

TRAJECTORIES

Official Newsletter of the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum

Quote of the Month:

"What is research but a blind date with knowledge?"
Will Henry

Ribbon Cutting

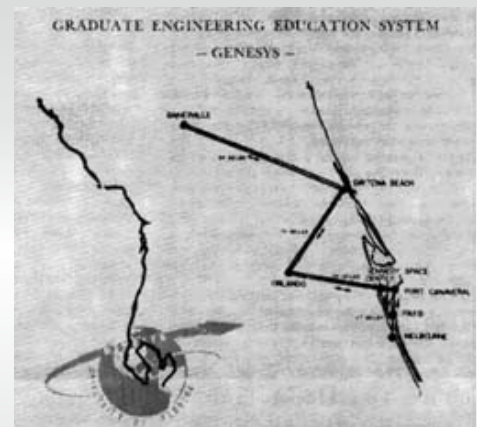


A new era for the Sands Space History Center began on 17 June 2025. We reopened the facility with an official ribbon cutting event. In attendance were Museum staff and Museum Volunteer Association members, local media, representatives from local chambers of commerce, economic development council members, Museum Foundation leadership, and plenty of spectators and supporters.

After some initial remarks, the ribbon was strung taut. Ray Sands and Jamie Draper took command of the ceremonial scissors. The crowd gave a raucous Space Coast countdown. Then BANG! Confetti cannons and loud cheers officially reopened the newly enhanced and renovated Sands Space History Center. Everyone poured into the facility and marveled at the new look and feel.

Additional presentations took place inside as Museum leadership introduced the scope and the mission of the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum and Foundation leadership promoted the new Legacy of Launch fundraising campaign. All the activity made it into print and on the airwaves through local media. This is just the first of many more exciting developments to come!

DID YOU KNOW?



The Sands Space History Center and surrounding buildings began as GENESYS, or Graduate Engineering Education System, in 1964. It was part of a distant learning program that used students to connect to professors at Florida universities through two-way live television systems. It allowed engineers at the Cape, a remote outpost at that time, to stay current with their engineering skills. GENESYS operated until 1974. Then the Florida Solar Energy Center moved in.

Message from the Director

James W. Draper



What exciting times! I was thrilled to help cut the ceremonial ribbon on 17 June to unveil the new and improved Sands Space History center to the world. It's the culmination of a year of discussions, research, planning, organizing, and implementation.

This was a team effort. I want to extend huge appreciation to several key participants. First and foremost, thank you to the U.S. Space Force Historical Foundation, Inc., for financing the improvements through the generous donation made by Jared Isaacman in 2024. Thank you, Ray Sands, for your leadership and Bob Ward, the Foundation's intrepid Executive Director for Planning & Design, for all the organizational help and connections.

Basemint Creative provided the imagination, creativity, and harnessed the vision into an exceptional design. Talented contractors from Northboro Builders, Inc., turned it into a reality. They masterfully transformed the look and feel of the Sands Space History Center. Thank you to all our contractors for going above and beyond the scope of work to create an outstanding experience for our visitors.

Most of all, I want to thank my core team of Sabra Gossett and Roger McCormick for the crucial daily assistance from concept, to design, through completion. And, many thanks to our dedicated Museum Volunteers who helped deinstall and then reinstall all the exhibits, lobby furniture, and gift shop area.

The improvements speak for themselves. You can see them in the next few pages of "before and after" highlights. Let me share some of the fun side stories. First, we added the display of General Jay Raymond's uniform! Gen

Raymond was the first Chief of Space Operations for the Space Force, 2020-2022. He served as the first Guardian of Space Force!

With the help of the local Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD) flight, we moved the heavy commercial refrigerator to Hangar C. It's now a "fueling station" providing bottled water for volunteers and visitors and encouraging donations to the Foundation.

We even updated the lighting. The fluorescent lights that faded light-sensitive artifacts for 15 years are gone! New, modern LED lighting replaced them. We even installed a motion sensor on the Gen Raymond uniform case to minimize light exposure and increase preservation.

The restrooms were not part of the original scope but they needed work. All the old, peeling wallpaper was removed, and walls repainted. The new counters and sinks are fantastic! We even installed some sci-fi art to add some color (and whimsy) to the spaces.

