

Former NASA test pilot Bruce Peterson dead

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Former NASA test pilot Bruce Peterson, whose 1967 M2-F2 crash appeared in opening credits of the TV show "Six Million Dollar Man," has died.

Peterson -- who often complained he disliked seeing his accident repeatedly replayed on the popular TV show -- died in Laguna Niguel, Calif., Monday at the age of 72 following a long illness.

Peterson joined NASA in 1960 and flew a variety of experimental and established aircraft during his 21-year career, the Orange County (Calif.) Register reported. His test flights included such aircraft as the B-52, F-111A, F-100, as well as aircraft that contributed to the development of the space shuttle.

NASA said the crash of the M2-F2 wingless aircraft followed a violent roll that Peterson was unable to control. The aircraft struck the Mojave lake bed at 250 mph. Peterson lost sight in one eye as a result of the accident.

Peterson left NASA in 1981 and worked for the Northrop Corp. until he retired.

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