



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of JOHN HERSCHEL GLENN JR.



Written by AMA staff (01/2017); Formatted by JS (01/2017)

The following was published in the In the Air section of Model Aviation magazine in the February 2017 issue (page 13).

John Glenn 1921-2016

A former astronaut and U.S. Senator, whose passion for flying began with model aircraft, has passed away. John Herschel Glenn Jr. served four terms as a U.S. senator for Ohio and was one of NASA's original seven Mercury astronauts. He died December 8 at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, in Columbus, Ohio, at the age of 95.

Robert "Hoot" Gibson, an AMA ambassador and a retired astronaut, said he met John in 1978 when he entered the Astronaut Corps. "He came to Houston to speak with all of us who were the first 35 astronauts selected for the space shuttle program, so [I] met him in the context of the entire class met him," Hoot stated.

"He had a most warm and outgoing personality, the kind of person everyone would love! He was, of course, a United States senator then and so very accomplished - both as an aviator and as a public servant."

The late John Worth, who served as AMA president and executive director, mentioned John Glenn in his [AMA History Project biography](#).

"I met John Glenn, Neil Armstrong, and Frank Borman. John Glenn went on to become the first man to orbit the earth in a spacecraft, Frank Borman was one of three to be the first men to go around the moon, and Neil Armstrong was to be the first man to set foot on the moon surface. In meeting with Armstrong, Glenn, and Borman in the early NASA days, I learned that they had been modelers and AMA members when they were younger."

Hoot said he knew that John Glenn had been a modeler, but never had the opportunity to fly model aircraft with him. Hoot added, "He was very interested in my final spaceflight, which was the first docking performed by a space shuttle and it was with the Russians and the Mir Space Station. He came to several events we held in [Washington] D.C and that was where I knew him the most.

"Our friendship led to his presenting me for induction into the Astronaut Hall of Fame in 2003, which was a tremendous honor for me!"

According to his NASA biography, John received several honors and awards in his lifetime. He received honorary doctoral degrees from nine colleges and universities, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on six occasions, held the Air Medal with 18 Clusters for his service during World War II and the Korean War, received the Navy Unit Commendation for service

in Korea, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the China Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation, the U.S. Navy's Astronaut Wings, the Marine Corps' Astronaut Medal, the NASA Distinguished Service Medal, the Congressional Space Medal of Honor, and in 2012, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. He returned to space in 1998 aboard the STS-95 Discovery.

John is survived by his wife, Annie, two children, two grandchildren, and several friends. Burial was at Arlington National Cemetery.

“I have many fond memories of him and I will always treasure the friendship!” Hoot said.

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