



Burt and Dick Rutan, Mike and Sally Melvill retell the emotional stories of the Voyager take-off and around the world flight while standing in front of the huge map in Voyager Restaurant that shows where the aircraft was on each of the nine days of the historical flight.

Voyager made the extraordinary milestone, first-ever non-stop, unrefueled flight, around the world with pilots Dick



Rutan and Jeana Yeager in nine-days, three-minutes and 44-seconds, December 14-23, 1986.



Numerous test flights, plus a flight to Oshkosh, Wisconsin to attend the annual Experimental Aircraft Association's fly-in led Dick and Jeana to the edge of entry into aviation history forever.

Burt Rutan, genius aerospace engineer/designer, created Voyager for maximum fuel efficiency. Dick Rutan, Mike Melvill, Bruce Evans, Crew Chief and a host of volunteers built and conducted test flights on this graceful design at Mojave Airport, over a period of five years. Mike Melvill was the only

other pilot to actually fly Voyager.

The circumnavigation flight was 26,366 statute miles, which more than doubled the previous record set by a B-52 Bomber in 1962. This fragile aircraft, with a wingspan of 110-feet, had an empty weight of only 939 pounds. The gross weight on take-off at 7:59 a.m., from Edwards AFB, December 14, 1986, was 9,694.5 pounds.

Burt's good friend, Rob Scherer flew his beautiful Starship One in for Plane Crazy. Rob actually picked Burt and Tonya up in Idaho and delivered them to Mojave for this special event!

This aircraft was used as a chase plane during the SpaceShipOne program at Mojave Air & Space Port.



Dustin Mosher brought his sweet 1947 Cessna 120 from Tehachapi for Plane Crazy! The weather was really quite nice considering it was December!

Plane Crazy Saturday's new photo booth! What fun! Thank you Rebecca and Zach Reeder!



Jim Salazar's daughter and son tried out the new booth!

**SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET  
 CELEBRATING THE 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOYAGER FLIGHT!  
 Held at the Stuart Witt Event Center Mojave Air & Space Port**



Voyager aircraft designer, Burt Rutan and Voyager pilot, Dick Rutan, gathered with many of the Voyager project volunteers and supporters last Saturday evening, December 17th to honor the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the milestone non-stop flight around the world, unrefueled, at a dinner hosted by the Mojave Transportation Museum.



The many contributors made this celebration possible in the beautiful MASP Event Center and we warmly thank – Title Sponsors: Mojave Air & Space Port; Hartzell Propellers, Inc. (original sponsor of Voyager); Scaled Composites; TSC, LLC; Contributing Sponsors: Aircraft Spruce & Specialty (original sponsor in 1986); Hall Ambulance; Voyager Restaurant; and Volunteer Sponsors: Mojave Chamber of Commerce; Zach and Rebecca

Reeder; Al & Cathy Hansen; Patty Gardner and Travis Behrens; Michele & Bob Slade; Ursula Finkbiener and Erma Martin

The audience was caught up in the dream as it began to unfold all over again. Burt and Dick reminisced about the experience of building and test flying this airplane at Mojave Airport. It now hangs in the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum in Washington D.C. Their presentation was straight from their hearts with all emotions

unmasked. There was laughter and tears in the entire room as they complimented each other and teased, as only the Rutan Brothers can.

Dick likes to remind people that their dear mother, Irene, told both of the boys, "If you can dream it, you can do it and the only way to fail is to quit."

The cramped cockpit environment was most uncomfortable and sleep deprivation was the enemy. Imagine being locked in a phone booth (does anyone remember phone booths?) for nine days while flying at speeds of only 80 knots navigating around thunder storms, near hostile countries threatening to shoot you down, worrying about whether or not you have enough fuel for the trip, running on one engine to conserve fuel and on the last leg of the flight suffering rear engine failure due to an air pocket in a fuel line, losing 5,000 feet of altitude while attempting to start the front engine, seeing the ocean coming up to meet you and then the front engine catching and roaring



to life, which saves yours! Talk about anxiety!