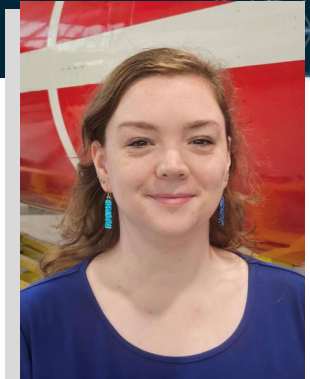
Finally, the History Center is no longer a nondescript white box. The letters are big and bold, the paint vibrant. No visitor will ever question again which building in the complex is the History Center., I've noticed recently, for the first time, visitors taking photos of the building and with the building. The Sands Space History Center is now, truly, a destination!

A handwritten signature of James W. Draper in black ink. The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "Draper" clearly visible.

James W. Draper, Museum Director

The Curator's Corner

with Sabra Gossett



Sands: Story Behind the Name

You may have been to the Sands Space History Center a million times, but do you know the story behind its name?

Harry J Sands Jr was born in Columbus, Ohio in 1915 to Harry J Sands Sr and Kathleen Timbrook Sands. He was one of three children. He attended and graduated from Ohio State University in 1938 with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering, as well as a reserve commission from the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).



Sands became a pilot in 1940 and was later assigned to activate a group in the South Pacific in 1943. He returned to the U.S. and was assigned to the Engineering Division of Air Materiel Command in Ohio, where he worked in the pilotless aircraft branch. After becoming assistant chief of development for the Aircraft and Guided Missiles Section of the Air Research and Development Command in Baltimore, he was transferred in 1953 to the Air Force Missile Test Center at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Sands then attended Harvard University and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C. and was later assigned to the 38th Tactical Missile Wing in Germany.

He returned to Patrick AFB in July 1961 as vice commander of the Air Force Missile Test Center, later being named commander in 1964. He was then transferred to Norton Air Force Base in California, where he became commander of the Ballistic Systems Division of Air Force Systems Command. After a temporary duty in Korea with the United Nations Command, he was assigned to Air University as the commandant of the Air Command and Staff College on Maxwell AFB in Alabama. He retired soon after in 1968.

Major General Sands, Retired, settled back on the Space Coast, and began dedicating his time to the preservation of the aerospace history of Cape Canaveral. In 1963, the commander of the Eastern Range appointed Brig Gen Sands to chairman of a museum committee, with the goal of establishing an Air Force Space Museum on the Cape, which opened in 1966. In retirement, he helped establish the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Museum Foundation as a private, non-profit organization to support the museum. He embodied the mission and even volunteered hours for touring in the early 1990s.

Gen. Sands always championed the museum and had a vision for the story to be told outside the gates. The Air Force Space & Missile History Center opened in 2010, as a "visitors center" to the more restricted Air Force Space & Missile Museum. The facility operated in the old Florida Solar Energy Center.

Gen. Sands died in 1993, and in his honor, the History Center was renamed the Sands Space History Center on what would have been his 101st birthday in 2016.

General Sands married Lelah Green in 1946. They had four sons, all of whom entered the service as well.

For more information on General Sands, check out our website [here](#).

The New Sands Space History Center



The New Sands Space History Center

Before



Before

After



After

Before



After



Museum Updates and News

RIP, Graveline and Crews

The Museum Volunteer Association lost two dedicated, iconic museum volunteers – [Bob Graveline](#) and [Al Crews](#). Both achieved distinguished and accomplished careers in aerospace. Both dedicated countless hours in retirement sharing their experiences and the rich history of the Cape with Museum visitors. They helped make the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum a magical place for so many people. We will truly miss them. Rest in peace. *(To the right are images of Bob Graveline on the left and Al Crews on the right.)*



75th Anniversary Exhibit

The reopening of the Sands Space History Center included the unveiling of the “First Cape Launch” special exhibit. Curated by Museum Volunteer Roger McCormick, the display focuses on the launch of Bumper 8 in 1950, the first rocket to launch from the Cape. We celebrate its 75th anniversary this month! Over 8,000 launches later, the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station is still the World’s Premier Gateway to Space! *(To the left is a close up view of just one section of the new “First Cape Launch” special exhibit.)*

