

NASA marks 10 years since loss of Columbia, crew

1 February 2013



In this Jan. 16, 2003 file photo, the space shuttle Columbia liftoffs from the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla. Space shuttle Columbia broke apart in flames 200,000 feet over Texas on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003 killing all seven astronauts just minutes before they were to glide to a landing in Florida. Ten years later, reminders of Columbia are everywhere, including up in the sky. Everything from asteroids, lunar craters and Martian hills, to schools, parks, streets and even an airport (Rick Husband Amarillo International Airport) bear the Columbia astronauts' names. Two years ago, a museum opened in Hemphill, Texas, where much of the Columbia wreckage rained down, dedicated to "remembering Columbia." About 84,000 pounds of that wreckage, representing 40 percent of NASA's oldest space shuttle, are stored at Kennedy and loaned for engineering research.(AP Photo/Chris O'Meara)

NASA will honor the seven astronauts who perished when the space shuttle Columbia was destroyed 10 years ago.

The space agency will mark the anniversary Friday at a public memorial service at [Kennedy Space Center](#) in Florida. Speakers include Evelyn Husband Thompson, who was married to the shuttle's commander.

The accident on Feb. 1, 2003, killed six Americans and Israel's first astronaut. They were returning home from a 16-day [science mission](#) when the shuttle disintegrated over Texas, just minutes from landing in Florida.



In this Jan. 2003 file photo, astronaut Rick D. Husband, mission commander of the space shuttle Columbia, is pictured on the aft flight deck. Husband and six crew members were lost when Columbia broke up during re-entry over north Texas on Feb. 1, 2003, . This picture was on a roll of unprocessed film recovered by searchers from the debris later, released by NASA on June 24, 2003. Ten years later, reminders of Columbia are everywhere, including up in the sky. Everything from asteroids, lunar craters and Martian hills, to schools, parks, streets and even an airport (Rick Husband Amarillo International Airport) bear the Columbia astronauts' names. Two years ago, a museum opened in Hemphill, Texas, where much of the Columbia wreckage

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An investigation board later determined the cause was damage to the wing that occurred during liftoff. The shuttles were grounded for more than two years, and resumed flying with more safety features in place. The shuttles retired in 2011.

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