

Aerospace Education History Events: January

1 January 1959-NASA is created. All space operations are transferred from US Army to NASA.

1 January 1959-The Federal Aviation Agency takes sole responsibility of the nation's civil-military system of air navigation and air traffic control.

2 January 1942-Navy opens blimp base. Navy Airship Patrol Group 1 and Airship Squadron 12 are established at Lakehurst, New Jersey.

2 January 1967-US Air Force F-4 Phantom jets shoot down seven Mig-21s over North Vietnam. Col. Robin Olds shoots down one of the Mig-21 fighters becoming the first and only USAF fighter "ace" with victories in both World War 2 and Vietnam.

5 January 1945-Japanese pilots get their first order to become "kamikaze" pilots.

5 January 1972-President Nixon signs a bill authorizing \$5.5 million for funding to develop a reusable space shuttle.

6 January 1942-The Pan-American Airlines "Pacific Clipper" arrives in New York after completing the first around the world flight by a commercial plane.

7 January 1785-Frenchman Jean-Pierre Blanchard and American John Jeffries travel from Dover, England to Calais, France in a gas balloon becoming the first to cross the English Channel by air.

8 January 1642-Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei dies at age 77.

9 January 1793-The first balloon ascent in America by J.P. Blanchard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

9 January 1990-The Air Transport Association reports that the nation's air carriers posted \$2 billion in losses for the previous twelve months.

10 January 1946-Radar bounces a signal off of the moon for the first time.

11 January 1935-Pilot Amelia Earhart flies on a solo flight from Wheeler Field in Honolulu, Hawaii to Oakland Airport in Oakland, California. Earhart traveled 2400 miles in 18 hours becoming the first to accomplish this feat.

13 January 1962-The first Operation Farm Gate mission is flown with T-28 fighter/bombers supporting a South Vietnamese outpost under North Vietnamese attack.

14 January 1943-President Franklin Roosevelt becomes the first president to fly in an aircraft on official business. President Roosevelt crossed the Atlantic in a Boeing 314 "Flying Boat" named the "Dixie Clipper" operated by Pan American Airlines.

16 January 1997-Raytheon purchases Hughes Electronics, military weapons electronics manufacturer, from General Motors for \$9.5 billion. Hughes Electronics was founded under Howard Hughes.

17 January 1942-Carol Lombard dies in a plane crash at age 34.

17 January 1966-A B-52 bomber and a KC-135 tanker collide over Spain's Mediterranean coast, dropping three 70 kiloton hydrogen bombs near the town of Palomares and one in the sea. None of the bombs detonated.

18 January 1957-Maj. Gen. Archie Old Jr. commands three US Air Force B-52 bombers and completes a world circuit in 45 hours and 19 minutes without landing and all refueling done in the air.

19 January 1915-Two German zeppelins drop bombs on Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn on the eastern coast of England. This becomes the first air-raid on England.

21 January 1960-NASA launches a monkey named Miss Sam, in a low altitude test of the Mercury escape system. The monkey was recovered unharmed.

21 January 1976-The first Concorde take off with commercial passengers. The two Concorde simultaneously departed Heathrow Airport in London, England and Orly Airport outside of Paris, France. Cruising speed was 1,350 miles per hour.

25 January 1995-Russia nearly launches nuclear missiles in response to a scientific missile launched from Spitzbergen, Norway. Norway announced their intentions nine days earlier but Russian officials failed to inform proper personnel.

27 January 1943-American 8th Air Force bombers fly the first American bombing mission against Germany, bombing the Wilhelmshaven port. Of the 64 bombers that took off from England, 53 reached their target and only three bombers were lost.

27 January 1967-Apollo 1 astronauts Virgil "Gus" Grissom, Edward H. White II and Roger B. Chafee are killed in a launch pad fire caused by a faulty electrical wire. They became the first astronauts to be killed in a space craft.

28 January 1964-Soviet Union shoots down an American jet that strayed into East German airspace. The US military jet was on a training mission over West Germany and the pilots became disoriented in a violent storm.

28 January 1986-The space shuttle Challenger explodes over Cape Canaveral, Florida 73 seconds after lift-off, killing all of the seven member shuttle crew. This becomes the first

major shuttle accident. Investigations concluded that the cause of the accident was a faulty elastic O-ring on one of the two solid fuel rocket boosters.

30 January 1943-The British Royal Air Force (RAF) launches a massive daytime air raid on Berlin, Germany coinciding with the 10th anniversary of Hitler's rise to power. This became the beginning of devastating air raids on German cities that continued until the end of the war.

31 January 1958-The first American satellite to be placed in orbit around the Earth, Explorer 1, is launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

31 January 1971-Astronauts Alan B. Shepard Jr., Edgar D. Mitchell and Stuart A. Roosa depart Cape Canaveral, Florida aboard Apollo 14 for a manned mission on the moon. All three astronauts returned to earth safely on February 9th.