

Aerospace Education History Events: March

1 March 1932-Charles Lindbergh III, the son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh, is kidnapped from their home in Hopewell, New Jersey.

1 March 1966-The Soviet probe, Venera 3, collides with the planet Venus. The probe was launched from Kazakhstan on November 15, 1965. Even though it crashed it became the first unmanned spacecraft to reach the surface of another planet.

2 March 1965-The first Operation Rolling Thunder raid on an ammunition depot in Xom Bang. Of the 100 USAF jet bombers deployed only six were downed. One US pilot, Capt. Hayden J. Lockhart, became the first USAF POW when his F-100 was shot down.

2 March 1972-Pioneer 10 is launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida on a mission to Jupiter. It is the world's first outer-planetary probe.

3 March 1965-30 USAF jets bomb the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

3 March 1974-A Turkish Airlines DC-10, Flight 981, crashes in a forest outside of Paris, France when a faulty latch causes the rear hatch door to blow off of the plane. All of the 346 persons aboard were killed when the plane hit the ground at 500 miles per hour.

4 March 1944-The Eighth Air Force conducts their first bombing raid against the German capitol of Berlin. Of the fourteen US bombers that took off only one made it to Berlin to drop its bombs. The rest of the planes dropped their bombs elsewhere.

4 March 1962-Flight 153, a Trans-African DC-7 crashes in Douala, Cameroon shortly after take off when an elevator spring tab jams. This becomes the first single airplane disaster in which more than 100 people are killed. All 111 aboard perished.

5 March 1966-A British Overseas Airways Boeing 707 crashes near Mt. Fuji. As the pilot flew in close to Mt. Fuji to give the passengers a better view extreme turbulence tore off the rear control surfaces causing loss of control. As the plane plunged to the ground it literally broke apart. All 124 people aboard Flight 911 perished.

9 March 1945-334 B-29 Superfortresses took off from Saipan and Tinian to firebomb Tokyo. They dropped their bombs flying at no more than 500 feet. After the firebombing was over 100,000 people perished and over 250,000 buildings were destroyed.

13 March 1781-German born English astronomer William Herschel discovers the seventh planet from the sun, Uranus. It becomes the first planet ever to be discovered by the use of a telescope.

14 March 1879-Albert Einstein is born in Ulm, Germany.

14 March 1980-A Polish Airlines Ilyushin 62 crashes while attempting to land in Warsaw, Poland. All 87 people aboard perished including 22 members of the United States boxing team, prominent anthropologist Dr. Alan Merriam and Polish singer Anna Jantar. The accident was caused when one of the engines blew apart and severed the rudder and elevator control lines.

16 March 1926-Robert H. Goddard successfully launches the first liquid fueled rocket in Auburn, Massachusetts. The rocket traveled for 2.5 seconds at about 60 miles per hour. It reached an altitude of 41 feet and landed 184 feet away from its original launch site.

18 March 1969-B-52 bombers drop bombs on Cambodia for the first time during the Vietnam War. The mission was named Operation Breakfast.

19 March 1916-The first American air combat mission is flown by the First Aero Squadron. The mission was to provide support to the 7,000 ground troops that invaded Mexico in search of Pancho Villa.

19 March 2003-President Bush announces the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

22 March 1958-Producer Mike Todd dies when his plane, "Lucky Liz" crashes. Todd produced such films as Oklahoma and Around the World in 80 Days.

23 March 1961-A US intelligence gathering plane is shot down over the Plain of Jars in central Laos.

23 March 1983-President Reagan calls for new antimissile technology using laser beams from satellites. The program becomes the "Strategic Defense Initiative" but is better known as the "Star Wars Initiative". After over \$30 billion in costs invested the program was shelved in the mid 1990s.

24 March 1999-NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) commences air strikes against Yugoslavia in the province of Kosovo after a new wave of ethnic cleansing.

27 March 1945-The Germans launch the last of their V-2 rockets from a launch site near The Hague in the Netherlands. Of the two V-2 rockets launched, one landed on a block of flats in London and the other landed in Antwerp in Belgium. Later that same afternoon another V-2 landed in Kent, England.

27 March 1977-Two Boeing 747 jumbo jets collide on the runway at the Los Rodeos Airport in the Canary Islands during a foggy afternoon. 582 passengers and crew were killed when the KLM and Pan Am jets collided.

29 March 1974-The unmanned spacecraft Mariner 10, launched by NASA, becomes the first and only spacecraft to visit the planet Mercury. The data sent back by Mariner 10 revealed that Mercury's slow rotational period of one rotation takes 58 Earth days.

Mercury is the closest planet to the sun. Its surface temperature facing the sun reaches 800 degrees Fahrenheit and -279 degrees Fahrenheit when facing away.