FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Pioneering Astronaut Joe Henry Engle Dies at 91

We are saddened to share the passing of Astronaut Joe Henry Engle; he was a U.S. Air Force pilot and at the time, the youngest man to become a NASA astronaut. Engle was selected as a NASA astronaut in 1966 with spaceflight already under his belt. Engle flew the X-15 above 50 miles, which qualified him for astronaut wings in 1965 during a joint program between the U.S. Air Force and a NASA research program.

He, along with Dick Truly served as one of the two crews who executed the test flights for the Shuttle Approach & Landing tests aboard Enterprise. He then flew with Truly again on his first Space Shuttle mission as the commander of Columbia during STS-2 in 1981, the only time a winged aerospace craft was manually flown from orbit through landing. His final flight was as commander of Discovery during STS-51I in 1985.

Engle was inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame© in 2001 along with Bob Crippen, Rick Hauck. and Dick Truly. Joe Engle is honored with the distinction of being the only astronaut to have flown into space in two completely distinct winged vehicles; the X-15 and the Space Shuttle.

We will miss this incredibly highly decorated aerospace pioneer whose achievements are out of this world and truly appreciate his dedication to our country, our space program and to our foundation; God Speed Joe Engle.

# # #

Media Contact:
Caroline Schumacher
Astronaut Scholarship Foundation
407-362-7900 | caroline@astronautscholarship.org