

Expedition 3 returns home



Expedition 3 Commander Frank L. Culbertson, Jr., has the distinction of being the only American who was not on Earth when the Sept. 11 tragedies occurred. After the day's events, Culbertson wrote about being so far from home at such a tragic moment in history.

Here are some of Culbertson's thoughts regarding September 11:

I haven't written very much about specifics of this mission during the month I've been here, mainly for two reasons: The first being that there has been very little time to do that kind of writing, and secondly because I'm not sure how comfortable I am sharing thoughts I share with family and friends with the rest of the world.

Well, obviously the world changed today. What I say or do is very minor compared to the significance of what happened to our country today when it was attacked by ... by whom? Terrorists are all we know, I guess. (It's) hard to know at whom to direct our anger and fear.

I had just finished a number of tasks this morning, the most time-consuming being the physical exams of all crew members. In a private conversation following that, the flight surgeon told me they were having a very bad day on the ground. I had no idea. He described the situation to me as best he knew it at -0900 CDT. I was flabbergasted, then horrified. My first thought was that this wasn't a real conversation - that I was still listening to one of my Tom Clancy tapes. It just didn't seem possible on this scale in our country. I couldn't even imagine the particulars, even before the news of further destruction began coming in.

Vladimir came over pretty quickly, sensing that something very serious was being discussed. I waved Michael into the module as well. They were amazed and stunned. After we signed off, I tried to explain to Vladimir and Michael as best I could the potential magnitude of this act of terror in downtown Manhattan and at the Pentagon. They clearly understood and were very sympathetic. I glanced at the World Map on the computer to see where over the world we were and noticed that we were coming southeast out of Canada and would be passing over New England in a few minutes. I zipped around the station until I found a window that would give me a view of NYC and grabbed the nearest camera. It happened to be a video camera, and I was looking south from the window of Michael's cabin.

The smoke seemed to have an odd bloom to it at the base of the column that was streaming south of the city. After reading one of the news articles we just received, I believe we were looking at NY around the time of, or shortly after, the collapse of the second tower. How horrible. I panned the camera all along the East Coast to the south to see if I could see any other smoke around Washington, or anywhere else, but nothing was visible.

It was pretty difficult to think about work after that, though we had some to do, but on the next orbit we crossed the US further south. All three of us were working one or two cameras to try to get views of New York or Washington. There was haze over Washington, but no specific source could be seen. It all looked incredible from two to three hundred miles away. I can't imagine the tragic scenes on the ground.

Other than the emotional impact of our country being attacked and thousands of our citizens, and maybe some friends, being killed, the most overwhelming feeling being where I am is one of isolation.

To read more of Culbertson's thoughts about Sept. 11, 2001, go to: <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/station/crew/exp3/culbertsonletter.html>



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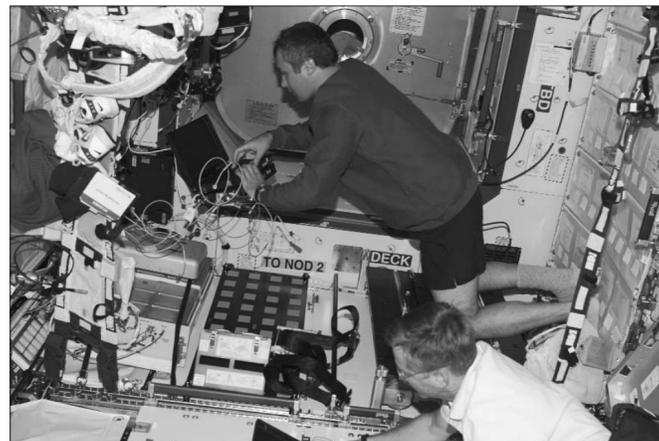
To prepare for their lengthy stay on the International Space Station (ISS), Dezhurov, Tyurin and Culbertson participate in mission training in one of the high fidelity trainers/mockups in the Systems Integration Facility at JSC. The three are seated on the mid deck for an emergency egress training session.



Cosmonaut Vladimir Dezhurov prepares the Russian Orlan space suit for a spacewalk from the Pirs Docking Compartment.



During some down time, Cosmonaut Mikhail Tyurin plays a guitar among storage bags in the hatch area of the Quest Airlock.



Culbertson (bottom) and Dezhurov perform routine tasks in the Destiny laboratory on the ISS.

Expedition 3 Commander Frank Culbertson, Pilot Vladimir Dezhurov and Flight Engineer Mikhail Tyurin, returned Dec. 17 from a 129-day stint aboard the International Space Station on STS-108.

Here are some highlights from Expedition 3's mission:

- ❖ The Volatile Organic Analyzer (VOA) was installed and activated. The VOA is designed to sample the air inside the ISS, detecting and identifying any possible contaminants.
- ❖ A wiring check enabled the treadmill to be used for exercise sessions on board.
- ❖ An orientation allowed the station's solar arrays to receive maximum sunlight.
- ❖ The grown colon, kidney and ovarian cancer cell research project was completed.
- ❖ The PuFF experiment began, studying the lungs of an astronaut over the duration of a space flight.
- ❖ The 16-foot-long Russian Pirs module docked with the ISS, providing the station with a new airlock and docking port.

