

FORECAST OF UPCOMING ANNIVERSARIES -- MAY 2013

80 Years Ago - 1933

May 14: The American Interplanetary Society successfully launched its Rocket No. 2 in Staten Island, N.Y. The rocket achieved a 250-foot altitude in only two seconds.

65 Years Ago - 1948

May 13: First Bumper Wac fired, first two stage rocket launched in western hemisphere. Rose 69.7 miles. Wac Corporal reached 79.1 miles. White Sands Proving Ground (WSPG), NM.

55 Years Ago - 1958

May 1: Van Allen radiation belts publicly announced, based on findings of Explorer 1 (launched January 31, 1958).

May 15: Sputnik 3, an orbiting geophysical observatory used to measure the pressure and composition of Earth's upper atmosphere, launched by Modified SS-6 (Sapwood) or Molniya rocket, 0712 UTC, from Baikonur.

50 Years Ago - 1963

May 3: First drop test of Project Apollo earth landing system using a boiler plate.

May 7: Telstar 2 launched by Atlas Agena, 7:38 a.m., EDT, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

May 15: Mercury/Atlas-9 (Faith 7), astronaut Leroy Gordon Cooper launched, 8:04 a.m., EST, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First U.S. flight exceeding 24 hrs. First live television broadcast from a U.S. spacecraft.

May 17: ESRO-2 (or 2B or IRIS) launched by Scout from Vandenberg AFB, CA at 2:09 UTC.

45 Years Ago - 1968

May 18: Nimbus -B meteorological R and D satellite launch using a Thor-Agena from Vandenberg AFB, CA at 5 p.m. PDT. First NASA launch using long-tank Thor-Agena

40 Years Ago - 1973

May 14: Skylab 1 space station launched aboard the last Saturn V rocket, 1:30 p.m., EDT, KSC.

May 25: Skylab 2 mission launched aboard Saturn 1B. Astronauts: Charles Conrad, Jr., Paul J. Weitz, and Dr. Joseph P. Kerwin, 9:00 a.m., EDT, Cape Canaveral, Fla.

35 Years Ago - 1978

May 20: Pioneer Venus launched by Atlas Centaur, 9:13 a.m., EDT, Cape Canaveral, Fla. First spacecraft placed in orbit around Venus.

May 29: President Carter signed a policy directive establishing a unified policy for all US military and civilian space programs that would broaden the civilian role.

30 Years Ago - 1983

May 19: Intelsat V F-6 launched by Atlas Centaur, 6:26 p.m., EDT, Cape Canaveral, Fla. This satellite helped increase the capability of telecommunications for Intelsat's global network and included a maritime ship-to-shore communication system. This was the 100th launch managed by engineers at NASA's Glenn Research Center (then NASA Lewis).

May 26: Launch of Exosat by Delta from Vandenberg, AFB, CA at 15:18 UTC.

25 Years Ago - 1988

May 17: Launch of Intelsat 5A F13 aboard an Ariane 2 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana, at 23:58 UTC.

20 Years Ago – 1993

May 25: At the end of its fourth orbital cycle, NASA's Magellan became the first orbiting planetary spacecraft to use aerobraking to change its orbit. During this 70-day maneuver, the elliptical orbit parameters were changed so atmospheric drag would slow the spacecraft and make its orbit around Venus more circular. Aerobraking thus saved precious maneuvering fuel for Magellan.

15 Years Ago – 1998

May 13: Launch of NOAA-15 (K) by a Titan 2 rocket from Vandenberg AFB, CA at 15:52:04 UTC.

May 28: The Hubble Space Telescope photographs the mysterious object TMR-1C, possibly a protoplanet or a background star..

10 Years Ago – 2003

May 9: Muses-C, renamed Hayabusa (meaning *Falcon*) after the launch, is a Japanese (ISAS) asteroid explorer that was launched by an M-5 solid fuel rocket from Kagoshima launch center, Uchinoura Space Center, Japan at 04:29 UTC. The primary scientific objective of the Hayabusa mission is to collect a surface sample of material from the small (550 x 180 meter) asteroid 25143 Itokawa (1998 SF36) and return the sample to Earth for analysis.

5 Years Ago – 2008

May 31: STS-124 (Space Shuttle *Discovery*) Launched at 5:02 p.m. EDT, KSC. Crew: Mark E. Kelly; Kenneth T. Ham; Karen L. Nyberg; Ronald J. Garan; Michael E. Fossum; Akihiko Hoshide (Japan); Gregory E. Chamitoff; and Garrett E. Reisman. Installation of the 16-tonne pressurized, second segment of the Japanese research laboratory (Kibo), and repair of the liquid toilet. Landing: June 14, 11:15 a.m. EDT, KSC. Mission Duration: 13 days, 18 hours, 13 minutes.