

Biographical Data

Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center
Houston, Texas 77058



National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

MANLEY LANIER "SONNY" CARTER, JR. (CAPTAIN, USN) NASA ASTRONAUT (DECEASED)

PERSONAL DATA: Born August 15, 1947, in Macon, Georgia, but considered Warner Robins, Georgia, to be his hometown. Died April 5, 1991. He is survived by his wife, Dana, and two daughters. He enjoyed wrestling, golf, tennis, L.A. Dodger baseball, and old movies. Carter was a professional soccer player from 1970-73 for the Atlanta Chiefs of the NASL.

EDUCATION: Graduated from Lanier High School, Macon, Georgia, in 1965; received a bachelor of arts degree in chemistry from Emory University in 1969, and a doctor of medicine degree from Emory University in 1973.

ORGANIZATIONS: Member of Sigma Delta Psi, Alpha Tau Omega, the Marine Corps Aviation Association, and SETP.

SPECIAL HONORS: Recipient of the Air Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, Marine Corps Aviation Association Special Category Award 1982, NASA Meritorious Service Medal 1988, and NASA Space Flight Medal 1989. Carter was the Guest of Honor at the 215th Marine Corps Birthday Ball.

EXPERIENCE: Carter graduated from medical school in June 1973 and completed a straight internal medicine internship at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. In July 1974 he entered the U.S. Navy and completed flight surgeon school in Pensacola, Florida. After serving tours as a flight surgeon with the 1st and 3rd Marine Air Wings he returned to flight training in Beeville, Texas, and was designated a Naval Aviator in April 1978. He was assigned as the senior medical officer of USS Forrester, and in March 1979 completed F-4 training at VMFAT-101 Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Arizona. He was subsequently reassigned as a fighter pilot to duty flying F-4 phantoms with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 333 at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina. In 1981 he completed a 9-month Mediterranean cruise aboard USS Forrester with VMFA-115. In September 1982 he attended U.S. Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) and then served as 2nd Marine Air Wing standardization officer and F-4 combat readiness evaluator at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina. He then attended the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, graduating in June 1984. He has logged 3,000 flying hours and 160 carrier landings.

NASA EXPERIENCE: Selected by NASA in May 1984, Carter became an astronaut in June 1985, qualified for assignment as a mission specialist on future Space Shuttle flight crews. Carter was assigned as Extravehicular Activity (EVA) Representative for the Mission Development Branch of the Astronaut Office when selected to the crew of STS-33. The STS-33 crew launched, at night, from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on November 22, 1989, aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery. The mission carried Department of Defense payloads and other secondary payloads. After 79 orbits of the earth, this five-day mission concluded on November 27, 1989 with a hard surface landing on Runway 04 at Edwards Air Force Base, California. With the completion of his first mission, Carter logged 120 hours in space.

At the time of his death, Captain Carter was assigned as a mission specialist on the crew of STS-42, the first International Microgravity Laboratory (IML-1). He died April 5, 1991, near New Brunswick, Georgia, in the crash of a commercial airplane while on NASA business travel.

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