



38. DR. SALLY RIDE, 1983

Astrophysicist* Dr. Sally Ride blasted into aviation history on June 18, 1983 aboard the space-shuttle rocket, becoming the first American woman to enter space and orbit the earth. She was a member of the initial team of six American female astronauts selected for the space-shuttle program. On her 1983 flight aboard the shuttle Challenger (left), Sally was responsible for testing the fifty-foot-long remote manipulator arm that was extended from the shuttle's open cargo bay. This multi-jointed robot arm, also known as the Remote Manipulator System (RMS), is used to launch and retrieve satellites and other spacecraft from the shuttle. Dr. Ride made a second space flight on the Challenger in 1984 before retiring from NASA in 1987. Thereafter, she pursued an academic career, as well as her own personal mission as an advocate for improved science education.

*Astrophysics is the branch of astronomy dealing with the physical and chemical nature of the universe.