (60 years) Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge established. Overlaying John F. Kennedy Space Center, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge was established to provide a buffer zone for space flight operations.

Approximately one-half of the refuge's 140,000 acres consist of brackish estuaries and marshes.

24 August 1948 (75 years) The Navy directed the Commandant, Seventh Naval District, to formally **transfer custody** of the Banana River Naval Air Station to the Department of the Air Force. See 17 August 1948 entry.

24 August 1958 (65 years) "The Missileer;" Patrick AFB newspaper, ceased publication after eight and one-half years because of shortage of personnel and money.

24 August 1958 (65 years) Explorer V, payload of Jupiter-C launch, failed to orbit because of booster malfunction. The Explorer 5 mission was the last of the original series of Explorer satellites designed, built and operated by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. However, the mission was scrubbed when a collision between the rocket's booster and its second stage threw off the launch angle.

25 August 1778 (245 years) British naval sloop "Otter" 10 or 14 guns, 302 tons, 95' x 27', Lieutenant John Wright (Commander), stranded and lost off Cape Canaveral.

25 August 2003 (20 years) A Delta II Heavy (7920H) carrying NASA's Space Infrared Telescope Facility (SIRTF) was launched successfully from Pad 17B. The flight marked the 300<sup>th</sup> launch in the history of the Delta Program, and it was advertised as the last of NASA's "great observatory" space missions.

27 August 1948 (75 years) An agreement transferring custody of the Banana River Naval Air Station from the Navy to the DAF (effective at 0001, 1 September 1948) was signed by RAdm E. W. Litch, USN; and Maj P. Andrew Keys and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Raymond C. Barwick, USAF. The purpose of the transfer was to provide a base site for the JLRPG for Guided Missiles. The station was placed under the jurisdiction of the Air Material Command, pending activation of a joint long-range proving ground.

27 August 1998 (25 years) First Delta III launch, LC-17B, ended in failure. The vehicle and its payload (Galaxy X) were destroyed about 75 seconds after lift-off.

28 August 1953 (70 years) Detachment 1, 884th Engineer Aviation Maintenance Company was attached to Hq AFMTC.

29 August 1968 (55 years) A **SAC B-52 aircraft crashed** on Cape Kennedy Air Force Station (CKAFS), all aboard parachuted to safety.

29 August 2003 (20 Years) A Delta IV (Medium) launched the DSCS III-B6 military communications spacecraft into space from Pad 37B. The DSCS

III-B6 was the last of 14 DSCS III satellites orbited over a period of 22 years. As such, the launch represented a major milestone in Air Force space history.

30 August 1993 (40 years) **First African American in space, Astronaut Guion S. Bluford**, STS-8, Space Shuttle Challenger from Complex 39A. This was also the first night launch and night landing of a Space Shuttle.

31 August 1948 (75 years) An agreement transferring custody of the Banana River Naval Air Station from the Navy to the Air Force (effective 0001, on 01 September 1948) was signed. The purpose of the transfer was to provide a base site for **the Joint Long Range Proving Ground** for guided missiles.

31 August 1953 (70 years) The Patrick AFB Elementary School opened as a unit of the Florida Public School System.

31 August 2023 **Full Moon, Supermoon, Blue Moon**. This is also the second of two supermoons for 2023. The Moon will be near its closest approach to the Earth and may look slightly larger and brighter than usual. Since this is the second full moon in the same month, it is sometimes referred to as a **blue moon**. See entry dated 01 August 2023.

## **SEPTEMBER 2023**

September 1893 (130 years) Construction was begun of a 50-ft. tall wooden tower for a beacon to act as the aid to navigation while the iron lighthouse at Cape Canaveral was dismantled, moved inland, and then reassembled. See entries dated 19 October and 23 October 1893.

September 1963 (60 years) East Island's radar was deactivated during this period. The range disposed of the East Island Annex on 16 February 1967.

01 September 1868 (155 years) C.G. Anderson, Master of the tender Dupont, discovered that a buoy shed at Fort Johnson, South Carolina had been entered and robbed of 365 lbs. of copper belonging to the dome of the original Cape Canaveral Lighthouse.

01 September 1948 (75 years) The Navy transferred the Banana River Naval Air Station to the Air Force for use as a base for the Long-Range Proving Ground. It was assigned to the jurisdiction of the Air Materiel Command pending activation of the Joint Long-Range Proving Ground. The facility later became **Patrick Air Force Base, and then Patrick Space Force Base.**

01 September 1958 (65 years) Army Rocket and Guided Missile Agency personnel arrived to support Project DAMP.

01 September 1958 (65 years) Rome Air Development Center Liaison Office established.

02 September 1958 (65 years) Last Jason launch, all six were launched in 1958. See entry dated 14 August 1958.

03 September 1783 (240 years) **Treaty of Paris of 1783** ending the American Revolution and granting the 13 original colonies their independence was signed. This should not be confused with the Treaty of Paris of 1763 that officially ended the French and Indian or Seven Years' War.

04 September 1913 (110 years) Henry Wilson resigns as post master due to failing eyesight. Samuel L. Jeffords assumes position of post master of Cape Canaveral. See entries dated 15 June and 13 July 1883.

04 September 1923 (100 years) First flight of the airship USS Shenandoah (ZR-1) occurs at NAF Lakehurst, New Jersey. The airship will make 57 flights in two years before it is destroyed in a storm near Marietta, Ohio.

04 September 1963 (60 years) Last launch of Polaris A-1 missile launched from a submerged

submarine, the USS Abraham Lincoln off the coast of Cape Canaveral. Additional launches at sea conducted near Johnson Island from the deck of the USS Observation Island until 1968.

