

FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- APRIL 2009

50 Years Ago – 1959

April 2: Seven astronauts selected for Project Mercury, Washington, D.C.

April 13: Discoverer 2 launched by Thor Agena, 4:18 p.m. EST, Vandenberg AFB.

45 Years Ago – 1964

April 2: Zond 1 launched by Modified SS-6 (Sapwood) or Molniya, 02:53 UTC, Baikonur, USSR.

April 8: GT-1 Gemini 1 Launch (Unmanned) at 16:00:01 UTC. First Project Gemini flight which tested the Titan II launch vehicle. It made four orbits and was successfully recovered.

40 Years Ago – 1969

April 14: Nimbus 3 launched by Thor Agena, 02:54 a.m., EST, Vandenberg AFB.

April 17: First X-24 glide flight, Jerauld.R. Gentry pilot, DFRF, CA.

35 Years Ago – 1974

April 13: Westar 1 launched by Delta at 23:33:03 from Cape Canaveral. First satellite for domestic communications.

30 Years Ago – 1979

April 10: Soyuz 33 launched on a Soyuz rocket from Baikonur at 17:34:34 UTC. Ferry flight to Salyut-6 space station. Crew: Nikolai N.Rukavishnikov and Georgi I. Ivanov (Bulgaria).

April 23: XV-15-2 (Tilt-Rotor Research Aircraft) achieved first hover flight, Arlington, TX.

25 Years Ago - 1984

April 3: Soyuz T-11 launched on Soyuz rocket from Baikonur at 13:08:42 UTC. Ferry flight to Salyut-7 space station. Crew: Yuri V.Malyshev, Gennadi M.Strekalov, and Rakesh Sharma (India).

April 6: STS-41C (Space Shuttle *Challenger*) launched, 8:58 a.m., EST, KSC. Crew: Robert L. Crippen, Francis R. Scobee, Terry J. Hart, George D. Nelson, and James Van Hoften. LDEF-1 launched from shuttle. First in-orbit spacecraft repair was performed on the Solar Maximum Mission. First direct ascent trajectory for Space Shuttle launch. Landed April 13, EAFB, CA. Mission duration: 6 days, 23 hours, and 41 minutes.

15 Years Ago – 1994

April 9: STS-59 (Space Shuttle *Endeavour*) launched, 7:05 a.m. EST, KSC. Crew: Sidney M. Gutierrez, Kevin P. Chilton, Linda M. Godwin, Jerome “Jay” Apt, Michael R. Clifford, and Thomas D. Jones. Carried Space Radar Laboratory (SRL-1). First flight of Toughened Uni-Piece Fibrous Insulation, known as TUF1, an improved thermal protection tile. First Hispanic Shuttle Commander (Gutierrez). Mission duration: 11 days, 5 hours, and 49 minutes.

April 13: GOES-8 launched on Atlas-Centaur rocket from Cape Canaveral at 1:04 EST.

10 Years Ago – 1999

April 15: Landsat 7, a remote sensing spacecraft, launched by a Delta 2 rocket from Vandenberg AFB at 18:32 UTC.

April 16: Sputnik Jr. 3 was a microsatellite that was carried by Progress M-41 to Mir and then pushed out by the crew on April 2. It carried tape recorded voices of the school children in Russia and France who built the satellite.

5 Years Ago – 2004

April 19: Soyuz TMA-4 launched on a Soyuz FG rocket from Baikonur at 03:19:00 UTC. Ferry flight to the International Space Station, bringing Expedition 9 (Padalka/Fincke). Crew: Gennady I. Padalka, E. Michael "Mike" Fincke, and André Kuipers (The Netherlands).

April 20: Gravity Probe-B, was launched by a Delta 2 rocket from Vandenberg AFB at 16:57 UTC to verify a derivative consequence of the General Relativistic Gravitation (GRG) theory, according to which a spinning body such as the Earth makes the space-time around it to rotate around, though extremely slowly.