

# NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

## BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

**NAME:** John William. Kiker

**ORAL HISTORY:** 5 May 1999  
12 May 1999

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

BS in Mechanical Engineering, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1951

**MILITARY EXPERIENCE:** Officer, United States Army Air Force (1944-1946)

**PRE-NASA CAREER:**

Pilot and commercial flight instructor, Georgia Air Service, Bennettsville, South Carolina (1943-1944)

Officer, United States Army Air Force (1944-1946)

Pilot and commercial flight instructor, W & L Airways, Wadesboro, North Carolina (1946-1947)

Engineer, Research Section, Parachute Branch, Aeronautical Accessories Laboratory, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), Dayton, Ohio (1951-1959)

Aeronautical Engineer, Aviation Division, US Army Aviation Transportation Research and Engineering Command (TRECOM), Fort Eustis, Virginia (1959-1960)

**NASA CAREER:**

NASA Space Task Group, Langley Field, Virginia

Aerospace Engineer, Mechanical Systems Section, Systems Engineering Branch, Flight Systems Division (1960-1962)

Head, Landing and Impact Section, Mechanical Systems Branch, Systems Evaluation and Development Division (1962-1963)

NASA Manned Spacecraft Center/Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas

Assistant Chief, Mechanical and Landing Systems Branch, Structures and Mechanics Division, Engineering and Development Directorate (1963-1964)

Chief, Landing Technical Branch, Structures and Mechanics Division (1965-1966)

Chief, Landing and Docking Mechanics Branch, Structures and Mechanics Division (1966-1971)

Chief, Mechanical Systems Branch, Spacecraft Design Division, Advanced Planning and Design Assistant Directorate, Engineering and Development Directorate (1971-1972, 1973-1976)

Chief, Mechanical Systems Branch, Structures and Mechanics Division, Chemical and Mechanical Systems Assistant Directorate, Engineering and Development Directorate (1972)

Chief, Mechanisms Branch, Spacecraft Design Division, Program Development  
Assistant Directorate, Engineering and Development Directorate (1976-1979)

**POST-NASA CAREER:**

Unknown

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Retired

**PROFESSIONAL & HONORARY SOCIETIES:**

- Associate Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
- Past Member, AIAA Aerodynamic Deceleration System Committee
- Phi Kappa Phi (honor society)

**AWARDS & CITATIONS:**

- Highest Cash Award from JSC for orbiter/747 concept
- JSC Contribution Award for Skylab Thermal Shield Emergency (1975)
- JSC Superior Achievement Award (1969)
- Leo Stevens Medal for Johnson Space Center (JSC) for Apollo parachute system (1973)
- Letter of Recognition from the President of the United States for Orbiter/747 concept
- NASA Certificate of Commendation for Apollo work (1972)
- NASA Certificate of Commendation for Shuttle/747 concept (1976)
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal (1978)
- Presidential Management Improvement Award (1980)

**SELECT PUBLICATIONS:**

Hinson, J. K. and John W. Kiker. "Landing Systems Applicable to Apollo Spacecraft." NASA Project Apollo Working Paper No. 1026. TM-X-65225. Hampton, VA: NASA Langley Research Center, 1961.

Hinson, J. K. and John W. Kiker. "Laboratory and Full-Sized Studies with Steerable Parachutes." Presented to Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft Fuer Luft-Und Raumfahrt, and Deutsche Gessellschaft Fuer Raketentechnik Und Raumfahrtforschung, Jahrestagung, Berlin, West Germany, 14-18 September 1964.

Kiker, John W. "Impact Attenuation of Manned Spacecraft." NASA TM-X-60606 (CASI 68N11001). Houston: NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, 1965.

Kiker, John W. and Carlisle C. Campbell, Jr. "Spacecraft Landing Systems—Design Criteria and Components." In Manned Spacecraft: Engineering Design and Operation, ed. Paul E. Purser, Maxime A. Faget, and Norman F. Smith, 327-341. New York: Fairchild Publications, 1964.

Kiker, John W., J. B. Lee, and J. K. Hinson. "Earth Landing Systems for Manned Spacecraft." NASA Fact Sheet 199. Presented to the Flight Mechanics Panel of the

Advisory Group for Aeronautical Research and Development, Turin, Italy, 18 April 1963. Vertical Files. Cabinet 3, Drawer 2. History Collection. Scientific and Technical Information Center. Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center. Houston, TX.

Kiker, John W. and Owen Morris. "Launching a Space Shuttle." Model Airplane News 93 no. 5 (November 1976):45-46, 62, 66.

Kiker is also the author of more than a dozen other papers and Air Force technical reports on landing systems and parachutes.

**BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:**

John W. Kiker Personnel File, Human Resources Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

John W. Kiker NASA Biographical Data Sheet (March 1964), John W. Kiker Biographical File, History Collection, Scientific and Technical Information Center, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

John W. Kiker NASA Biographical Data Sheet (n.d., ca. 1977), John W. Kiker Biographical File, Key Personnel Files (Inactive), Awards Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

John W. Kiker NASA Biographical Data Sheet (1979), John W. Kiker Biographical Folder, Public Affairs Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

Organizational Charts, Boxes 13 and 14, Organization Series, Center Collection, Scientific and Technical Information Center, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

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