05 September 1958 (65 years) First 199-C launch conducted on AMR, from a B-58 aircraft, ABLM (Air Launched Ballistic Missile). Erratic pattern ended flight 16-miles from the aircraft.

05 September 1983 (40 years) **Vice President George Bush** landed at the Shuttle Landing Facility to attend a KSC Labor Day picnic held at the Press Site.

06 September 2013 (10 years) First launch of the Minotaur V booster from Wallops Island, Virginia, carrying NASA's Lunar Atmosphere and Dust Environment Explorer (LADEE). The launch occurred at 03:27 UTC (Universal Time) on the 7<sup>th</sup>, but on the 6<sup>th</sup> using Eastern Standard Time.

09 September 1908 (115 years) Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, flying with Orville Wright, was killed when the plane crashed. He was the first military aviation casualty.

09 September 2003 (20 years) Last Titan IVB Centaur launched from Complex 40 carrying the NROL-19 payload, this was not the last of other Titan IVB configurations however, but the last with a Centaur upper stage.

09 September 2008 (15 years) Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) announced it had been granted an "Operational License" for the use of Complex 40 in support of the Corporation's Falcon 9 program. The license covered a five-year period commencing 1 June 2008.

10 September 1958 (65 years) 4th Communications Construction Squadron, **Robins AFB**, awarded Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for work in support of missile programs on the Atlantic Missile Range.

11 September 1958 (65 years) First Navaho launch in Project Rise, using a surplus XSM-64 vehicle, was unsuccessful. One more mission attempted on 18 November 1958, but the missile broke up and the project was cancelled. This was not the first Navaho launch; it was the first of the Project Rise effort. Launch was from Complex 9.

11 – 13 September 2023 Air, Space & Cyber Conference, National Harbor, MD.

<https://www.afa.org/events/calendar/2023-09-11/air-space-cyber-conference>

14 September 1968 (55 years) In a significant first, the Soviet Union sent its Zond 5 lunar mission capsule on an unpiloted flight around the Moon and brought it back safely to Earth.

17 September 1908 (115 years) Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge becomes the first person killed in a

powered aircraft accident when a Wright Flyer crashes at Fort Myer, Virginia. Orville Wright, at the controls suffered serious injuries.

18 September 1958 (65 years) The range station on Fernando de Noronha activated.

18 September 1963 (60 years) The first Thor-Asset combination lifted off Pad 17B. This was one of the Thor missiles returned from England when Thor bases were discontinued. It carried Asset ASV-1 glide vehicle which was not recovered.

18 September 1968 (55 years) First Delta M launch, Complex 17A.

19 September 1958 (65 years) The Florida Institute of Technology (known as Brevard Engineering College and as "Countdown College") held its first classes. 154 "missilemen" were enrolled for courses.

20 September 1953 (70 years) Detachment 2, 6520th Flight Test Squadron, Hanscom Field, Mass., arrived at PAFB to study air currents at high altitudes under Project Jet Stream.

23 September 2023 **September Equinox.** The September equinox occurs at 06:43 UTC. The Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.

24 September 1958 (65 years) First full-scale prototype Polaris missile was launched, Complex 25A. According to eye witnesses, the missile went straight up and seemed to have been on a normal flight path when it began to spin and tumble before heading toward what today is the city of Cape Canaveral. A section of the flaming missile landed in the Banana River.

24 September 1958 (65 years) First flight of the Navaho X-10 vehicle (AX-1) after conversion as a drone target for Bomarc from the Cape Skid Strip. Unsuccessful landing destroyed the vehicle.

24 September 2003 (20 years) The Genesis VII company completed the transfer of the Gemini White Room to the **Air Force Space & Missile Museum.**

26 September 1893 (130 years) The **first lighthouse tower at Cape Canaveral**, which was built in 1847 was blown up with dynamite to be used in making concrete for the foundation of the tower at its new and present location.

26 September – 02 October 1953 (70 years) An AFMTC survey party made a reconnaissance of St. Lucia Island (proposed site of Station No. 10). Moule-A-Chique was recommended as the site for

the central control area.

29 September 1988 (35 years) The Space Shuttle returned to flight following the Challenger accident with the launch of Discovery (STS-26).

29 September 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Corn Moon because the corn is harvested around this time of year. This moon is also known as the Harvest Moon. The Harvest Moon is the full moon that occurs closest to the September equinox each year.

30 September 1958 (65 years) The National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics issued its final report. Facilities and personnel were absorbed by the newly established agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

30 September 1963 (60 years) The *USS Observation Island* made the first use of a new steam-gas system to eject a live Polaris missile from a launch tube. The Polaris A-3 completed the test successfully. Previous launch methods relied on compressed air.

30 September 1983 (40 years) Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) "Fat Albert," became operational over the Cape. It was used primarily by the Southeast Air Defense Sector and the U.S. Customs Service for detecting aircraft flying at low levels, and was sometimes used as a radio relay station for search and rescue helicopters. TARS was a fabric envelope slightly larger than the Goodyear Blimp measuring 175 feet long by 58 feet across the hull, with a tip-to-tail span of 81 feet. It was filled with helium and was capable of rising to a maximum of 12,000 feet above the ground while held by a single tether about the diameter of a dime.

## OCTOBER 2023

October 1893 to July 1894 (130 years) The **lighthouse at Cape Canaveral** was dismantled, moved by tram about one mile inland and re-erected at its present location.

