

FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- APRIL 2010

60 Years Ago – 1950

April 1: Dr. Wernher von Braun moved from Fort Bliss, TX to Redstone Arsenal, AL.

50 Years Ago - 1960

April 1: Tiros 1 (Television and InfraRed Observation Satellite) launched aboard Thor rocket, 6:40 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla., first weather observation satellite and took the first television image of the Earth from space.

April 13: Transit I-B launched by Thor Ablestar, 7:03 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla., first navigational satellite.

April 13: First flight of Robert M. White, X-15 pilot, Dryden FRF, CA.

April 15: Discoverer 11 launched aboard Thor rocket, 3:30 p.m., EST, Vandenberg AFB. Part of Corona spy satellite program.

45 Years Ago - 1965

April 3: Snapshot 1 (Snap 10A) launched by Atlas Agena D, 1:27 p.m., PST, Vandenberg AFB. First nuclear reactor in space. NASA- Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) cooperative program.

April 6: Early Bird (Intelsat 1) launched by Thor Delta, 6:48 p.m. EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First commercial communications satellite -- placed in synchronous orbit over the Atlantic Ocean.

April 23: Molniya 1 launched , 0211 UTC, Baikonur, USSR.

April 29: Explorer 27 launched by a Scout rocket, 10:17 a.m., EST., Wallops Island, VA.

40 Years Ago – 1970

April 8: Nimbus 4 launched, 3:18 a.m., EST, Vandenberg AFB. Also launched Topo 1. Rocket: Thor Agena.

April 11: Apollo 13 launched on its ill-fated flight to the moon. Crew: James A. Lovell Jr., John L. Swigert Jr., and Fred W. Haise Jr. aborted the mission after the service module oxygen tank ruptured on April 13.

April 22: Intelsat III F-7 launched by Thor Delta, 7:46 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

April 24: China 1 (PRC 1). Also known as Dong Fang Hong-1 (DFH-1), launched by Long March. First Chinese satellite making the PRC the fifth nation to launch its own satellite.

35 Years Ago – 1975

April 9: GOES 3 launched by Delta, 7:48 p.m., EDT, Vandenberg AFB.

30 Years Ago – 1980

April 26: NavStar 6 launched by Atlas F, Vandenberg AFB.

25 Years Ago – 1985

April 12: STS-51D (Space Shuttle *Discovery*) launched from KSC at 8:59 a.m., EST. Astronauts Karol J. Bobko, Don E. Williams, Margaret Rhea Seddon, S. David Griggs, Jeffrey A. Hoffman, Charles D. Walker and Senator E. J. "Jake" Garn aboard. Landed at KSC on April 19 at 8:45 a.m., EST. Mission duration: 6 days, 23 hours, and 55 minutes.

April 12: Telesat 1 launched by Shuttle *Discovery*.

April 12: Syncom IV 3 launched by Shuttle *Discovery*. Booster motor failed to fire.

April 29: STS-51B (Space Shuttle *Challenger*) launched from KSC at 12:02 p.m., EDT with astronauts Robert F. Overmyer, Frederick D. Gregory, Don L. Lind, Norman E. Thagard, William E. Thornton, Lodewijk van den Berg and Taylor G. Wang aboard. Carried Spacelab 3 in the cargo bay. Landed at Edwards AFB, CA, May 6 at 9:11 a.m., PDT. Mission Duration: 7 days, 0 hours, 8 minutes.

April 29: NUSAT 1 launched by Shuttle *Challenger*.

20 Years Ago – 1990

April 5: PEGSAT launched by Pegasus newly developed launch vehicle system. The rocket was carried aloft by an L-1011 aircraft flying out of Vandenberg AFB.

April 11: Department of Defense triple satellite launched with an Atlas E booster, Vandenberg AFB.

April 13: Palapa B2R launched 6:28 p.m., EDT. Cape Canaveral, Fla.

April 24: STS-31, (Space Shuttle *Discovery*) launched from KSC at 8:33 a.m., EDT with astronauts Loren J. Shriver, Charles F. Bolden, Steven A. Hawley, Bruce McCandless and Kathryn D. Sullivan. Deployment of Hubble Space Telescope (HST). Landed April 29, 1990, 6:49:57 a.m. PDT, Edwards Air Force Base, CA. Mission duration: 5 days, 1 hour, and 16 minutes.

April 25 - Hubble Space Telescope launched from shuttle *Discovery*, weighing approximately 25,000 pounds (11,355 kg). First image taken by Wide Field/Planetary Camera released May 20. Spherical aberration in the optical system announced publicly June 27.

15 Years Ago – 1995

April 3: MICROLAB 1 minisatellite with a global lightning mapper launched by a Pegasus rocket carried aloft by an L-1011 aircraft flying out of Vandenberg AFB.

April 3: ORBCOMM FM2 and ORBCOMM FM1 minisatellites launched by the same Pegasus rocket which launched the MICROLAB 1. The main payload consisted of a transponder to relay the GPS-determined locations of cargo trucks, and data from oil pipeline monitors.

10 Years Ago – 2000

April 4: Soyuz TM-30 launched at 05:01 UTC from Baikonur. Last Soyuz mission to the 14 year-old Mir space station. Crew: Sergei Zalyotin, Alexandr Kaleri, aboard a Soyuz-U rocket from Baikonur.

5 Years Ago – 2005

April 14: Michael Griffin takes office as eleventh NASA Administrator.

April 15: DART (Demonstration of Autonomous Rendezvous Technology) was an American (NASA) technology demonstrator that was launched by a Pegasus-XL HAPS rocket at 1:25 pm from an L-1011 cargo aircraft flying out of Vandenberg AFB to test its capability to rendezvous and maneuver around a specially equipped DoD satellite, MUBLCOM. The spacecraft did not complete its mission and collided with the intended rendezvous satellite.

April 15: Soyuz-TMA 6 launched from Baikonur. Carried Expedition 10 crew of three astronauts (a Russian, Sergei Krikalev; an American, John Phillips; and an Italian, Robert Vittori) to the International Space Station (ISS). During the mission Krikalev broke the record for total time in space.

April 29: The last Titan 4 rocket blasted off from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, ending nearly five decades of Titan launches.