

25 Years Ago, June 1984

June 17 Giant balloons are sent aloft to mark the 200th anniversary of the first hot air balloon launch in America, by Peter Carnes on June 16, 1784, at Bladensburg, Md. *Washington Post*, June 17, 1984, p. B-1.



June 22 Voyager, designed by Burt Rutan and flown by his brother, Dick, completes its maiden flight, which lasts for 30 min. This unique canard, twin-boom aircraft has a third center compartment designed for its two-person crew and housing its tractor and pusher engines. The aircraft is intended to break one of the last records left in aviation, that of a non-stop, non-refueled, round-the-world flight. Eighteen months later, it does just that. NASM Web site.

50 Years Ago, June 1959

June 1 The Rhesus monkey Able dies from an adverse reaction to anesthesia given for the removal of an electrode inserted in his body to measure physiological reactions to a May 28 flight of 300-mi. altitude and 1,500-mi. range on a Jupiter IRBM. However, an autopsy reveals that there are no effects from the flight itself, on which Able and a second monkey, Baker, experienced acceleration forces of 38 g, and from which both were successfully recovered. E. Emme, ed., *Aeronautics and Astronautics 1915-60*, p. 110; *Aviation Week*, June 8, 1959, p. 30.



June 3 Discoverer III, in which the U.S. was to have made its first attempt to collect biological data from black mice carried on an orbital flight, fails to achieve

orbit. The satellite is launched from Vandenberg AFB, Calif., on a Thor booster. *Aviation Week*, April 8, 1959, p. 33.

June 3 At Cape Canaveral, Fla., construction of Complex 34, the Saturn launch vehicle facility, begins. It is later used for the Saturn V vehicles that take men to the Moon under the Apollo program. I. Ertel and M. Morse, *The Apollo Spacecraft—A Chronology*, Vol. I, p. 23.

June 4 A Republic Aviation F-105D Thunderchief automatic all-weather fighter-bomber makes a successful maiden flight. *Aerospace Year Book 1960*, p. 454.



June 6 The Army announces that sea urchin eggs, fertilized before a 300-mi.-altitude Jupiter IRBM nosecone flight on May 28, are successfully retrieved and continue to grow normally. The nose-cone carried six vials of both fertilized and unfertilized eggs. E. Emme, ed., *Aeronautics and Astronautics 1915-60*, p. 110; *Aviation Week*, June 15, 1959, p. 33.

June 8 The North American Aviation X-15 (No. 1) rocket-powered research aircraft makes its first unpowered free flight at Edwards AFB, Calif., with Scott Crossfield at the controls. It is carried aloft to 37,550 ft by a B-52 at Mach 0.79, then released for a successful 5-min 10-sec glide, making a large S-turn to test the plane's controls. It then glides to a controlled landing on Rogers Dry Lake. The plane has two XLR-11 rocket engines by Reaction Motors Div. of Thiokol Chemical, although on this flight it carries no fuel. The two engines can deliver 16,000 lb of thrust. The XLR-11 is considered the interim engine because development of the 50,000-lb-thrust XLR-99 is behind schedule. The program's next phase will be demonstration flights conducted by North American Aviation before it turns over the X-15 to a joint NASA-Air Force-Navy team for captive flights before the research flights begin. Three X-15s are built for the hypersonic research program. *Aviation Week*, June 15, 1959, p. 29; D. Jenkins, *X-15 Extending the Frontiers of Flight*, pp. 364-366, 609.



June 8 Three thousand specially printed souvenir envelopes are carried by a Regulus 1 missile launched from the deck of the submarine USS Barbera near the Naval Auxiliary Air Station at Mayport, Fla., and later stamped by the post office at Jacksonville. Although called the "first official missile mail," it does not lead to any regular missile mail service, and the letters are carried strictly for collectors. Missiles never become a viable option for delivering mail because of high costs and numerous failures. J. Ellington and P. Zwisler, *Ellington-Zwisler Rocket Mail Catalog, 1967 edit.*, pp. 8-9, 224-225.

June 9 The Navy's George Washington nuclear-powered submarine, built for carrying the Polaris two-stage solid-fuel nuclear-armed ballistic missile, is launched at Groton, Conn., and is the first sub to be fitted with the missile. Known as a fleet ballistic missile, the Polaris is to replace the turbojet, rocket-boosted Regulus cruise missile. E. Emme, ed., *Aeronautics and Astronautics 1915-60*, p. 110.