October 1958 (70 years) Hq AFMTC received \$336,000 to extend the Letter Contract with PAA and RCA for partial operation of the Florida Missile Test Range pending completion of negotiations for a definitive contract.

October 1958 (70 years) A contract for a Data Transmission System for the Florida Missile Test Range was let to the SFTavid Engineering Company.

01 October 1958 (65 years) **The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** was established as the controlling agency for non-military scientific space projects.

01 October 1958 (65 years) Occupational Health Research Laboratory established at Patrick AFB.

01 October 1978 (45 years) **President Jimmy Carter** landed at the Shuttle Landing Facility to attend celebration for NASA's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and give awards to astronauts in the VAB.

01 October 1993 (30 years) Colonel William A. Sample succeeded Colonel John E. Angell as Vice Commander, 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing.

02 October 2003 (20 years) Cape Canaveral Oil House restoration completed. The oil house is 16 feet in length, 12 feet in width and 18 feet in height. Prior to 1930, within it were numerous shelves for the many containers of kerosene used to keep the flame of the lantern lit. Upon electrification of the lighthouse, two large fuel tanks were placed in the oil house to power a pair of generators installed in the lighthouse basement. The generators and the tanks were later removed when commercial power arrived at the lighthouse in the early 1950's.

04 – 10 October 2023 **World Space Week**. <http://www.worldspaceweek.org/>

06 October 1958 (65 years) Brevard County Civilian-Military Relations Council organized. A greater Cocoa Civilian-Military Relations Council had been operating since 14 December 1953.

07 October 2023 **Draconids Meteor Shower.** The Draconids is a minor meteor shower producing only about 10 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet 21P Giacobini-Zinner, which was first discovered in 1900. The Draconids is an unusual shower in that the best viewing is in the early evening instead of early morning like most other showers. The shower runs annually from October 6-10 and peaks this year on the the night of the 7th. The second quarter moon will dark skies in the early evening for what should be a good show. Best viewing will be in the early evening from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Draco, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

09 October 1973 (50 years) **Name Cape Canaveral restored**, was Cape Kennedy for 10 years. Geographical area of Cape Kennedy was restored its original name of Cape Canaveral by Board on Geographic Names. See entry dated 27 November 1963.

10 October 1963 (60 years) **Emory L. Bennett Causeway** (State Road 528) across the Indian River, linking the mainland and Port Canaveral opened. It was formally dedicated on the 17<sup>th</sup> by Governor Farris Bryant. Emory L. Bennett was a native of Volusia County, but a resident of Cocoa, Florida, when he entered the service. He earned the Congressional Medal of Honor in the Korean War. Bennett's mother cut the ribbon at the dedication ceremonies of the 13.6 mile long road.

10 October 1983 (40 years) **Kurt Debus**, first director of the Kennedy Space Center dies. He retired in 1975, was born on 29 November 1908 (115 years ago) in Frankfurt, Germany.

11 October 1958 (65 years) **Pioneer 1 lunar probe** launched, failed to reach the Moon. Traveled 70,717 miles into space, the farthest any man-made object had traveled at that time. Launch was aboard a Thor-Able 1 from Complex 17A. The probe failed to reach the Moon, it reentered the Earth's atmosphere and was destroyed.

11 October 1968 (55 years) **Apollo 7 launch**, first manned Apollo mission, last manned mission from "Cape side," last launch from Complex 34. Apollo 7 launched aboard a Saturn IB booster with astronauts Wally Schirra, Donn F. Eisele, and Walter Cunningham, who tested the Apollo Command and Service modules in Earth orbit.

11 October 2008 (15 years) General Helms provided Space Florida President Steve Kohler with a letter to confirm the Air Force's intention to issue Space Florida a five-year license for the development of Launch Complex 36 as a state-sponsored **Commercial Launch Zone (CLZ)**. The official

dedication ceremony was held at the former launch site on 22 October 2008.

12 October 1953 (70 years) The Automotive Hobby Shop was opened at PAFB.

13 October 1953 (70 years) The AFMTC Installation Planning Board was established to facilitate installation planning and development.

13 October 1968 (55 years) First Minuteman III ICBM launch occurs from LC-32 silo.

14 October 2023 **Annular Solar Eclipse.** An annular solar eclipse occurs when the Moon is too far away from the Earth to completely cover the Sun. This results in a ring of light around the darkened Moon. The Sun's corona is not visible during an annular eclipse. The eclipse path will begin in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of southern Canada and **move across the southwestern United States** and Central America, Columbia, and Brazil. A partial eclipse will be visible throughout much of North and South America.

15 October 1928 (95 years) Canaveral Pier opens. See entry dated 23 August 1928.

16 October 1963 (60 years) First Atlas Agena D launch. Launch occurred on the 17 using Universal Time (UT). The Atlas carried twin "Vela Hotel" satellites designed to detect nuclear explosions in space at a maximum range of 100-million miles. The launch was from Complex 13.

18 October 1928 (95 years) Actual work on the construction of a small, but modern hotel building at Canaveral Harbor will begin next Monday morning, when the concrete for the foundation will be poured. The hotel is being built by the Canaveral Harbor Corporation of which T.L. Broughton of this city is the president. The building will be two-stories high and will be of Spanish architecture with a stucco finish. It will front 69 feet on Honeywell Trail and will occupy the location on which the Casino is now situated. Neil Wiggins has been given the contract for the structure and will have it finished and ready for occupancy by the 15<sup>th</sup> of December when it is hoped to open the hotel to the public. The cost to build the hotel is around \$25,000, it will include in it two 10-foot glass-enclosed porches, a barber shop, post office and a ball room. See entries dated 31 December 1928.

