

EDGERTON



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Space Shuttle Columbia

A necessary venture for science, mankind

By J. Dana Haynes
Of The Print

Hollywood couldn't have done it better. Two and a half years behind schedule, several billion dollars over budget, and touted by a public relations department that couldn't sell tickets to the Second Coming. Is it "Heaven's Gate"? The next Francis Ford Coppola epic? No, it's NASA's space shuttle.

And in these times of economic turmoil (query: can any of us remember any other kind of economic time?), many people are asking if the USS Columbia is worth all the money, bother and hoopla.

The answer: a resounding yes. As a matter of fact, of the million-plus sightseers who invaded Titusville, Fla., and the countless-millions more who awoke early Friday and Sunday morning to turn on their TV sets, few truly understand the importance of the Columbia. Recently, Senator William Proxmire (R-Wisc.), watchdog of the budget, scoffed at the shuttle and referred to it as a "space track"; just another very expensive piece of metal to send up, orbit and land. Big Deal.

Now, Proxmire seems to be an honest man, and no one doubts his intelligence. But the fact is, he simply does not

understand the issue.

There have been three highly important, stepping-stone space flights in history. John Glenn's Mercury proved that man could orbit, and thus survive in space for short intervals. In 1965, Grissom and Young took control of their Gemini, the first space vehicle not piloted by ground control. And Schirra, Eisele and Cunningham took Apollo 7 for a spin in '68, about 20 months after the tragic Apollo 6 fire, thus proving that Apollo was not an inherently flawed ship, and assuring money for future flights.

These three flights were milestones. Technically, landing on the moon as a nice stunt, but not that much harder to build and fly than an orbiter. The next step?

Columbia. The shuttle craft is to the Apollo line what a Ferrari is to a Model T. One hundred fifty-four feet long (when on end, as high as a 15-story building), as massive as a Boeing 707, and complete with 49 different engines and boosters, it is a megalith.

Pilot John Young looks at the shuttle like this: "Apollo required us to know a massive amount. The shuttle is a whole magnitude more difficult. But because we've worked so long, I do believe we're better prepared than we ever were for Gemini and Apollo."

And moreover, no one is better suited for the job of handling this behemoth than Young. An Air Force man, he has spent more time in space than any man in history. He flew aboard Gemini 2 and 10, and Apollo 10 and 16, for a total of 533 hours and 33

minutes. He is the best there is.

Bob Crippen is a rookie, but with vast experience as a test pilot. Between the two of them, Young and Crippen are perhaps the most experienced crew ever shot into orbit.

But it is not the men who make this flight special, it's the role in history. The much heralded space age is not actually here yet. Indeed, it won't be until space travel is possible for more than a handful of specialists. The shuttle will make that possible.

Bob Crippen said, "We're going concern, an eventual money-maker. All sorts of participants want to work with us. European nations, China, Arabsat, Indonesia. Scores of universities want to send experiments aloft. And many of the big industries. This isn't an experiment. It's the real thing."

But, you may well ask, what about the common man? According to author/historian James Michener, you and I may soon have a hand in astronautics. In an article for "Omni" magazine, Michener estimated that, by flight 17 of the shuttle, paying passengers may be aboard.

"Three men I know have already signed up for the first businessman's special," said Michener, "Lowell Thomas, Walter Cronkite, and I. If the flight takes place, as I think it might, as early as 1984, Thomas will be in his nineties, I will be in my late seventies, and Cronkite in his late sixties. When we three elder statesmen blast off on a routine flight, the world will awaken to the fact that it has truly entered the Space Age."

Editor's notes

This policy was made for you and me

Sam Crosby:

This policy's your policy
This policy's my policy,
From fiscal conservatism
to involving students,
from tiny-pin-tithisis
to tiding with Board members,
This policy was made for you
and me.

Walt McAllister:

This stance is your stance
This stance is my stance,
from tightly knit budgets
to involving students,
from short alterations
to informing Board members,
this stance is made for you
and me.

Joe Schweizer:

This platform's your platform
This platform's my platform,
from zero capital expansion
to involving students
from stunted metamorphosis
to conversing with Board members,
this platform was made
for you and me.

Thomas A. Rhodes

feedback Thanks to phonetics

To The Editor:

This note is to express my thanks to all those who helped pass the tax proposal to cover college-operation costs. Without community support, Clackamas Community College has little purpose or direction.

In the near future, I hope to announce a comprehensive community outreach program designed to help the college and community open new and better lines of communication. This program will be broad in scope, touching many communities, and seeking the advice and counsel from all corners of the college district.

The college district voters have placed their trust in the college and in its staff and Board. We appreciate their trust and will do our best to ensure continued trust in the future.

Dr. John Hakanson
President
Clackamas Community
College

staff

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