

NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

NAME: Eugene Andrew Cernan

ORAL HISTORY: 11 December 2007

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

BS in Electrical Engineering, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, 1956
MS in Aeronautical Engineering, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School

MILITARY EXPERIENCE: Captain, United States Navy (retired)

PRE-NASA CAREER:

Commissioned, Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Purdue University, 1956
Pilot, Attack Squadrons 126 and 113, Miramar Naval Air Station, California

NASA CAREER:

NASA Manned Spacecraft Center/Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas
Astronaut, Flight Crew Operations Division (1963-1976)
Special Assistant to the Manager, Apollo Spacecraft Program Office/Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (1973-1975)
Chief of Training Operations, Astronaut Office, Flight Crew Operations Division (1975-1976)

POST-NASA CAREER:

Executive Vice President, Coral Petroleum, Houston, Texas (1976-1980)
President, Cernan Corporation, Houston, Texas (1980-Present)
Commentator, ABC-TV (1977-1984)

MISSIONS:

Gemini IX-A

- Crew: Commander Thomas P. Stafford, Pilot Eugene A. Cernan
- Launched: 3 June 1966 at 8:39:33.335 A.M. EST from Cape Canaveral, FL
- Duration: 3 days, 0 hours, 20 minutes, 50 seconds
- Landed: 6 June 1966 at 9:00:28 A.M. EST, at 27°52' north and 75° 0.4' west
- Mission Highlights: The primary objective of rendezvous and docking could only be partially achieved because the launch shroud on the ATDA failed to jettison. In lieu of docking, Gemini IX-A performed a number of rendezvous maneuvers, including a simulation of lunar module rendezvous. During the EVA maneuvers, Cernan was overexerted and his visor became fogged, causing the EVA to be aborted before he was able to test the maneuvering unit. The secondary objective, the Agena

Micrometeorite Collection experiment was not attempted because of the GATV malfunction.

Apollo 10

- Crew: Commander Thomas P. Stafford, Command Module Pilot John W. Young, Lunar Module Pilot Eugene A. Cernan
- Launched: 18 May 1969 at 12:49:00 A.M. EDT from Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Duration: 8 days, 0 hours, 3 minutes, 23 seconds
- Landed: 26 May 1969 at 12:52 A.M. EDT, 15 deg 2 min south by 164 deg 39 min west
- Mission Highlights: Conducted successful dress rehearsal for first manned lunar landing. Completed first manned CSM/LM operations in cislunar and lunar environment. Transmitted first live color TV from space.

Apollo 17

- Crew: Commander Eugene A. Cernan, Command Module Pilot Ronald B. Evans, Lunar Module Pilot Harrison H. Schmitt
- Launched: 7 December 1972 at 12:33:00 A.M. EST from Cape Canaveral, FL
- Duration: 12 days, 13 hours, 52 minutes
- Landed: 19 December 1972 at 2:25 p.M. EST in the mid-Pacific
- Mission Highlights: Harrison H. "Jack" Schmitt became the first scientist-astronaut to land on Moon. Cernan and Schmitt set up the sixth automated research station. Completed the longest Lunar Roving Vehicle (LRV) traverse to date, totaling 30.5 km. Completed the longest lunar surface stay of 75 hours. Gathered 110.4 kg (243 lbs) of lunar material.

PROFESSIONAL & HONORARY SOCIETIES:

- Fellow, American Astronautical Society
- Member, Society of Experimental Test Pilots
- Member, Tau Beta Pi (National Engineering Society)
- Member, Sigma Xi (National Science Research Society)
- Member, Phi Gamma Delta (National Social Fraternity)

AWARDS & CITATIONS:

- Two NASA Distinguished Service Medals
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal
- Johnson Space Center Superior Achievement Award
- Two Navy Distinguished Service Medals
- Navy Astronaut Wings
- Navy Distinguished Flying Cross
- National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Special Trustees Award, 1969
- Honorary Lifetime Membership, American Federation of Radio and Television Artists, 1969
- Honorary Doctorate of Laws, Western State University College of Law, 1969

- Honorary Doctorate of Engineering, Purdue University, 1970
- Federation Aeronautique Internationale Gold Space Medal, 1972
- City of New York Gold Medal, 1973
- Nassau County New York Distinguished Service Medal, 1973
- Republic of Senegal's National Order of the Lion, 1973

BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Peter Bond, Heroes in Space: From Gagarin to Challenger, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1987), 289.

"Eugene A. Cernan," NASA Biographical Data Sheet, May 1974, Biographical Files, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas History Collection, Scientific and Technical Information Center, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

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