19 October 1893 (130 years) Notice to Mariners No 111 of 1893: "...a fourth-order light, flashing white every 10 seconds will be exhibited from a black framework structure located on the same bearings as the present lighthouse." See entry dated September 1893, and 23 October 1893.

20 October 1893 (130 years) The storm changed the topography of Canaveral beach very much, leveling it off where it was steep, and piling it up where it was level. The barometer at the lighthouse was lower than in Titusville, during the gale. The clock in the tower refused to run, the pendulum striking the glass with every gust of wind, and the tower shook threateningly. The sea cut some deep gullies; one in the old lighthouse road, which C. P. Honeywell found by driving into it. He says he does not know how deep it is, but the **mule swam and the wagon body floated**. The water was even with the second step of the quarters of the workmen. The damage to the work at the lighthouse is estimated at a thousand dollars. The frame for one of the houses at the new location was blown down and long stretches of the loose sand thrown up for the tram road, were washed away. The pier was entirely submerged; but, except for the washing away of the earth at the shore end, is standing as firm as ever.

21 October 1953 (70 years) The first low-level flight test was conducted using a YB-61 Matador missile.

21 October 1958 (65 years) First time two Bomarc missiles were in the air at the same time. They were launched within less than 10 seconds of each other at CCMTA. Launches were signaled by SAGE network at Kingston, N.Y., and both missiles scored successful intercepts against different target aircraft.

21 October 2023 **International Observe the Moon Night.**  
<https://moon.nasa.gov/observe-the-moon-night/>

21 – 22 October 2023 **Orionids Meteor Shower.** The Orionids is an average shower producing up to 20 meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Halley, which has been known and observed since ancient times. The shower runs annually from October 2 to November 7. It peaks this year on the night of October 21 and the morning of October 22. The first quarter moon may block some of the dim meteors in the evening, but it will set shortly after midnight. This will leave dark skies for what could be a good morning show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Orion, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

22 October 1953 (70 years) First night launch of the B-61A Matador missile, proved night operations feasible.

23 October 1893 (130 years) During the move of the **Cape Canaveral Lighthouse** from its original location to its present in 1893 to 1894, a temporary 4<sup>th</sup> order beacon was established and lighted for the first time at 5:21 p.m. on this date. Very little is known about this light---the "second" of three lights at Cape Canaveral. The 1<sup>st</sup> order light was also discontinued on this date in perpetration of the move. See entries dated September 1893, and 19 October 1893.

23 October 2008 (15 years) The **Brevard County Historical Commission** presented a 3 by 4-foot bronze marker as part of its Cape Canaveral Lighthouse Marker Dedication ceremony. The marker was funded by the Brevard County Tourist Development Council.

24 October 1968 (55 years) With NASA test pilot William H. Dana at the controls, the North American X-15 makes the type's 199<sup>th</sup> and final flight, completing 10-years of flight testing. The first flight of the X-15 was an unpowered glide flight carried out by pilot Scott Crossfield.

24 October 1998 (25 years) Deep Space 1 launched by Delta II at 7:08 a.m. EST from Complex 17. A technology testbed, it was the first mission under NASA's New Millennium Program. Deep Space 1 was the first deep space use of an ion engine. On its extended mission, the probe encountered Comet Borrelly. The spacecraft was retired on December 18, 2001.

26 October 1963 (60 years) First launch of a Polaris A-3 missile from a submerged submarine, the USS Andrew Jackson, about 20-miles off the coast of Cape Canaveral.

26 October 1968 (55 years) Largest number of people to visit the **Space Museum** in one day is during an open house event sponsored by the Kennedy Space Center; 11,245 people tour the museum.

26 October 1968 (55 years) The Soviet Union's Soyuz 3 made a rendezvous with Soyuz 2 in a mission that repeated the basic flights of Gemini VI and Gemini VII carried out by the United States in December 1965.

28 October 2008 (15 years) Brigadier General Edward L. Bolton, Jr., assumed command of the 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing, succeeding Brigadier General Susan J. Helms.

28 October 2023 **Full Moon**. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Hunters Moon because at this time of year the leaves are falling and the game is fat and ready to hunt. This moon has also been known as the Travel Moon and the Blood Moon.

29 October 1998 (25 years) **President Bill Clinton** landed at the CCAFS Skid Strip to be here to view the launch of STS-95 with John Glenn onboard.

29 October 1998 (25 years) The Space Shuttle Discovery was launched on the STS-95 mission from Complex 39B. The flight became famous as a "return to space" for Senator **John Glenn**, the Mercury 7 astronaut who completed America's first manned orbital mission on 20 February 1962.

30 October 1938 (85 years) The radio play "**The War of the Worlds**" starring Orson Welles aired on CBS radio. "It is reported that at 8:50 p.m. a huge, flaming object, believed to be a meteorite, fell on a farm in the neighborhood of Grovers Mill, New Jersey, twenty-two miles from Trenton."

## **NOVEMBER 2023**

November 1953 (70 years) Three missile assembly buildings (Hangars A and B at Patrick AFB, and **Hangar C** at Cape Canaveral), constructed by the J. H. Sapp Company, were accepted by AFMTC. Construction costs as of 31 December 1953 was \$1,774,000 for the buildings and \$791,000 for interior facilities.

November 1953 (70 years) The 1st and 69th Pilotless Bomber Squadrons, Light, were alerted for deployment upon completion of training.

November 1953 (70 years) The 79-unit Sunset Terrace family housing project in Eau Gallie was declared to be inadequate quarters because of the distance from Patrick AFB. In addition, the 52 Silver Beach family housing units on Base were declared inadequate because of size and inadequate ventilation.

