

# NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

## BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

**NAME:** Margaret R. "Rhea" Seddon

**ORAL HISTORY:** 20 May 2010  
21 May 2010  
9 May 2011  
10 May 2011

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

B.A. in Physiology, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 1970  
M.D., University of Tennessee, College of Medicine, Memphis, TN, 1973

**PRE-NASA EXPERIENCE:**

Rutherford Hospital, Murfreesboro, TN (1966-1970)

- Surgical Assistant

City of Memphis Hospital, Memphis, TN (1971-1972)

- Suture Technician

University of Tennessee, Memphis, TN (1972-1973)

- Pathology Prosector, Department of Pathology

Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, TN (1974)

- Intern, Straight Surgery

Emergency Room Physician in hospitals in TN, MS, TX (1975-1996)

- Physician

City of Memphis Hospital, Memphis, TN, (1975-1978)

- Resident, General Surgery

**NASA EXPERIENCE:**

Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX (1978-1997)

- Astronaut, Astronaut Office, Flight Crew Operations Directorate (1978-1996)
- Detailed to Vanderbilt University Medical School (1996-1997)

**POST-NASA EXPERIENCE:**

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN (1997-2007)

- Assistant Chief Medical Officer, Vanderbilt Medical Group

Partner, Lifewings Partners LLC

**MISSIONS:**

STS 51-D (*Discovery*)

- Crew: Commander Karol J. Bobko, Pilot Donald E. Williams, Mission Specialist 1 M. Rhea Seddon, Mission Specialist 2 Jeffrey A. Hoffman, Mission Specialist 3 S.

David Griggs, Payload Specialist 1 Charles D. Walker, Payload Specialist 2 Senator E. Jake Garn

- Launched: 12 April 1985 at 8:59 A.M. EST from Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Duration: 6 days, 23 hours, 55 minutes, 23 seconds
- Landed: 19 April 1985 at 8:54 A.M. EST, Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Mission Highlights: The deployment of the satellites Telesat-1 and Syncom IV-3 was the focus of this mission, but the Syncom IV-3 failed to activate. An unscheduled EVA and Seddon's manipulations with the Remote Manipulator System (RMS) were unable to fix the problem in the short window available. The astronauts also participated in the Toys in Space Program and conducted several medical experiments.

#### STS-40 (*Columbia*)

- Crew: Commander Bryan D. O'Connor, Pilot Sidney M. Gutierrez, Mission Specialist 1 James P. Bagian, Mission Specialist 2 Tamara E. Jernigan, Mission Specialist 3 M. Rhea Seddon, Payload Specialist 1 F. Drew Gaffney, Payload Specialist 2 Millie-Hughes Fulford
- Launched: 5 June 1991 at 9:24 A.M. EDT from Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Duration: 9 days, 2 hours, 14 minutes, 20 seconds
- Landed: 14 June 1991 at 8:39 A.M. PDT, Edwards AFB, California
- Mission Highlights: This was the first Spacelab mission dedicated to life sciences. Spacelab Life Sciences-1 (SLS-1) experiments centered on physiology experiments on six body systems of humans, rodents, and jellyfish and observations of the crew, and the tests focused on the effects of microgravity on living organisms.

#### STS-58 (*Columbia*)

- Crew: Commander John E. Blaha, Pilot Richard A. Searfoss, Mission Specialist 1 and Payload Commander M. Rhea Seddon, Mission Specialist 2 William S. McArthur, Jr., Mission Specialist 3 David A. Wolf, Mission Specialist 4 Shannon W. Lucid, Payload Specialist 1 Martin Fettman
- Launched: 18 October 1993 at 10:53 A.M. EDT from Kennedy Space Center, FL
- Duration: 14 days, 0 hours, 12 minutes, 32 seconds
- Landed: 1 November 1993 at 7:05 A.M. PST, Edwards AFB, California
- Mission Highlights: On the second Spacelab mission dedicated to life sciences, Spacelab Life Sciences-2 (SLS-2) Seddon worked as the Payload Commander. The crew conducted medical and physiology experiments on themselves and rodents to understand the adaptation of biological systems to microgravity. Rodent experimentation included dissection, blood drawing, and monitoring. At the time, it was the longest duration NASA shuttle mission to date.

**AWARDS & CITATIONS:**

- Melbourne W. Boynton Award, 1986
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal, 1988
- Melbourne W. Boynton Award, 1992
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal, 1992
- NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal, 1994
- National Achievement Award, 16<sup>th</sup> Y Women in Career Awards, 1994
- Tennessee Aviation Hall of Fame

**REFERENCES:**

Dan Barry to Carol Sue Hipp, "National Achievement Award," 21 December 1994, Margaret Rhea Seddon Awards File, Awards Office, NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

Aaron Cohen to Rosie Zamora-Cope, "1993 Outstanding Women's Luncheon," 16 May 1993, Margaret Rhea Seddon Awards File, Awards Office, NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

Kay Grinter, Curator, "Space Shuttle Mission Chronology STS-40," Kennedy Space Center History Homepage, Online, <http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/kscpao/chron/sts-40.htm> (Last updated 26 September 2000; Accessed 28 May 2002).

Kay Grinter, Curator, "Space Shuttle Mission Chronology STS-58," Kennedy Space Center History Homepage, Online, <http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/kscpao/chron/sts-58.htm> (Last updated 26 September 2000; Accessed 28 May 2002).

Kay Grinter, Curator, "Space Shuttle Mission Chronology STS 51-D," Kennedy Space Center History Homepage, Online, <http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/kscpao/chron/sts51-d.htm>, (Last updated 26 September 2000; Accessed 28 May 2002).

Rhea Seddon, "An Astronaut's Experiences of the SLS Missions," Ames Research Center Life Sciences Division, Online, [http://lifesci.arc.nasa.gov/lis2/Interviews/Inteview\\_Seddon.html](http://lifesci.arc.nasa.gov/lis2/Interviews/Inteview_Seddon.html) (Last Updated, n.d., Accessed 24 May 2002).

Margaret Rhea Seddon NASA Biographical Data Sheet (1992), Kennedy Space Center Homepage, Online, <http://www.ksc.nasa.gov/persons/astronauts/q-to-t/SeddonMR.txt> (Last Updated February 1992; Accessed 24 May 2002).

Margaret Rhea Seddon NASA Biographical Data Sheet (1998), Johnson Space Center Homepage, Online, <http://www.ksc.nasa.gov/persons/astronauts/q-to-t/Seddon MR.txt> (Last Updated November 1998; Accessed 3 May 2002).

"Rhea Seddon," Final Frontier, March/April 1996, 17, Margaret Rhea Seddon Awards File, Awards Office, NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

Margaret Rhea Seddon, "Melbourne W. Boynton Award," n.d., Margaret Rhea Seddon Awards File, Awards Office, NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

"STS-40 Landing Statement," NASA Spacelink Homepage, Online, <http://spacelink.nasa.gov/NASA.Projects/Human.Exploration.and.Development.of.Space/Human.Space.Flight/Shuttle/Shuttle.Missions/Flight.040.STS-39/Landing.Statement> (Last Updated n.d.; Accessed 30 May 2002).

"Vanderbilt University People Finder," Vanderbilt University Homepage, Online, <https://webapp1.mis.vanderbilt.edu/cdb/Controller> (Last Updated n.d.; Accessed 28 May 2002).

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