- ❖ Spinal cord experiments continued to study reflexes of long-duration space flight, as well as physical examinations done periodically to gauge the effects of weightlessness.
- ❖ New science experiments included the ability of certain chemical compounds to impede the formation of kidney stones using ingested pills. The crew also continued testing the Active Rack Isolation System in its ability to protect experiments from crew activity.
- ❖ Three space walks finished connecting Pirs with the rest of the station.
- ❖ A fourth space walk by Pilot Dezhurov and Tyurin removed debris in the form of a rubberized seal from the docking interface between a Russian Progress re-supply craft and the Zvezda Service Module that delayed the launch of STS-108 and the arrival of Expedition 4.



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The Expedition 3 crew is comprised of Culbertson (center), who served as commander, and Tyurin (left) and Dezhurov, both flight engineers who represented Rosaviakosmos.



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Fans of Commander Culbertson show their support at the Ellington crew return event on Dec. 19.

WELCOME HOME MR. FRANK! WE MISSED YOU
 Jennifer Radik, Chance, Melissa Chibe & Bailey Hurt

Profiles

February is Black History Month



Herbert J. Babineaux, Jr.

Time at JSC:

14 years

Organization:

Office of the Chief Information Officer

Position title:

Computer Engineer, AST

Education:

Bachelor's of Science in Computer Science, Louisiana State University

Place of birth:

Arnaudville, Louisiana

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Having grown up in the Deep South during the 60s and 70s, I have seen firsthand the devastation resulting from the practice of racial discrimination. Although having experienced such discrimination in my life, I know that my personal experiences were mild compared to those of my predecessors. As I learn about the accomplishments of such individuals as Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Jesse Owens, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Barbara Jordan, I am struck with awe.

Although born into slavery, Booker T. Washington became America's premiere black educator promoting the notion that education should be used as the primary tool to help blacks overcome their economic poverty and gain their equality in the U.S. Also born a slave, George Washington Carver's scientific work (agronomy and chemistry) on the sweet potato and peanuts allowed the South to loosen its dependence on cotton as a cash crop. Jesse Owens, gold medalist at the 1936 Berlin Olympics, shattered Hitler's attempt to use the games as a showcase of the athletic prowess of the so-called Aryan race. Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King, Jr. showed the world courage by laying down his life to support a cause that he so deeply believed in. The wit and wisdom of Barbara Jordan earned her the reputation of being one of the greatest orators of modern time.

Black History Month is an opportunity for me to reflect on my own life and accomplishments. By learning how those who have come before me were able to overcome great adversity and achieve success, I am motivated to apply these same principles to my own life and profession. The lessons learned from these great people are for everyone, regardless of race.

Favorite words of wisdom:

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for he is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.

(NIV Bible, Proverbs 3:13, 14)

Sharon R. Evans

Time at JSC: 15 years

Organization: Human Resources, Education & Student Programs Branch

Position title: Student Programs Specialist

Education: Sterling High School, some courses taken at San Jac College

Place of birth: Houston, Texas

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Black History Month is a time where I can reflect on all the great things that have been accomplished by African-Americans.

Favorite words of wisdom?

Be strong. "He" doesn't give you no more than you can handle.



Andrea Renee Falls

Time at JSC: 18 Years

Organization: BJ3/COD Procurement

Position title: Contract Specialist

Education: Business Management Degree, University of Houston-Clear Lake

Place of birth: Rayne, Louisiana

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Black history to me means being blessed to have a great and wonderful multicultural life, opportunities of an education and career, community service and being an AMERICAN. From God's grace and mercy my ancestors riding on the back of a bus to me being able to ride anywhere on a bus, drive a bus or even own a bus. The bottom line is without Black History there wouldn't be a ME.

Favorite words of wisdom?

Faith equals opportunities to infinity plus 2 square.



Rodney L. Lofton

Time at JSC: 23 years

Organization: ISS Program Office, Space Station Payloads Office

Position title: Increment Payload Manager

Education: Bachelor's of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Brown University, 1977; Master's of Aerospace Engineering, Cornell University, 1979

Place of birth: New Bern, North Carolina

What does Black History Month mean to you?

Recognition and celebration of the positive accomplishments of African-Americans have made to this country and the world as a whole.

Favorite words of wisdom?

Always be conscious of your actions and deeds, for they may indeed have an effect on lives of others that may not be readily apparent to you.



Janice K. Hall

Time at JSC: 14 years

Organization: Office of the Comptroller (Org LA)

Position title: Program Analyst - Space Shuttle Program

Education: University of Houston (Main Campus), Bachelor's of Science, Mathematics.

Place of birth: Galveston, Texas

What does Black History Month mean to you?

That a wonderful legacy was established, through blood, sweat and tears, that I am able to enhance.

Favorite words of wisdom?

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Also: If it is to be, it's up to me.



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