November 1953 (70 years) Installation of submarine cable facilities at Cape Canaveral and Grand Bahama was completed, and equipment was being installed at Eleuthera and Jupiter terminals.

November 1953 (70 years) Three launching pads (1, 2, and 4) and a blockhouse at Cape Canaveral AAFB were accepted by AFMTC.

November 1953 (70 years) AFMTC began transferring property and equipment to Pan Am under amendments to the Letter Contract with Pan Am and RCA. The two companies accepted all Government furnished equipment essential to Range contract operations.

November 1953 (70 years) The first self-service store for the issue of supplies at PAFB went into operation.

November 1953 (70 years) The General Master Plan for PAFB, and Range stations and sites was approved.

November 1958 (65 years) NASA Atlantic Missile Range Operations Office established at AFMTC.

November 2023 Florida's oldest marathon, the **Space Coast Marathon** was first run in 1972. Inspired by the location, the event is very much based on the theme of space. The Space Coast Marathon takes place in the shadow of the Kennedy Space Center. It is a waterfront course with a strong space theme. The race starts in beautiful Cocoa Village and finishes at Riverfront Park. Much of the details have yet to be determined for the event in November 2023, for more info: **Email : [info@spacecoastmarathon.com](mailto:info@spacecoastmarathon.com)** or

**Website :** <https://www.spacecoastmarathon.com>

02 November 1893 (130 years) The ball and first Iron work was lowered from the lighthouse in preparation for moving the tower inland to its current location.

02 November 1953 (70 years) The AFMTC test program to evaluate and improve the Azusa missile tracking system was set forth in a published plan.

02 November 1988 (35 years) The first stage of the first Delta II launch vehicle was erected at Complex 17A on this date. Two weeks later, Lt. General Donald L. Cromer, Space Systems Division Commander, gave the keynote address to a gathering of about 300 people at the Delta II Dedication Ceremony held near the base of Complex 17A.

03 November 1973 (50 years) **Mariner 10 launched**, first encounter with the planet Mercury, launched from LC-36B.

04 November 1953 (70 years) **Dedication ceremonies** were held at Port Canaveral to commemorate the opening of the new harbor. Flags were flying and bands played as some five thousand pounds of fried mullet, 300 pounds of baked beans, 500 gallons of coleslaw, and 20 gallons of pickles were consumed at the event.

04 November 2008 (15 years) In a joint effort requiring the cooperation of Patrick Family Housing (PFH), four Air Force bases, their respective host commands and Air Force Headquarters, Hunt-Pinnacle Communities LLC became the new owner of the privatization projects at Patrick AFB, Little Rock AFB, Hanscom AFB and Moody AFB on this date.

04 – 05 November 2023 **Taurids Meteor Shower**. The Taurids is a long-running minor meteor shower producing only about 5-10 meteors per hour. It is unusual in that it consists of two separate streams. The first is produced by dust grains left behind by Asteroid 2004 TG10. The second stream is produced by debris left behind by Comet 2P Encke. The shower runs annually from September 7 to December 10. It peaks this year on the night of November 4 and the morning of the 5th. The second quarter moon will block most of the dim meteors this year. But if you are patient, you may still be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be just after midnight from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Taurus, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

05 November 1863 (160 years) USS Beauregard seizes the British schooner Volante off Cape Canaveral. The Volante was carrying a cargo of Salt. See entry dated 23 June 1863.

05 November 1958 (65 years) Redstone R&D launchings completed; engineer user tests continued.

07 November 1918 (105 years) Dr. Robert H. Goddard demonstrates tube-launched solid-propellant rockets at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

07 November 2003 (20 years) Launch Complex 47, managed by Space Florida, was designated an Educational Facility.

08 November 1958 (65 years) Last Thor Able I launch, Complex 17A.

08 November 1958 (65 years) First SAC training flight was conducted with recovered Snark missiles.

13 November 1958 (65 years) Last X-10 takeoff and landing at the Cape Skid Strip. Missile burned after running off Skid Strip at end of mission. Another takeoff in 1959 did not make it back to the Skid Strip.

13 November 1983 (40 years) Last Pershing 1A launched from Complex 16.

15 November 1963 (60 years) A letter signed by **Brigadier General Harry J. Sands, Jr.**, to Air Force Museum Board Members, dated 15 November 1963: "I ask that each of you give this project [to establish an Air Force Space Museum at Cape Canaveral] not only the necessary support, but also a full measure of personal interest and enthusiasm." See entry for 18 November below.

16 November 1963 (60 years) **President John F. Kennedy** makes third and final visit to the Cape, landed at the Skid Strip, meets with Werner von Braun, And witnessed the launch of a Polaris A2 missile from the submarine USS Andrew Jackson while he stood onto the deck of the USS Observation Island. America's 35<sup>th</sup> president was assassinated less than a week later on 22 November in Dallas, Texas.

16 November 1973 (50 years) **Third and final** manned crew launched to the Skylab space station, crew spent 84 days in space. Astronauts Pogue, Gibson, and Carr, Complex 39B.

17 November 1988 (35 years) **LOFT-1** launched by the E-Prime Corp. launched the first commercial sub-orbital launch vehicle from Complex 47. though the payload's main parachute did not open, the payload was retrieved successfully, and the mission was a success.

