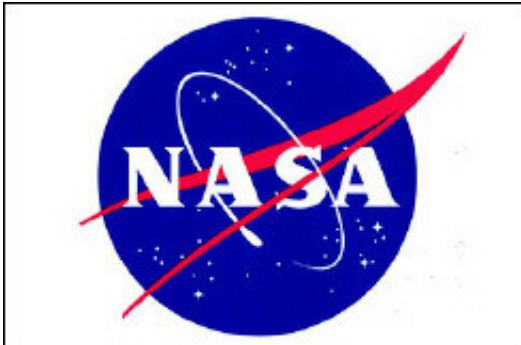


# NASA celebrates 30 years of Mars research

June 21 2006

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NASA will host a Thursday symposium titled "Mars: Past, Present and Future" at the space agency's Langley Research Center, Hampton, Va.

The event is part of NASA's Viking 30th Anniversary celebration. It will highlight the first successful soft landing on Mars by the Viking spacecraft.

Symposium speakers will include key participants in Viking and other NASA Mars missions.

NASA's Viking 1 and 2 missions to Mars, each consisting of an orbiter and a lander, obtained high-resolution images of the Martian surface, characterized the structure and composition of the atmosphere and surface and searched for evidence of life.

Viking 1 was launched Aug. 20, 1975, and arrived at Mars June 19, 1976. On July 20, 1976, the Viking 1 Lander separated from the Orbiter and touched down at Chryse Planitia.

Viking 2 was launched Sept. 9, 1975, and entered Mars orbit on Aug. 7, 1976. The Viking 2 Lander touched down at Utopia Planitia on Sept. 3, 1976.

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