

FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- FEBRUARY 2014

450 Years Ago - 1564

February 15: Galileo Galilei born, Pisa, Italy.

55 Years Ago – 1959

February 5: NASA forms a working group at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) to formulate plans for future lunar exploration.

February 6: First successful Titan missile flight, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

February 17: Vanguard 2 launched, 10:55 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First fully instrumented Vanguard payload. First Earth photos from satellite.

February 28: Discoverer 1 launched by Thor Agena, 16:49 EST, Vandenberg AFB. The Agena stage must have malfunctioned and it probably landed near the South Pole. A precursor to the Corona satellite program, this was the first launch in a joint project of the U.S. Air Force and the Advanced Research Projects Agency to develop a film return reconnaissance satellite.

50 Years Ago - 1964

February 26: First visual telecast via communications satellite of the Sonny Liston versus Cassius Clay (later known as Muhammad Ali) Championship boxing match using Relay 2 communications satellite.

45 Years Ago - 1969

February 5: Intelsat III F-3 launched by Thor Delta, 7:39 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

February 25: Mariner 6 launched, 8:29 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First Mariner launch with the Atlas/Centaur launch vehicle (Atlas/Centaur 20)

February 26: ESSA 9 launched by Thor Delta, 2:49 a.m., Cape Canaveral, Fla.

40 Years Ago - 1974

February 11: First launch of Titan/Centaur launch vehicle. Titan-Centaur Proof Flight [Titan IIIE-Centaur D] or TC-1.

February 18: San Marco 4 launched by Scout , 6:05 a.m., EDT, from San Marco Range, Kenya.

35 Years Ago - 1979

February 18: SAGE (Stratospheric Aerosol & Gas Experiment) launched, 11:18 a.m., Wallops Flight Facility (WFF).

February 24: Solwind (STP 78-1) launched by Atlas F, 12:20 a.m., PST, Vandenberg AFB.

30 Years Ago - 1984

February 3: STS-41B (Space Shuttle Challenger) launched from KSC, 8:00 a.m., deployed Westar 6 and Palapa B2, which failed to orbit. Crew: Vance D. Brand, Robert L. Gibson, Bruce McCandless, Ronald E. McNair, and Robert L. Stewart. First use of Manned Maneuvering Unit (MMU). First untethered space walks performed in space by McCandless and Stewart. First satellite refurbished & flown again (SPAS). First Shuttle landing at Kennedy Space Center on 2/11/1984 at 7:16 am.

February 8: Soyuz T-10 launched by Soyuz at 12:07 UTC, Baikonur, USSR. Docked with Salyut 7, crew of Leonid D. Kizim, Vladimir A. Solovov, and Oleg Y. Atkov, set 237 day space duration record. Returned in Soyuz T-11.

25 Years Ago – 1989

February 14: GPS (Block IIR) launched, 1:30 p.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First in series of Navstar Global Positioning Satellites launched by Delta II.

20 Years Ago – 1994

February 3: STS-60 (Space Shuttle Discovery) launched from KSC, 7:10 a.m. EST. Carried SPACEHAB-02 facility to conduct 12 experiments. Crew: Charles F. Bolden, Kenneth S. Reightler, Jr., N. Jan Davis, Ronald M. Sega, Franklin R. Chang-Diaz, and Sergei K. Krikalev. Krikalev is first Russian cosmonaut to fly aboard the Space Shuttle. First flight of the Wake Shield Facility-1. Landed at KSC February 11 at 2:18 p.m. EST. Mission duration: 8 days, 7 hours, 10 minutes.

15 Years Ago - 1999

February 7: Stardust probe launched atop a Delta II rocket from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Station at 4:04 p.m. EST to become the first U.S. mission destined for a comet, and the first-ever spacecraft sent to bring a comet sample back to Earth from Comet Wild 2.

February 20: Soyuz TM-29 launched on a Soyuz-U rocket from Baikonur at 04:18:01 UTC. Docked with Mir space station February 22. Crew: Viktor M. Afanasyev; Jean-Pierre Haigneré (France); Ivan Bella (Slovakia).

10 Years Ago - 2004

February 26: International Space Station (ISS) Expedition 8 crew: first spacewalk outside a space station without a human crewmember inside by C. Michael Foale and Alexander Y. Kaleri.