Community Outreach

Museum Director Jamie Draper stayed busy over the last two months with several community speaking events. He provided his presentation on the past, present, and future of the Museum to an Order of Daedalians group in May and for the Heritage Isles speakers bureau in June. Mr. Draper also presented on the history of the World’s Premier Gateway to Space at the International Space Development Conference in Orlando on 22 June. *(To the right Mr. Draper prepares his presentation for the Order of Daedalians.)*



Museum Updates and News



STARCOM Tour

In early May, Jamie Draper provided a tour of several Museum facilities to Major General Timothy Sejba and his leadership team. Maj Gen Sejba commands STARCOM, which is the Space Training and Readiness Command for the U.S. Space Force. They are currently moving their headquarters to Patrick and the Cape. Mr. Draper toured them through historic Launch Complex 26, Pad 5, Hangar C, and other notable historic sites around the Cape. *(On the left Mr. Draper points out some of the unique features of Firing Room B at the LC-26 Blockhouse.)*

Snark Discovery

The Museum accepted several donations of historical materials recently. One of the most unique items was connected to the Snark missile program. Contractors working near the Skid Strip unearthed a strange piece of equipment. It still had an intact and readable data plate! Some diligent research revealed that it was a constant speed drive used on Snark missiles. This piece must be from one of the Snark crashes on the Skid Strip! More research is taking place. *(To the right is an image of the Snark missile constant speed drive.)*



Influencer Visit

SLD-45 Public Affairs Office scheduled a special historical tour of Cape Canaveral Space Force Station for Sam Eckholm. His team filmed the journey with their tour guide, Jamie Draper. Mr. Eckholm served as an F-22 Raptor Demonstration Team Public Affairs Officer during his time in the Air Force. He's now a content creator for multiple social media networks focusing on aerospace and the defense sector. *(To the left is Mr. Draper pictured with Emre Kelley of Public Affairs, Sam Eckholm, and Rupert the Space Armadillo on their Cape tour.)*





Rupert's Launch Pad

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**LIFT
OFF!**



CAPE CANAVERAL
SPACE FORCE
MUSEUM

Hello Everyone

Welcome to this brand new addition to the Trajectories Newsletter. I'm Rupert the Space Armadillo and I will be your host on these special pages for kids of all ages. My plan is to share some of my adventures around the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station — and beyond. Along the way I hope you will learn something about space and missile history. And have fun too!



Word of the Month

"blockhouse"

[blok-hous]

A blockhouse is a building close to a launch pad that is made extra strong with stuff like steel or cement. It can withstand the blast of an exploding rocket. That helps keep the launch team and equipment inside safe from harm.



Rupert Remembers

I love celebrating birthdays and anniversaries. It gives you a chance to have a party with cake and ice cream, or juicy earthworms and spiders. (I am an armadillo, after all.) This month we're remembering the very first rocket launch from Cape Canaveral, 75 years ago on July 24, 1950. It was called Bumper 8. That's a picture of the launch below. The sight and sounds of that first rocket launch must have surprised the local residents and my armadillo ancestors. We're kind of used to it now. It's always special to see and hear a launch!