17 – 18 November 2023 **Leonids Meteor Shower.** The Leonids is an average shower, producing up to 15 meteors per hour at its peak. This shower is unique in that it has a cyclonic peak about every 33 years where hundreds of meteors per hour can be seen. That last of these occurred in 2001. The Leonids is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Tempel-Tuttle, which was discovered in 1865. The shower runs annually from November 6-30. It peaks this year on the night of the 17th and morning

of the 18th. The crescent moon will set before midnight leaving dark skies for what should be a great early morning show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Leo, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

18 November 1958 (65 years) **Last Navaho** XSM-64 missile launched from the Cape, part of Project RISE, Complex 9. See 11 September 1958 entry for more info. The RISE program made use of surplus Navaho hardware.

18 November 1963 (60 years) The following named officers, HQ AFMTC, AFSC, Patrick AFB, are appointed to the Museum Advisory Board for the purpose of providing guidance and assistance in the establishment of an Air Force Space Museum to be located at Cape Canaveral. **Brig. Gen. Harry J. Sands, Jr.**, Chairman, Col. George Prodanovich, Col. Eugene M. Gant, Jr., Col. Joseph L. Campbell, LT. Col. C. E. Thomson, Jr., and Maj. Robert C. White, Project Officer. See entry for 15 November above.

18 November 1963 (60 years) **Museum Advisory Board** appointed to provide guidance in establishing an Air Force Space Museum at Cape Canaveral.

20 November 1998 (25 years) A Russian Proton rocket launched the Zarya ("Sunrise") control module from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, the first element of the International Space Station. On 4 December the Space Shuttle Endeavour, STS-88, rendezvoused with Zarya and mated the Unity module, contained in the shuttle's cargo bay, to Zarya. Then, in a series of complex spacewalks astronauts connected cables between the two modules, affixed antennae and other elements to the exterior, and opened the hatches between the two spacecraft. See entry dated 4 December 1998.

22 November 1963 (60 years) President John F. Kennedy assassinated in Dallas, TX.

26 November 1963 (60 years) First Delta C launch, Complex 17B.

27 November 1963 (60 years) First successful launch of an Atlas Centaur, AC-2, in which the Centaur stage was placed in orbit. The launch occurred from Complex 36A.

27 November 1963 (60 years) The Board of Geographic Names sanctioned changing the name of **Cape Canaveral to Cape Kennedy** in memory of President Kennedy, who was assassinated 22 November 1963 in Dallas, Texas. President Lyndon B. Johnson announced the name change in a televised address on 28 November 1963. This action applied only to the point of land formerly known as Cape Canaveral and did not change the name of any organization or installation. See entry dated 9 October 1973.

27 November 2023 **Full Moon**. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as

the Beaver Moon because this was the time of year to set the beaver traps before the swamps and rivers froze. It has also been known as the Frosty Moon and the Dark Moon.

28 November 1958 (65 years) Last Bull Goose launch, engine flameout at T+180 seconds, Complex 22.

28 November 1958 (65 years) An Atlas missile flew the full 5,000+ mile long missile range for the first time, launched from Complex 14.

28 November 1963 (60 years) In his first speech to the American people from the White House, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced Air Force and NASA facilities in the Cape Canaveral area would be renamed. As a result of the speech, Cape Canaveral Missile Test Annex became Cape Kennedy Air Force Station (22 January 1964); NASA's Launch Operations Center was changed to John F. Kennedy Space Center, NASA (20 December 1963); and the overall name of Station Number 1 of the Atlantic Missile Range (AMR) and NASA's Merritt Island facilities became known as the John F. Kennedy Space Center per Executive Order #11129, 29 November 1963.

29 November 1908 (115 years) Birth of Kurt Debus in Frankfurt, Germany. Became first director of the Kennedy Space Center, retired in 1975, died on 10 October 1983 (40 years ago).

29 November 1963 (60 years) **Cape Canaveral officially renamed Cape Kennedy** by executive order number 11129. Order designated Air Force facilities on Cape Kennedy, the NASA holdings on Merritt Island, and the coastal strip north of the Cape as the John F. Kennedy Space Center.

30 November 1928 (95 years) Canaveral Harbor post office discontinued. Mail sent to Artesia.

## **DECEMBER 2023**

December 1953 (70 years) Early testing of the AN/APS-20 as a ground-based radar was completed. The radars were to replace range clearance aircraft for surface search within the launch and impact areas on the Canaveral-Grand Bahama Island segment of the Range.

December 1953 (70 years) Hq AFMTC decided to have the Range Contractor perform maintenance and operation on the operational portion of the submarine cable system, rather than continue that work with the Western Electric Company until completion of the system. The maintenance was performed by RCA.

December 1958 (65 years) Construction started at the Cape on Launch Complex 30, Pads A and B, to accommodate the Pershing program.

01 December 1953 (70 year) 6550th Medical Group was reorganized and redesignated the 6550th USAF Hospital.

01 December 1958 (65 years) Trinidad Test Site designated and activated.

01 December 1958 (65 years) A training course in the "Medical Aspects of Missile Operations" was organized at Patrick AFB as the world's first missile medical school. Twenty senior medical officers from the Army, Navy, and Air Force attended the first course.

01 December 1998 (25 years) The 5th Space Launch Squadron was inactivated, and its resources were absorbed by the 3rd Space Launch Squadron on the same date. (The squadron was reactivated on 1 December 2003---20 years ago this year).

02 December 1973 (50 years) Sunday drive-through tours suspended because of national fuel crisis. Some articles give the date as the previous Sunday; 25 November 1973---still a 45-year anniversary in 2018.

02 - 12 December 1993 (30 years) Astronauts aboard the Endeavour (STS-61) executed a highly successful first mission to repair the optics of the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) and perform routine servicing on the orbiting observatory, conducting five extravehicular activities.