Thousands of people drove to Edwards Air Force Base to witness the landing of

Voyager on December 23, 1986. The Voyager story is one of great emotion, courage, vision and adventure.

It was wonderful to see the many volunteers at the banquet who worked on Voyager, including Crew Chief, Bruce Evans. He wore his original crew shirt and hat complete with patches.



Glenn Dunlap of Cincinnati, Ohio constructed a one-quarter scale radio controlled model of Voyager and brought it to Mojave ten years ago, for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, to fly off the same runway as the original Voyager. Dick Rutan stood on the ground and watched as Voyager lifted into the air and said, "That's the first time I ever saw her fly!"

Glenn came to the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and his model was in the center of the event center. He donated the RC aircraft to MTM and it is displayed in Legacy Park with the full size SS1 replica.

Voyager, a piece of Mojave history,



proudly hangs in the South Lobby of the National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C.

Glenn Dunlap with Burt and Dick Rutan.



Scaled Composites engineer, Dan Kreigh, brought a very small RC Voyager model and flew it around the building during the social hour. What fun to see a little Voyager flying around overhead!



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Dick and Burt Rutan with Kelly (Chandler) Hall. Kelly worked with the Voyager project from the get-go! She now owns and operates Hall Star Speakers and Talent. <http://hallstar.net/> She is a true 'get 'er done' kind of gal. Always a joy to work with!

How emotional to hear Sally and Mike Melvill talk about waving goodbye to Jeana and Dick, thinking they might never see them again, as they were turning the Dutchess around after flying out with Voyager off the coast of California. And then to hear Burt tell the story of when he and Mike were meeting up with Voyager on the last day of the flight. They couldn't be sure the single strobe light they were seeing in the

distance was Voyager or not, so Burt radioed Dick and said, "Dick, turn off the strobe light." When it went out Mike and Burt knew that Dick and Jeana had made it home. Both men said with their voices cracking, "We were both bawling like babies." Both Burt and Mike tear up still to this day! There were lots of smiling faces with tears in their eyes when they heard the story

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again.

Zack Scrivner, Kern County Second District Supervisor presented plaques from State Senator Jean Fuller and from the Kern County Board of Supervisors commemorating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the vision, accomplishment and adventurous spirit of the Voyager flight.

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Dick Rutan's daughter Holly Hogan with sons, Jack and Sean.



Tonya Rutan, Burt's wife, with Cathy Hansen.



Great night with great friends – truly a night to remember!

Chris Wiser, Kaye LeFabvre, Nell Rutan, Sandra Dralle.



Christy Donner, Commercial Astronaut Brian Binnie and Patti John!

Kaye LeFabvre, Chris Wiser and Patty Gardner.

Thank you Ursula Finkbeiner, Kris Rutan and Rebecca Pontius for setting tables and thank you Rebecca, Ursula and Steve Rushford for selling the new Voyager shirts! They were a huge hit!

We will have shirts at the next Plane Crazy in January!





Mojave Transportation Museum will begin their 9<sup>th</sup> year of Plane Crazy Saturday on January 21, 2017! Our speaker will be Mr. Ed Dunlap of Orbital ATK with a presentation on their latest satellite launch at Cape Canaveral. Orbital ATK's Pegasus rocket launched on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> carrying NASA's CYGNSS environmental research satellite constellation (carrying 8 satellites) into orbit.

The Cyclone Global Navigation Satellite System – or CYGNSS – is a constellation of eight identical satellites intended to increase scientific understanding and improve forecasting of tropical cyclones such as hurricanes. The mission is a partnership between NASA, the University of Michigan and the Southwest Research Institute.

<https://www.nasaspaceflight.com/2016/12/pegasus-cygnss-constellation-deployment/>




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[www.mojavemuseum.org](http://www.mojavemuseum.org)

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