



Francis R. (Dick) Scobee

LT. COL., U.S. AIR FORCE, RET., NASA ASTRONAUT

PERSONAL DATA

Born May 19, 1939, in Cle Elum, Washington. Died January 28, 1986. He is survived by his wife, June, and two children. He enjoyed flying, oil painting, woodworking, motorcycling, racquetball, jogging, and most outdoor sports.

EDUCATION

Graduated from Auburn Senior High School, Auburn, Washington, in 1957; received a bachelor of science degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Arizona in 1965.

ORGANIZATIONS

Member of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, the Tau Beta Pi, the Experimental Aircraft Association, and the Air Force Association.

AWARDS

Posthumously awarded the Congressional Space Medal of Honor.

SPECIAL HONORS

Awarded the Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and two NASA Exceptional Service Medals.

EXPERIENCE

Scobee enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1957, trained as a reciprocating engine mechanic, and was subsequently stationed at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas. While there, he attended night school and acquired 2 years of college credit which led to his selection for the Airman's Education and Commissioning Program. He graduated from the University of Arizona with a bachelor of science degree in Aerospace Engineering. He received his commission in 1965 and, after receiving his wings in 1966, completed a number of assignments including a combat tour in Vietnam. He returned to the United States and attended the U.S. Air Force Aerospace Research Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base, California. After graduating in 1972, he participated in test programs for which he flew such varied aircraft as the Boeing 747, the X-24B, the transonic aircraft technology (TACT) F-111, and the C-5. He logged more than 6,500 hours flying time in 45 types of aircraft.

NASA EXPERIENCE

Lt. Col. Scobee was selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in January 1978. In August 1979, he completed a 1-year training and evaluation period, making him eligible for assignment as a pilot on future space shuttle flightcrews. In addition to astronaut duties, Scobee was an Instructor Pilot on the NASA/Boeing 747 shuttle carrier airplane.

He first flew as pilot of STS 41-C which launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on April 6, 1984. Crew members included spacecraft commander Captain Robert L. Crippen, and three mission specialists, Terry J. Hart, Dr. G.D. (Pinky) Nelson, and Dr. J.D.A. (Ox) van Hoften. During this mission, the crew successfully deployed the Long Duration Exposure Facility (LDEF); retrieved the ailing Solar Maximum Satellite, repaired it onboard the orbiting Challenger, and replaced it in orbit using the robot arm called the Remote Manipulator System (RMS). The mission also included flight testing of Manned Maneuvering Units (MMU's) in two Extravehicular Activities (EVAs); operation of the Cinema 360 and IMAX Camera Systems, as well as a Bee Hive Honeycomb Structures student experiment. The mission duration was 7 days before landing at Edwards Air Force Base, California, on April 13, 1984. With the completion of this flight, he logged a total of 168-hours in space.

Lt. Col. Scobee was spacecraft commander on STS 51-L, which launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, at 11:38:00 EST on January 28, 1986. The crew onboard the Orbiter Challenger included the pilot, M.J. Smith (U.S. Navy) (pilot), three mission specialists, Dr. R.E. McNair, Lt. Col. E.S. Onizuka (U.S. Air Force), and Dr. J.A. Resnik, as well as two civilian payload specialists, G.B. Jarvis and S.C. McAuliffe. The STS 51-L crew died on January 28, 1986 when Challenger exploded after launch.

