

NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

NAME: Walter Marty Schirra, Jr.

ORAL HISTORY: 1 December 1998

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Attended Newark College of Engineering, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, New Jersey, 1941

BS, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, 1945

Attended Naval Air Safety Officer School, University of Southern California, San Diego, California, 1957

MILITARY EXPERIENCE: Captain, United States Navy (retired)

PRE-NASA CAREER:

United States Navy

Served, Battle Cruiser *Alaska* (1945)

Staff, Seventh Fleet, China (1946)

Pilot, Navy Fighter Squadron 71, Quonset Point, Rhode Island (1948-1951)

Exchange Pilot, 154th US Air Force Fighter Bomber Squadron, Korea (1951-1952)

Served in Development of Sidewinder Missile, Naval Ordnance Training Station, China Lake, California (1952-1954)

Project Pilot, F7U-3 Cutlass and FJ3 Fury, Miramar Air Naval Station, San Diego (1954)

Training pilot, Moffett Field, California (1954-1955)

Operations Officer, 124th Fighter Squadron, Carrier *Lexington*, Pacific Ocean (1955-1957)

Test Pilot, Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Maryland (1958-1959)

NASA CAREER:

NASA, Langley Research Center, Virginia

Astronaut (1959-1964)

NASA Manned Spacecraft Center, Houston, Texas

Astronaut (1964-1969)

POST-NASA CAREER:

Board Member, Imperial American Oil and Gas (1967-1969)

President, Regency Investors, Denver, Colorado (1969-1970)

Founder, Environmental Control Company (1970- date unknown)

Chairman, SERNCO, California (date unknown -1974)

Officer, Johns Manville Corporation (1975-1977)

Officer, Goodwin Company (1977-1979)
Founder, Schirra Enterprises (1979- date unknown)
Spokesperson, Actifed

MISSIONS:

Mercury-Atlas 8 (MA-8) (*Sigma 7*)

- Crew: Walter M. Schirra, Jr.
- Launched: 3 October 1962 at 7:15 A.M. EST from Cape Canaveral, FL
- Duration: 9 hours, 13 minutes, 11 seconds
- Landed: 3 October 1962 at 4:28 P.M. EST in the Pacific Ocean
- Mission Highlights: Corroborate man and spacecraft in orbit for 9 hours.

Gemini VI-A (GT-6A)

- Crew: Commander Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Pilot Thomas P. Stafford
- Launched: 15 December 1965 at 8:37:26 A.M. EST from Cape Canaveral, FL
- Duration: 25 hours, 51 minutes, 24 seconds
- Landed: 16 December 1965 at 10:28:50 A.M. EST in the Atlantic Ocean
- Mission Highlights: First manned rendezvous (with Gemini VII).

Apollo 7 (AS-205)

- Crew: Commander Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Command Module Pilot Donn F. Eisele, Lunar Module Pilot R. Walter Cunningham
- Launched: 11 October 1968 at 11:02:45 A.M. EDT from Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Duration: 10 days, 20 hours, 8 minutes, 58 seconds
- Landed: 22 October at 7:11:43 A.M. EST, Atlantic Ocean
- Mission Highlights: First manned flight of the Apollo program. Demonstrate performance of Command And Service Modules, crew, and mission support.

PROFESSIONAL & HONORARY SOCIETIES:

- Fellow, Society of Experimental Test Pilots
- Fellow, American Astronautical Society

AWARDS & CITATIONS:

- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Two Air Medals
- Two NASA Distinguished Service Medals
- Navy Astronaut Wings
- American Rocket Society Astronautics Award, 1963
- Collier Trophy, 1963
- American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Award, 1963
- American Astronautical Society Flight Achievement Award, 1966
- 1965 Harmon International Aviation Trophy, 1966
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal

- Distinguished Alumnus Award, Newark College of Engineering, New Jersey
- Honorary Doctor of Philosophy in Astronautical Engineering Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, 1966
- Society of Experimental Test Pilots Kincheloe Award

SELECT PUBLICATIONS:

Carpenter, M. Scott, L. Gordon Cooper, Jr., John H. Glenn, Jr., Virgil I. Grissom, Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Alan B. Shepard, Jr., and Donald K. Slayton. We Seven. New York: Simon Schuster, 1962.

Schirra, Walter M., Jr. Schirra's Space. With Richard N. Billings. Boston: Quinlan Press, 1988.

BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Schirra's Space, With Richard N. Billings (Boston: Quinlan Press, 1988), 1-227.

NASA Biographies for Walter Marty Schirra, Jr. Biographical Files. Scientific and Technical Information Center. Johnson Space Center, Houston.

M. Scott Carpenter, L. Gordon Cooper, Jr., John H. Glenn, Jr., Virgil I. Grissom, Walter M. Schirra, Jr., Alan B. Shepard, Jr., and Donald K. Slayton, We Seven (New York: Simon Schuster, 1962), 58-64.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET CREATED: 12 MARCH 1998