

# NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

## BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

**NAME:** John Finley Yardley

**ORAL HISTORY:** 29 June 1998  
30 June 1998

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

BS in Aeronautical Engineering, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, 1944  
MS in Applied Mechanics, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, 1950

**MILITARY EXPERIENCE:** Ensign, United States Navy Reserve (1943-1946)

**PRE-NASA CAREER:**

United States Navy  
Aircraft Maintenance Officer, Memphis, Tennessee and Seattle Air Navy Stations  
Engineer, Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, DC  
McDonnell Aircraft Company, St. Louis, Missouri (1946-1959)  
Stress Analyst, FH-1, XF-85, XF-88 (1946-1948)  
Stress Group Engineer, F2H, F3H (1948-1950)  
Structural Methods Engineer (1950-1951)  
Project Strength Engineer, F2H, F-101 (1951-1955)  
Chief Strength Engineer (1955-1958)  
Project Engineer, Advanced Design (1958-1959)

**CAREER AS NASA CONTRACTOR:**

McDonnell Aircraft Company, St. Louis, Missouri (1959-1966)  
Project Engineer, Mercury Spacecraft (1959-1960)  
Mercury Launch Operations Manager (1960-1964)  
Gemini Technical Director (1964-1966)  
McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Company, St. Louis, Missouri (1966-1974)  
Gemini Technical Director (1966-1968)  
Vice President-Deputy General Manager and Skylab Corporatewide General  
Manager (1968-1969)  
Vice President-Deputy General Manager and Vice President-General Manager Space  
Shuttle Program (1969-1972)  
Vice President-Deputy General Manager (1972-1973)  
Vice President-General Manager (1973-1974)

**NASA CAREER:**

NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC (1974-1981)  
Associate Administrator, Manned Space Flight (1974-1976)

Associate Administrator, Space Flight (1976-1978)  
Associate Administrator, Space Transportation Systems (1978-1981)

**POST-NASA CAREER:**

McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Company (1981-1988)  
President  
McDonnell Douglas Corporation, St. Louis, Missouri (1981-1989)  
Corporate Vice President (1981-1988)  
Senior Vice President (1988-1989)

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Retired (1989)

**PROFESSIONAL & HONORARY SOCIETIES:**

- Member, Tau Beta Pi (Honorary Engineering Society)
- Member, Phi Mu Epsilon (Honorary Mathematics Fraternity)
- Member, Phi Kappa Phi (Honorary Academic Society)
- Member, Phi Eta Sigma (Honor Society)
- Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
- Member, National Academy of Engineering
- Fellow, American Astronautical Society (AAS)
- Member, International Academy of Astronautics
- Board of Directors, NASA Alumni League
- Board of Governors, National Space Club

**AWARDS & CITATIONS:**

- Achievement Award, Institute of Aerospace Sciences, St. Louis Section (1961)
- John J. Montgomery Award (1963)
- NASA Public Service Award for contributions to the Mercury Program (1963)
- NASA Public Service Award for contributions to the Gemini Program (1966)
- Professional Achievement Citation, Iowa State University (1970)
- Spirit of St. Louis Medal, American Society of Mechanical Engineers (1973)
- Washington University Alumni Citation (1975)
- Distinguished Achievement Citation, Iowa State University (1976)
- Space Flight Award, American Astronautical Society (1978)
- Presidential Ranks—Meritorious Executive Award (1980)
- NASA Special Achievement Award (1981)
- NASA Distinguished Service Medal (1981)
- NASA Engineer of the Year Award (1982)
- AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award (1982)
- Goddard Memorial Trophy (1983)
- Washington University Engineering Alumni Achievement Award (1983)
- Elmer Sperry Award (1986)
- Washington University Alumni Achievement Award (1986)

- Von Karman Astronautics Lectureship Award (1988)

**SELECT PUBLICATIONS:**

Yardley, John F. "Twenty-Five Years of NASA Reflections and Projections on Manned Space Flight." In the Proceedings of the Twenty-First Goddard Memorial Symposium, Greenbelt, MD. McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Co., St. Louis, MO, 1983.

Yardley, John F. "To the First Shuttle Launch—Program Review." Aeronautics and Astronautics. Washington, DC: NASA (February 1979).

Yardley, John F. "Space Shuttle Test Program." NASA, Washington, DC. Keynote Address, Aerospace Testing Seminar, Los Angeles, CA (1978).

Yardley, John F. "Role of Spacelab in the Space Transportation System." 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Industrial Space Study Group, Monte Carlo, Monaco. British Interplanetary Society Journal (1977).

Yardley, John F. "McDonnell Douglas Fully Reusable Shuttle." AIAA Paper (14-20 July 1971).

Yardley, John F. "Systems Engineering for Flight Safety." AIAA Paper (October 1967).

Yardley, John F. "Manned Space Flight." Institute of Aeronautical Sciences Proceedings. 62E92 (30 April-2 May 1962).

**BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:**

American Men & Women of Science, 17<sup>th</sup> ed. s.v. "Yardley, John Finley."

"John F. Yardley," McDonnell Douglas Corporation Biography (1984), Key Personnel File, Johnson Space Center Awards Office, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

"John F. Yardley," McDonnell Douglas Corporation Biography (1993), Key Personnel File, Johnson Space Center Awards Office, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

National Academy of Engineering, 1993 Founders and Arthur M. Bueche Awards Nomination Form for John F. Yardley, Key Personnel File, Johnson Space Center Awards Office, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

National Space Club Goddard Memorial Trophy Nomination Recommendation for John F. Yardley. Key Personnel File, Johnson Space Center Awards Office, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

National Academy of Engineering, Committee on Membership Nomination Form for John F. Yardley. Key Personnel File, Johnson Space Center Awards Office, Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

Who's Who in America, 46<sup>th</sup> ed. Vol. 2. s.v. "Yardley, John Finley."

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