Past

An Aerospace Chronology
by Frank H. Winter and
Robert van der Linden
National Air and Space Museum



June 11 The Saunders-Roe SR-N1 saucer-shaped hovercraft is test flown for the first time in the U.K. before representatives of the press, becoming the first practical hovercraft. It operates by ducted air from a vertically mounted four-bladed 435-hp Alvis Leonides radial piston engine that drives a lift fan and twin propulsion ducts. The first flight demonstrates the plane's ability to cross both land and water. Invented by Christopher Cockrell, the SR-N1 is considered a prototype. *Aviation Week*, June 29, 1959, pp. 64-65.

And During June 1959

—Two Soviet missile-launching submarines are spotted on an operation patrol in the Atlantic. The subs are of the modified "Z" class and carry solid-fuel missiles stored vertically in their 30-ft-high conning towers. *Aviation Week*, June 15, 1959, p. 26.

75 Years Ago, June 1934

June 1 Air service between Amsterdam and Hull and Liverpool



in England is begun by KLM airlines with its Fokker F.XII. The daily service is the first air connection between Britain and the continent to use a terminal other than Croydon in London. *The Aeroplane*, June 6, 1934, p. 906.

June 10 The American Rocket Society attempts to launch its fourth flight rocket at Staten Island, N.Y. The rocket, designed by John Shesta, Laurence Manning, Carl Ahrens, and Alfred Best, and built largely by Shesta, is about 90 in. tall and 5 in. in diameter at the motor. The fuel inlets for the LOX-gasoline motor prove to be too small and the rocket does not build up enough power to lift off. After modifications, it is flown on Sept. 9, becoming the society's most successful flight rocket. F. Winter, *Prelude to the Space Age: The Rocket Societies 1924-1940*.

June 23 In honor of the 25th anniversary of Louis Bleriot's 1909 flight across the English Channel, a Competition of Elegance and Comfort for Tourist Planes, organized by the Paris aviation journal *L'Air* and the daily sports paper *L'Auto*, is held at France's Buc Airport. Bleriot's famous monoplane, which made the 1909 crossing (on July 25, 1909), with a 25-hp Anzani three-cycle air-cooled engine, is placed on exhibit. The French and British air ministers and Albert Lebrun, president of France, are present for the garden party following the event, as is Bleriot himself. A British fighter squadron flies in formation overhead. *Flight*, June 21 and June 28, 1934.

June 24 James Wedell, the well-known racing pilot and builder of racing planes, is killed in a crash near Patterson, La., while instructing a pupil. Wedell attained fame for his successes in the National Air Races in 1932 and 1933. On Sept. 4, 1933, he beat the world's land speed record, flying at 304.8 mph. *The Aeroplane*, June 27, 1934.

And During June 1934

—The new low-wing Stinson model A airliner, with three Lycoming R-680 240-hp engines, goes into production at Stinson Aircraft of Wayne, Mich. Built entirely of welded chrome-molybdenum steel and covered in fabric, the plane has retractable hydraulic brakes and split trailing-edge flaps that extend from nacelle to nacelle. It has an estimated range of 370 mi., a cruising speed of 150 mph at 5,000 ft, and carries eight passengers. American Airlines is one of its customers. *The Aeroplane*, June 20, 1934, p. 960.

—The Soviet newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* (*Red Star*) reports that Japan is buying scrap metal at an unprecedented rate. In the past two months 22 ships have passed through the Panama Canal loaded with scrap metal for Japan's munitions factories, says the paper. It adds that the country is importing anti-aircraft artillery and will conduct large-scale air maneuvers in July. The Japanese air force budget is also greatly increased. *The Aeroplane*, June 20, 1934.

100 Years Ago, June 1909

June 12 For the first time, an aircraft carries two passengers. Piloted by Louis Bleriot, the flight takes off from Issy-les Moulineaux, France. One of the two passengers is Alberto Santos-Dumont. *Flight*, June 19, 1909, p. 236.

And During June 1909

—Germany's Zeppelin II achieves a distance record of 1,000 mi. on a round-trip flight from Friedrichshafen to nearby Göppingen. *Flight*, June 5, 1909, p. 326.