03 December 2013 (10 years) First Falcon 9 (VI.I) launch, Complex 40.

04 December 1998 (25 years) The Shuttle Endeavour was launched from Pad 39A on this date to deliver the Node 1 space station element, also called the Unity docking connector module, and mate it to the Russian Functional Energy Block, also called the Zarya ("Sunrise") control module. Together, the two pieces formed the cornerstone of the International Space Station (ISS). The mission, STS 88, was successful, and Endeavour landed safely at the Kennedy Space Center on 16 December 1998. See entry dated 20 November 1998.

05 December 1958 (65 years) 3215th Drone Squadron discontinued as activity in the Bomarc program slacked off.

05 December 2023 United Nations **International Volunteer Day** for Economic and Social Development. International Volunteer Day is a chance for individual volunteers, communities and organizations to promote their contributions to development at the local, national and international levels. By combining UN support with a grassroots mandate, International Volunteer Day is a unique opportunity for people and volunteer-involving organizations to work with government agencies, non-profit institutions, community groups, academia and the private sector.

06 December 1958 (65 years) First Juno II launch, *Pioneer III* probe failed to reach the Moon but did discover that the Van Allen Belt was composed to two belts. Launch was from Complex 5.

07 December 1953 (70 years) Under the Range Contract, RCA assumed control of the Photographic Laboratory, Quality Control Section, and Test operations Branch from the 6541st operations Group (Range).

08 December 1958 (65 years) Deputy Officer in Charge of Construction, Navy Department, was established at PAFB to replace Assistant Resident OICC, Bureau of Yards and Docks, which was disestablished.

09 December 2003 **The Space Force T-Minus 10-Miler** will take place December 9, 2023 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. This second annual event celebrates the fourth anniversary of the branch focused on global space operations and features a 10-mile race and finish line festival. With warm December weather and a flat terrain, the course offers a great opportunity to set a personal best or train for longer events. Registration will open May 4, 2023. <https://runspaceforce.com/contact-us/>

09 December 2023 **International Conference on Space Law and Policy**, ICSLP in New York,

NY.

<https://conferenceindex.org/event/international-conference-on-space-law-and-policy-icslp-2023-december-new-york-us>

10 December 1963 (60 years) **Air Force X-20 Dyna Soar** project is canceled.

11 December 1998 (25 years) A Delta II carrying NASA's Mars Orbiter-2 launched from Pad 17A, unfortunately the spacecraft trajectory was flawed, and the Mars Orbiter-2 burned up as it entered the Martian atmosphere in September 1999.

12 December 1958 (65 years) Bull Goose program cancelled.

13 December 1863 (160 years) **Birth of Major General Mason Mathews Patrick**, namesake of Patrick Air Force Base. He was born in Louisburg, West Virginia, died 29 January 1942.



13 December 1953 (70 years) The 1st Pilotless Bomber Squadron (Light) launched five Matador missiles within a 22-hour period, the most concentrated launching schedule to date.

13 December 1958 (65 years) **Monkeynaut "Gordo"** launched into space, LC-26B. Gordo, a one-pound squirrel monkey, survived a flight to a height of 300 miles in the nosecone of a Jupiter missile that landed in the Atlantic Ocean some 1,700 miles Southeast of the Cape, but died because the nosecone sunk before it could be recovered. Gordo remains "lost at sea" to this day.



13 – 14 December 2023 **Geminids Meteor Shower.** The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower runs annually from December 7-17. It peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. This should be a great year for the Geminids. The nearly new moon means dark skies for what should be an excellent show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

14 December 1953 (70 years) The Greater Cocoa Civilian-Military Relations Council was organized to maintain friendly relations between Patrick AFB and the surrounding area; and to achieve a common approach to mutual problems.

15 – 16 December 1953 (70 years) The 1st Pilotless Bomber Squadron, Light, completed its launch training by firing five B-61A Matador missiles from Cape Canaveral AAFB within a 22-hour period.

15 December 1963 (60 years) Public **drive-by tours** of the pads on Cape Canaveral were first permitted, following the final manned Mercury launch the year before. This is the first time the Cape was opened to the public on a regular basis, the only other time it had been opened was since Armed Forces Day in 1961 (20/21 May 1961). The tour was available from 1p.m. to 4p.m. and took about 65-minutes at a consistent speed of 25-miles-per-hour. 2,230 cars, about 9,000 people, made the trip on the first day. The first motorist through the gate was J. A. Morris of Creswell, North Carolina, he and his family were greeted by **Brig. Gen. Harry J. Sands**. No stops or cameras were permitted along the well-marked route per U.S. Air Force policy. Nevertheless, 400,000 guests took the tour in the first year. **Tour did not yet include Launch Complex 26.** Previously the Cape had been opened for drive-

through only an occasion connected with Armed Forces Day celebrations in May 1961.

16 December 1968 (55 years) The first missile launched from Vandenberg AFB was a Thor Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile from Space Launch Complex-2 East.

16 December 1993 (30 years) Cape supports first commercial launch of an Atlas IIAS/Centaur, LC-36B. Launched Telstar 4 into orbit.

17 December 1903 (120 years) On this day in 1903, near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first successful flight in history of a self-propelled, heavier-than-air aircraft. Orville piloted the gasoline-powered, propeller-driven biplane, which stayed aloft for 12 seconds and covered 120 feet on its inaugural flight.

17 December 1948 (75 years) The 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first powered flight is commemorated by the donation of the original Wright Flyer to the Smithsonian Institution. The Flyer was displayed in Britain for many years because of a dispute between the Wrights and the Smithsonian.

