

November 1, 2010

Dear NASA Education family:

I got word last week that an old friend and NASA co-worker of mine has passed away. I don't know his age at death (somewhere in his 90s I suspect), but I can tell you that Lloyd Aronson served NASA Education for a long, long, LONG time. He was one of the first and best Spacemobile (some call it AESP now) lecturers, admired and respected by all who worked with him. Lloyd was assigned to Lewis (some call it Glenn now) in 1962, and he later moved to Goddard where he spent most of his Spacemobile career. He was considered the program's aeronautics expert for good reason: With his background as a military transport pilot in WWII and later the Berlin airlift, he'd become a walking encyclopedia of world aviation. A tour through the Air and Space Museum with Lloyd was always an educational experience par excellence.



Here's a picture of Lloyd from 1982. Not sure who that other guy is on the right.

Over the weekend as I was thinking about who in NASA I needed to notify about Lloyd's passing, I realized (to my horror) that I am practically the only person remaining in NASA education who knew and worked with Lloyd. (Yikes! <Bill checks pulse>) So I thought I'd put together a short note to bring all you whippersnappers up to speed on a little bit of NASA Education history. And I just want to make something clear: a lot of this pre-dates me too. But that doesn't make it any less interesting to me, and I hope not to you either.



First: Ever wondered what a Spacemobile looked like? That's one of Goddard's.



And what about a Spacemobile lecture? What did NASA show to kids back then? This is Jack Bannister in the mid-60s when it was ALL Space Science.



And who were these lecturers? In this January, 1964 group photo are Goddard Space Flight Center AESP specialists,

left to right: Bob Bush, Lloyd Aronson, Ernie Gibson, Elva Bailey (who later became Bob Gabry's predecessor), Dick Crone (who later became Dean Kern's predecessor), and Jack Bannister. (All right, I heard that, who just whispered "diversity?")

If you want to know more about Spacemobile and its contributions over the years to NASA Education, check out this link. Oklahoma State University has put together this website for all of us who will attend the Spacemobile/AESP 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion in San Francisco next year. There are some very nice pictures and remembrances here:

<http://aesp.nasa.okstate.edu/osuaesp/>

Now I'll conclude my reminiscing and get back to work. But before I close, I'll share some of the notes about Lloyd that have been coming my way since last week. I hope you enjoy reading about someone you very likely didn't know, but who helped build the foundation of the program in which you're working.

FROM LARRY BILBROUGH (Former AESP and NASA HQ Education):

Lloyd was certainly one of the most respected AESPers of all time. I'll always appreciate the time he drove from Goddard to Maine in early February of 1975 to take my place when my daughter Cindy was born. He caught a terrible cold while there.

FROM HARRY HERZER (Former AESP):

Lloyd was an institution with Spacemobile. We always kidded him that he felt the most important aspect of "The Lecture" or a workshop was "The History of Aviation -The History of Aviation -The History of Aviation. " One of the most memorable moments was at our training workshop for new Spacemobilers after Chico took over the contract. We held it at Skyland, Virginia. I was doing an earth resources workshop using pages cut from the *Landsat Views The World* book. ["Where On Earth?"] I randomly passed out envelopes with a picture.... Lloyd took one as well. A few minutes later he exclaimed.... "I recognize this, I flew over here.... it's Burma!" Sure enough Lloyd was a "hump pilot" and had flown over Burma..... I grabbed up another envelope and said "OK smartass, try this one... A moment later, Lloyd exclaimed, "I have flown over this place too....! It was Berlin and of course Lloyd had flown the Berlin Airlift.... [Incidentally, some of the newbies in this workshop included the likes of Bill Anderson, Les Gold, and Clarice Lolich, among other notables...

FROM LYNN BONDURANT (Former Glenn Education):

Harry, thanks for your notice of Lloyd Aronson's passing. I always enjoyed doing summer workshops with Lloyd. However, one of my fondest memories of Lloyd is that I often helped him with chores around his house. I would get to sleep over and have a good meal. I remember on the day of the Apollo 11 moon landing that I was at Lloyd's painting a bedroom. We were both quite tired when Neil Armstrong finally took one small step for a man.

FROM BOB BUSH (Former Spacemobile):

Thank you for keeping us connected and the sad news of Lloyd's passing. Like Lynn, we all have unique and wonderful memories from our experiences working with Lloyd. I remember him telling me of his many hair rising experiences as a young Army pilot flying his C-47 over the Himalaya Mountains better known as 'fly the hump' during WW II. One particular story that stayed with me was the time he lost an engine and could not make it over the 'hump'. He made a forced landing on a mountain side close to a Chinese village. Before landing, he radioed his need for a replacement engine. After he and his crew spend some interesting days and meals with the friendly Chinese, his engine was brought in to him. He and his crew with the help of his Chinese friends replaced his bad engine with the good one. Lt. Aronson and his crew took off and completed their original mission and return back to their home base in Burma. Thus, one more story as a lasting memory of our beloved Lloyd Aronson. Our WW II Hero and dear friend!

FROM ELLWOOD JOHNSON (Former Spacemobile):

I first met Lloyd in late Sept or early October in '62. I had just gotten back from the World's Fair and was asked to work out of DC. Lloyd and I were scheduled to do some lectures in the DC area. It looked like I would be in the area for some time so I moved into an apartment building where Lloyd and Chris also lived. Then we were scheduled to do a week of workshops for elementary school teachers in Roanoke, VA. There were no guidelines and we had to come up with the

workshop format. I remember us at a motel on top of a hill and we strung some wire and attached rocket motor (Estes), fired it off. I think this was the first workshop designed for teachers in their local environment and not associated with colleges and a credit program. After getting back to DC, I got involved with the international program and prepared to go to Venezuela and Brazil. Lloyd talked a lot about flying in the Burma "Hump" campaign and the Berlin Airlift. Anyone who was involved in those two conflicts had to be one cool dude. All of those pilots in both activities should have gotten the air metal. Good job Lloyd.

I understand that Lloyd will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in January. He is survived by his wife, Chris.

Bill Anderson