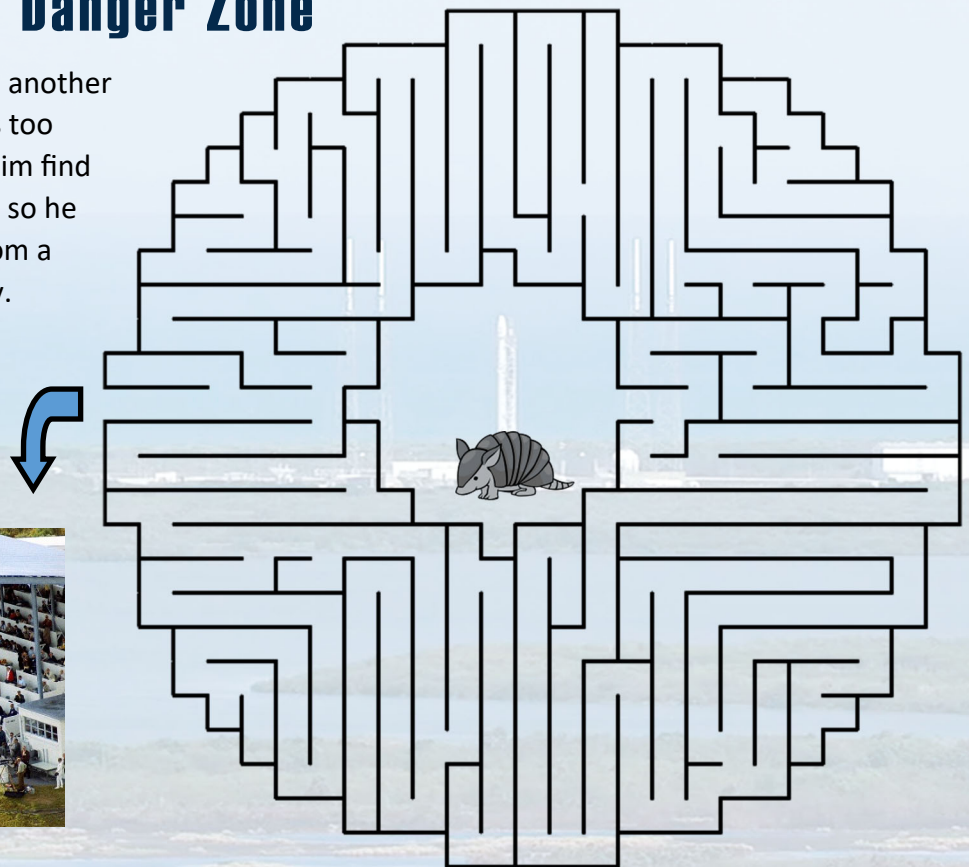
My Favorite Things

This is the blockhouse and launch pad where six Mercury Redstone rockets were launched in 1960 and 1961. NASA astronaut Alan Shepard became the first American in space when he blasted off from here on May 5, 1961. Gus Grissom followed on July 21. A full-sized model of the rocket stands on display at the site. You can see it for yourself when you visit the Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum.



Clear the Launch Danger Zone

Uh oh! It's almost time to send another rocket into space and Rupert is too close to the launch pad. Help him find his way out of the danger zone so he can safely watch the launch from a viewing site several miles away.



Our Museum Family



CAPE CANAVERAL
SPACE FORCE
MUSEUM

Museum Staff:

James Draper, Museum Director
Sabra Gossett, Museum Curator
Rupert the Space Armadillo, Mascot

Museum Volunteer Association:

Randy Wehrung, Chairperson
Bill Jelen, Secretary



UNITED STATES
SPACE FORCE
HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

Executive Committee Members:

Raymond Sands, Chairman
Steven Lepper, Major General, USAF (ret.)
Vice Chairman
Rob Quigg, Treasurer
Roger McCormick, Secretary

Board Members:

Robert VanVonderen
Stephen Houser
Therrin Protze
Victor Latavish
Tim Oliver
Jim Banke (*Honorary Member*)

Foundation Employees:

Deborah Allison, Foundation Services Manager
Sharon Rodriguez, Executive Assistant



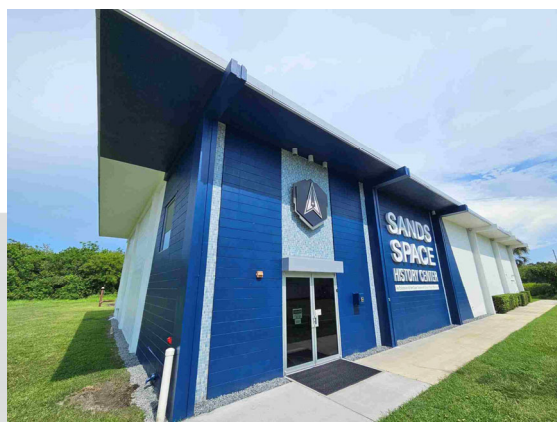
Cape Canaveral Space Force Museum

191 Museum Circle

Cape Canaveral SFS, FL 32925

321.853.9171

ccspacemuseum.org



Sands Space History Center

100 Space Port Way, Bldg. 90328

Cape Canaveral, FL 32920

321.853.1919

ccspacemuseum.org