18 December 1958 (65 years) First use of the Atlas missile as a space vehicle, part of **Project Score** (Signal Communications by Orbiting Relay) which placed the entire Atlas vehicle in orbit. President Eisenhower's Christmas message to the world was broadcast from this orbiting craft--the first voice broadcasted from space--first communications satellite! Launch was from Complex 11 at 6:02 p.m. EST.

18 December 1958 (65 years) Launch of the Trios 1 spacecraft by a Thor-Able booster from Complex 17 becomes the first true meteorological satellite in orbit. First of a series of television Infrared observation satellites placed in low Earth orbit.

19 December 1958 (65 years) Launch of 199-C (ALBM) from B-58 aircraft travelling at supersonic speed; met all test objectives.

19 December 1958 (65 years) The Vanguard program was officially transferred from the Navy to NASA.

20 December 1963 (60 years) NASA announced designation of its Launch Operations Center as the **John F. Kennedy Space Center**.

21 December 1968 (55 years) **Apollo 8 launched** from Complex 39A, first manned flight of the Saturn V rocket, first manned launch from the Kennedy Space

Center “side” of the river, first manned mission to venture beyond Earth orbit, and first manned mission to orbit the Moon. Crew radioed a Christmas message back to Earth, mission ended with a splashdown in the Pacific Ocean on 27 December 1968. Astronauts Frank Borman, James A. Lovell Jr., and William A. Anders.

21 December 1988 (35 years) Two Soviet cosmonauts returned to Earth following a record-setting period in space aboard the Soviet space station Mir. Cosmonauts Titov and Manarov far outdistanced any other spacefarers after a period of one year, 22 hours, and 39 minutes in space.

21 – 22 December 2023 **Ursids Meteor Shower.** The Ursids is a minor meteor shower producing about 5-10 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Tuttle, which was first discovered in 1790. The shower runs annually from December 17-25. It peaks this year on the night of the 21st and morning of the 22nd. The waxing gibbous moon will block out most of the faintest meteors this year. But if you are patient, you should still be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be just after midnight from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Ursa Minor, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

22 December 1958 (65 years) The 3205th Drone Group, Detachment 1, organized at PAFB to succeed the 3215<sup>th</sup> Drone Squadron which was discontinued on 5 December 1958.

22 December 2023 **December Solstice.** The December solstice occurs at 03:21 UTC. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its southernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.44 degrees south latitude. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the Southern Hemisphere.

23 December 1958 (65 years) First Atlas C launch, Complex 12. (Listed as occurring on 24 December using Universal Time).

27 December 2023 **Full Moon.** This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Cold Moon because this is the time of year when the cold winter air settles in and the nights become long and dark. This moon has also been known as the Long Nights Moon and the Moon Before Yule.

29 December 1948 (75-years) Defense Secretary James Forrestal announced that the United States was working on an “Earth satellite vehicle program” to study the operation of guided rockets beyond the Earth’s pull of gravity.

31 December 1928 (95 years) On Monday evening December 31 on the eve of the new year, the Canaveral Harbor Hotel at Canaveral Harbor will be thrown open to the public with a dance arranged by George Burgess, the manager, who has leased the hotel from the owners, the Canaveral Harbor Corporation. The hotel building was begun several months ago. The structure will be entirely finished when guests enter it on Monday. Of Spanish architecture and occupying a location a few yards from the seashore, the Canaveral Harbor Hotel is a beautiful building and a monument to the foresight of its builders. At first it was planned to have only 16 rooms but the original plans were altered and it now has two stories and 21 rooms. The cost of the building will be around \$25,000. A local orchestra, which has been playing at dances in this county for several weeks, will furnish the music for the formal opening on Monday night. The Canaveral Harbor Hotel is the beginning of a new era for that section of the county which means the development of the harbor by reason of the fishing industry being established there and the fact that the growing of vegetables in that vicinity on a very large scale at this time. Canaveral is destined to be a center of great activity before many moons have passed. Two hundred people attended the New Year's Eve party. See entry dated 18 October 1928.

31 December 1928 (95 years) Four cottages are being built at Canaveral by Ewing – are being constructed to take care of deep-sea fishermen. Because there was a demand for more houses at Canaveral Harbor where much activity is going on this moment in the fishing industry. Ewing Construction is building four cottages for the men who work in the fishing vessels and at the dock.

31 December 1953 (70 years) Phase-in of Range Contractor signaled phase-out of foreign scientists. Only six remained on AFMTC rolls and three of these were expected to leave. Five had transferred to other ARDC Centers during the fourth quarter calendar year 1953.

31 December 1953 (70 years) The Florida Missile Test Range was equipped and manned to 300 nautical miles (Eleuthera Island).

31 December 1953 (70 years) Acceptance tests on equipment of the Azusa missile tracking system was completed at the contractor's (Convair Division of the General Dynamics Corporation) plant. Construction of a temporary Azusa building at Cape Canaveral AAFB was completed, except for minor items.

31 December 1953 (70 years) The first range contract was signed with Pan American World Services. Pan Am signed its own contract with RCA to make the latter responsible for operating and maintaining range stations and tracking systems as of 28 February 1954.

31 December 1953 (70 years) Cost of AFMTC capital assets was estimated at \$146,257,000 by Hq AFMTC study.

31 December 1953 (70 years) Total working population of AFMTC was 7,219.

31 December 1958 (65 years) Capital Plant Investment of AFMTC stood at \$467,152,000.

31 December 1958 (65 years) AFMTC working population - 17,469.

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