

## **Aerospace Education History Events: November**

2 November 1947-Howard Hughes pilots the H-4 Hercules on a one mile flight across Long Beach Harbor at an altitude of about 70 feet. The Hercules had a wing span of 320 feet, was powered by eight propeller engines and cost a total of \$23 million to construct.

3 November 1957-The Soviet Union launches the first animal into space aboard Sputnik 2. The passenger on the space craft was a dog named Laika.

9 November 1967-Captain Lance P. Sijan is shot down over Laos near Vinh, North Vietnam. Capt. Sijan ejected from his disabled McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom and suffered a fractured skull, mangled right hand and a compound fracture of his left leg during ejection. Sijan evaded capture by the enemy for over six weeks. He eventually was found along a North Vietnamese road after collapsing from his wounds and lack of food. While in prison as a POW, Sijan contracted pneumonia and died. Sijan's father was presented the Medal of Honor in his sons stead on March 4, 1976 by President Ford.

12 November 1799-Andrew Ellicott Douglass, an early American astronomer, witnesses the Leonids meteor shower from a ship in the Florida Keys. Douglass wrote in his journal, "the whole heaven appeared as if illuminated with sky rockets, flying in an infinity of directions, and I was in constant expectation of some of them falling on the vessel. They continued until put out by the light of the sun after day break." Douglass' journal entry is the first known record of a meteor shower in North America.

12 November 1980-Over three years after its launch, Voyager 1 came within 77,000 miles of Saturn and took photos. The photos were beamed 950 million miles back to Earth in California.

14 November 1940-German bombers devastate the English city of Coventry. Over 60,000 buildings were destroyed and almost 600 people were killed in the bombing.

14 November 1969-Apollo 12 lifts off from Cape Canaveral, Florida with astronauts Charles Conrad Jr., Richard F Gordon Jr. and Alan L. Bean. Apollo 12 was the second lunar landing on the moon. President Nixon viewed the launch from Pad A and was the first president to view a liftoff of a manned space flight.

15 November 1978-An Icelandic Airways DC-8 crashes into a rubber tree plantation due to a far too steep descent killing 183 people aboard. 47 people in the forward part of the main cabin were able to walk away from the wreck.

16 November 1945-The United States ships 88 German scientists to America to aid in the development of the rocket program. American and Soviet forces were in a fierce competition to see who could acquire the best and brightest of the scientists.

19 November 1915-British pilot Richard Bell Davies performs one of the most daring of rescues during World War One. Davies swooped down in his plane and whisked fellow pilot, Gilbert F. Smylie, from behind Turkish lines at Ferrijik Junction.

21 November 1783-Jean-Francois de Rozier and Francois Laurent make the first un-tethered hot air balloon flight over Paris. Their flight took them 5.5 miles over Paris and lasted 25 minutes. Their cloth balloon was crafted by Jacques Etienne and Joseph Michel Montgolfier, inventors of the world's first successful hot air balloons.

22 November 1972-The United States loses its first B-52 bomber of the Vietnam War when it is hit by a surface to air missile near Vinh.

22 November 1988-The B-2 bomber is unveiled to Congress and the media for the first time at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale, California. With the wing span of a half of a football field the B-2 only shows a radar signal of a bird. It also successfully evaded infrared, sound detectors and the human eye. Development of the aircraft cost about \$40 billion and each aircraft came with a price tag of \$1 billion each.

24 November 1944-111 B-29 Superfortress bombers take off to raid Tokyo on a bombing mission. This was the first mission flown since Capt. Jimmy Doolittle's raid in 1942.

24 November 1971-A hijacker named D.B. Cooper parachutes from a Northwest Orient Airlines 727 into a raging thunderstorm over Washington State. Cooper had over \$200,000 in ransom money in his possession. What happened to Cooper after his jump remains a mystery to this day.

26 November 1965-France successfully launches the Asterix-1 satellite powered by a Diamant-A rocket making France the fourth space power after America, Russia and Canada.

26 November 1968-Air Force 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James P. Fleming rescues Army Green Berets and safely arrived at the air base in Duc Co. After arriving it was found that Fleming's Bell UH-1F helicopter was almost out of fuel. Lt. Fleming was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

28 November 1942-The first Ford built B-24 bomber rolls off of the assembly line at Ford's massive Willow Run plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan. By July 1944 the Willow Run plant was producing a bomber one every hour. By the end of the war over 8,500 B-24s were built.

28 November 1979-A New Zealand sight seeing flight DC-10 crashes into Mount Erebus, a 12,444 foot volcano, over Antarctica killing all 257 persons on board.

29 November 1929-Explorer Richard Byrd and three companions fly over the South Pole from their base on the Rose Ice Shelf. Their flight to the pole and back took 18 hours and 41 minutes.

30 November 1954-A woman in Sylacauga, Alabama is hit by a meteorite when it crashes through the roof of her house, into the living room, bounces off of a radio and struck the woman on the hip and leg. Mrs. Elizabeth Hodges was sleeping on the couch at the time of impact and was not seriously injured but did sustain severe bruising to her leg and hip. The meteor was a sulfide meteorite, weighed 8.5 pounds and was seven inches in length. This became the first modern instance of a meteor striking a human.