

BFA Script v0012

By

Katie Schaefer

Based On  
John Glenn

NARRATOR

The date is February 20th, 1962 and America is about to do something that has never been done before.

NARRATOR

They will send the 1st American into space around the Earth to gain orbital space flight information.

NARRATOR

The astronaut chosen was small town boy John Glenn

JOHN GLENN

The word astronaut was something new, we didn't even know there was such a word. There hadn't been that kind of word when I was a kid or growing up in Ohio.

NARRATOR

John was raised in New Concord Ohio where his father ran a plumbing business and his mother taught school.

NARRATOR

As a boy, John would wash cars, sell rhubarb, and delivered the Columbus Daily Dispatch to earn money.

NARRATOR

At the age of 8, John flew his first airplane with his father and developed a passion for flight that would stay with him throughout his entire life.

JOHN GLENN

I was in the middle of my junior year in college and Pearl Harbor occurred. And I had just received my private pilots license earlier that year and so I knew where my duty lay and that was to go into the military at that time.

JOHN GLENN

The space program was just starting and when they put out their criteria for the type of people they wanted, why I seemed to fit the qualifications

they were looking for.

NARRATOR

Through a series of rigorous training exercises including mental, physical, and psychological testing, the first ever 7 American astronauts would be chosen.

NARRATOR

With the testing completed, John Glenn was a clear choice and was officially declared a United States astronaut.

NARRATOR

On that February morning in 1962, John Glenn carried the hope of NASA and all of America on his shoulders.

RECORDED VOICE

Godspeed John Glenn.

RECORDED VOICE

3...2...1...0 -- roger the clock is operating we're underway. It is loud and clear. Roger we're programming and we're all okay.

JOHN GLENN

Roger Ogs and I feel fine. Oh that view is tremendous.

NARRATOR

John Glenn spent a total of 4 hours and 55 minutes in space, traveling at a speed of 17,500 mph. At one point within the mission, John would witness a sight that not he, or anyone listening at NASA could explain at the time.

JOHN GLENN

Uh this is friendship 7, I'll try to describe what I'm in here. I'm in a thick mass of some very small particles, uh that are brilliantly lit up like they're luminescent. I never saw anything like it, they're around the little -- they're coming by the capsule...and uh they look like little stars -- a whole shower of them.

NARRATOR

During the third orbit, the indicator light for the heat shield turned on. This was cause for extreme worry due to the fact the heat shield was the piece of equipment needed to ensure a safe reentry into the Earth's atmosphere that would keep the capsule, and John Glenn from burning up upon return.

NARRATOR

NASA decided to cut the mission short in concern for John's safety and had him keep the retro rockets attached over the heat shield instead of removing them which was originally planned.

NARRATOR

With John's safe return from his historic mission, he was met with adoration and cheers from all over the world. As his childhood sweetheart, one could only wonder if Annie ever thought she'd see this day as she grew up with John.

NARRATOR

His bravery provided NASA with unknown knowledge such as the effects of weightless flight, radar tracking, communications, the effects on a person's blood pressure and heart rate, and so much more.

NARRATOR

With this previously unknown knowledge NASA could look at creating more complex missions in the future and push America even farther ahead in the Space Race. But at that moment, John Glenn had lifted the country up to a whole new level.

NARRATOR

President John F. Kennedy even considered John a national treasure and wouldn't let him go back into space.

NARRATOR

During John's time away from NASA he was elected into the United States Senate in 1974. In 1998, when John was 77 years old, President Bill Clinton sent John back into space on the Space Shuttle Discovery, making John the oldest person to ever go into space.

NARRATOR

Shortly after, the NASA Lewis Research Center in Cleveland Ohio changed their name to the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center in honor of John in 1999. Later on John would also receive the Presidential medal of freedom in 2011 from President Barrack Obama.

NARRATOR

Then, on December 8th, 2016, John Glenn passed away in Columbus OH at the age of 95.

NARRATOR

John's lifetime of achievements and bravery will not be forgotten soon. He was a man of great passion and dedication.

NARRATOR

A passion and dedication that led him to be a pioneer in the space frontier and become the first American to have ever orbited the Earth which changed the future of space travel forever.